

THE FOUR HIRAMS OF TYRE

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INTRODUCTION

IT will, no doubt, surprise many Masons, as well as non-Masons, to be told that there are four Hiram's of Tyre mentioned in the scripture narrative of the building of King Solomon's Temple of Jerusalem. Recently the Revd. Br. Morris Rosenbaum, P. P. G. Chaplain, Northumberland; Hollier-Hebrew Scholar, University of London; called the attention of the Masonic fraternity to the views of Meir Lob Malbim, the famous Rabbi of Kempen, as shown in his Commentary on the books of Kings and Chronicles. The learned Rabbi maintains, that these books refer to two Hiram's who were employed at the building of the Temple, and that many passages in these books are only reconcilable on that supposition. While considering this proposition and searching for information regarding it, some interesting indications became apparent, leading to the conclusion, that there are two Kings of Tyre, as well as two Artisans of Tyre, mentioned in the sacred narrative; and all called by the name of Hiram. Following up these indications and reviewing the whole subject, at full length, this article on "**The Four Hiram's of Tyre**" is the result.

Let us then consider the two propositions indicated, viz : **First**, that in the narration of the building of King Solomon's Temple at Jerusalem, as given in the books of Kings and of Chronicles, **two** kings of Tyre, called Hiram, are mentioned. **Second**, that in the narration above referred to, **two** artisans of Tyre, called Hiram, are also mentioned.

I. THE TWO KINGS CALLED HIRAM

The first mention in the Bible of the name of Hiram is in II Samuel V. 2, where we read: "And Hiram of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons, and they built David an house." Referring to the same circumstance, we read in I Chronicles XIV. 1: "Now, Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and timber of cedars, and masons, and carpenters, to build him an house." In I Kings V. 1 we are informed: "And Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants unto Solomon; (for he had heard that they had anointed him king in the room of his father:) for Hiram was ever a lover of David." In II Chronicles 11. 3, it is recorded: "And Solomon sent to Hiram the

king of Tyre, saying, as thou didst deal with David my father, and didst send him cedars to build him an house to dwell therein, even so deal with me." After the Temple had been built, as we learn from I Kings IX. 10: "It came to pass at the end of twenty years, when Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the Lord, and the King's house, . . . that then king Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee. And Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him; and they pleased him not. And he said: What cities are these which thou hast given me, my brother? And he called them the land of Cabul unto this day." (This word "Cabul" expresses contempt. According to Josephus, it means, "that which does not please.")

Let us try to arrange the circumstances here mentioned in chronological order. From II Samuel V. 5, and I Kings II. 11, we learn that David reigned thirtythree years in Jerusalem. It was in the early years of his reign there, that David received from Hiram, cedar trees, masons and carpenters to build his house. This was, in all probability, thirty years before the death of David and the crowning of Solomon. In the fourth year of Solomon's reign the building of the Temple was begun and Hiram, king of Tyre, sent his servants to assist in the work. Twenty years afterwards, Solomon gave Hiram, twenty cities in the land of Galilee. Such is an outline of the events connected with Hiram king of Tyre, as related in the Hebrew scriptures, and if we closely examine them the question will naturally arise: **was the Hiram who sent cedar-trees, and masons and carpenters to David the Hiram of the twenty cities?** If so, then when Solomon gave him the twenty cities, he must have reigned in Tyre for fifty-four or more, years; an almost incredulous length of reign in those days in the east. (This figure is arrived at as follows: from the building of King David's house to the crowning of King Solomon, 30 years: from the latter event to the beginning of the building of the Temple, 4 years: from the beginning of the Temple to the giving of the twenty cities, 20 years: In all 54 years.)

Considering the conditions of royal government prevalent in the eastern world in the days of Solomon and David, we are surely entitled to assume that Hiram would be at least twenty years of age when he sent his carpenters and masons to build a house for David his friend. If this is right, Hiram must have been at least seventy-four years old when he "came out from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him." For an aged eastern monarch to undertake a journey through a rough and barren country, such as Galilee, seems not at all natural. One can hardly suppose, also, that after his long

intimacy with David and Solomon he would be without a fairly accurate knowledge of the cities adjacent to his own kingdom, and that he would have needed to undergo the toil of such a journey in order to know what they were like. This journey indicates more the curiosity of an active, young, monarch, than the careful action of one approaching, if not actually the octogenarian stage. The phrase, also, in Kings V. I: "for Hiram was ever a lover of David," scarcely accords with the idea of an old friend. It seems more to indicate a youthful admirer whose father, or near relative, had long been a friend of David.

The only known source of information on this subject, outside of the Hebrew scriptures, are the two Hellenistic historians: Menander of Ephesus, and Dios; the latter being largely dependent on the former. The statements of these historians have been preserved by the Jewish writer Josephus, and from these we learn that Hiram I, son of Abi-baal, reigned in Tyre from 970 to 936 B. C. and that the building of Solomon's Temple dates from **the eleventh year of Hiram**. If this is correct, he could not be the Hiram who sent masons and carpenters to build an house to David, according to the sacred narrative, at least thirty-four years before the building of the Temple. If Hiram, son of Abi-baal, was the first of the name, then who was the Hiram of David's house referred to in II Samuel, V. 2? This difficulty is explained by some writers, by suggesting that Abi-baal was a distinctive, or honorary name; and that his proper name was Hiram: and this, according to Kitto's Cyclopaedia, "is rendered probable by the fact that other persons of the name of Hiram occur in the series of kings of Tyre." On the whole, taking everything into account, the natural and probable conclusion seems unavoidable, viz: that the Hiram of the building of David's house and the Hiram of the twenty cities were two distinct persons. If we assume that they were one and the same, we are faced with the following improbabilities.

- (1) That David must have built his house shortly before his death, after reigning in Jerusalem for about thirty years; which does not agree with the sacred narrative.
- (2) That his intrigue with Bethsheba, the mother of Solomon, must also have occurred in his old age, which is not quite likely.

- (3) That the various campaigns, detailed in the narrative, after the building of his house, must also have taken place in his advanced years, viz: the Philistine war at Baal-perazim, and the war in the valley of Rephaim; the conquests of Moab, of Zobah, of Syria, of Edom and of Ammon; the revolt of Absalom, various insurrections, another Philistine war, in which David waxed faint in battle; and the battles of Gob and Gath, et cetera.
- (4) That Solomon must have been a child when he was crowned king of Israel, and when he began to build the Temple; also, when he married Pharaoh's daughter, and gave his famous judgment in the case of the two women who claimed each to be the mother of the same child; and further, when he had established a fame for wisdom and learning that had spread over many lands; all of which is very improbable.

Reading the Hebrew scriptures in a common sense way, there seems no reasonable doubt that none of these improbabilities occurred. David built his house previous to the Bethsheba incident, and the various wars referred to. Wars were protracted and trying in his day, and we can scarcely imagine those mentioned as being carried on by an old monarch of seventy years, nor in less than twelve to fifteen years. Add to this the intervals of peace, in which the Ark was taken to Zion, and in which preparations were made for the building of the Temple, the three years of famine, and other things mentioned in the sacred narrative; and we may safely say that, at least, thirty years intervened between the building of David's house and his death.

In contrast to this contradictory and unsatisfactory theory, that there is only one Hiram, king of Tyre referred to, in the sacred history of the building of the Temple; the assumption that two kings of Tyre, called Hiram are therein mentioned, at once solves our doubts and difficulties, and makes the narrative plain and natural.

The course of events seems to have been as follows: David of Israel and Hiram of Tyre were great friends and, probably, about the same age. After David captured Jerusalem, his friend in Tyre sent him masons and carpenters to build an house for him. War had for years devastated Judea, causing the arts and manufactures to be neglected. The peaceful occupations of the builder and the artist had been abandoned for that of the warrior, and hence David had to obtain those from Tyre; which was then famous all the world over for its arts and manufactures. Time passed and age began to steal over

the hardy shepherd, warrior and poet king. Twenty-six years after the building of his house his friend Hiram dies, and is succeeded by his son Hiram; and, seven years afterwards, David himself is gathered to his fathers and Solomon, then thirty years of age, ascended the throne. In the fourth year of his reign Solomon began to build the Temple, with the assistance of Hiram, king of Tyre, the successor of Hiram the friend of David. In furtherance of this view of the subject we find in the letter sent by Hiram to Solomon, agreeing to the request for assistance in the building of the Temple, the following words: "And now I have sent a cunning man, endued with understanding of Hiram my fathers." Here we have, surely in the light of common sense, a clear indication that the predecessor of Hiram on the Tyrian throne was also called Hiram.

Reviewing all the circumstances as related in the sacred narrative, and taking into account the testimony of Menander that the building of the Temple was begun in the eleventh year of the reign of Hiram; there appears only one conclusion open to us, viz: that the Hiram who sent masons and carpenters to build a house for David, and the Hiram who, fifty-four years after that event, refused the twenty cities offered to him by king Solomon; were not the same but were both kings of Tyre; of the same name, and, probably, father and son.

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II. THE TWO ARTISANS* CALLED HIRAM

IN the traditions of Masonry connected with the M. M. degree, the central figure is that of "Hiram Abif." A martyr to fidelity and honour, his memory has been held sacred by the Craft. Yet, historically, there is very little known of him. By many, if not by the most, of those who troubled themselves to think on the subject, the traditions regarding him, until recently, were considered to be mythological legends similar to those on which the ancient mysteries were formed, and altogether devoid of truth. The fact that in the Biblical accounts of the building of King Solomon's Temple there is no mention, nor apparently the smallest hint, of his death, has been accepted as a proof that he did not die, during the building of that structure. Dr. Oliver, the well known Masonic writer, evidently considered the tradition of his death as mythical, for in the "Freemason's Treasury," Lecture XLV, he says: "It is well known that the celebrated artist was living at Tyre many years after the Temple was completed."

But let us examine the Biblical narrative a little more closely than we have hitherto done. Assuming for the time being as correct, the generally accepted belief that only one artisan of the name of Hiram, or Hiram, is mentioned in that historical account of the building of the Temple; we are immediately confronted with three contradictions demanding attention. These are:

- (1) in the descriptions of his parentage;
- (2) in the descriptions of his qualifications;
- (3) in the periods named of his arrival at the Temple.

In the first place then, let us look at

THE DESCRIPTIONS OF HIRAM'S PARENTAGE

In 2 Chron. H. 14, Hiram is said to be: "the son of a woman of the daughters of Dan." In I Kings VII. 14, he is described as: "the Son of a widow woman of the tribe of Naphtali." Now, no man can have two mothers, and no mother can belong to two tribes.

* The word "Artisan" is here used in its proper sense as one skilled in Art; a master of Arts.

On what supposition then, can these two differing descriptions be reconciled? Is it some mistake as to the tribe to which the mother belonged? With writers unacquainted with the tribes of Israel, or of the peculiarities of Hebrew history, that might be. But the writers of the books of Kings and Chronicles had an intimate knowledge of all these things, and we can scarcely suppose for a moment any such mistake.

The tribe of Dan occupied the hilly country in the immediate neighborhood of the Philistines and Samson the celebrated warrior and patriot was of that tribe.

Unable to subdue the Philistines the Danites, after the death of Samson, migrated to the plains of the upper Jordan around the city of Laish, which was then the granary of Sidon. Their proximity to Tyre, no doubt, resulted in intermarriages with the Tyrians; and hence, there would be nothing very remarkable in "the Son of a woman of the daughters of Dan," being a famous artisan of Tyre.

The tribe of Naphtali were located in the mountains on the northern border of Palestine; and from their nearness to Tyre and the necessities of trade from the sea-coast, they had regular intercourse with the Tyrians, and intermarriage would, consequently, more or less result. Thus there seems nothing extraordinary in the recorded fact, that a Tyrian artisan was "the son of a widow woman of the tribe of Naphtali."

There is little likelihood that, in either of these two cases, the writer of the book of Kings, or the writer of the book of Chronicles, would make any mistake in the matter of lineage; for on this point the Hebrew writers seem to have been very particular. The fact that in both instances the father is not mentioned, adds weight to the correctness of the description of the mother; and, if there was only one artisan of the name of Hiram at the building of the Temple, we have before us the insuperable difficulty of believing that he had two mothers.

Let us now pass on to consider, in the second place;

THE DESCRIPTIONS OF HIRAM'S QUALIFICATIONS

In 2nd. Chronicles II. 14, Hiram is described as: "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; and also to grave any manner of graving, and to find out every device." In 1st Kings VII. 14, he is called: "A worker in brass, and he was filled with wisdom and understanding, and cunning to work all works in brass." Now, just think for a little on

these two descriptions. The one is skillful to work metals--gold, silver, brass and iron; also stone and timber. In weaving and in dyeing, in engraving and in every device, he is an expert. He is an all around architect--a marvel, a genius, a man of large experience and, no doubt, of ripe years, whose fame would be sure to go down the ages. The other is merely a worker in brass--no doubt a man of good parts, but limited in experience and knowledge--probably young in years, and, according to the description, as yet only a worker in brass. This statement that his craftsmanship is confined to brass is most carefully noted by the historian, for it is reiterated in the description. He says: "A worker **in brass** filled with wisdom and understanding, and cunning to work all works **in brass**," He repeats the words "**in brass**," as if he was afraid that the individual he was describing might be mistaken for some other person of the same name, also celebrated as an artisan and a worker, at the building of the Temple.

Considering these two descriptions, is it reasonable to believe that they refer to the same individual? They are not loose, nor in any way vague. On the contrary, they are very precise and detailed, and no one reading them, without prejudice, would imagine them to refer to the same artisan.

We now come to our third point, viz:

THE PERIODS NAMED OF HIRAM'S ARRIVAL AT THE TEMPLE

In 2nd Chronicles II. 13, before the work of the Temple was begun, Hiram king of Tyre in his letter to Solomon says: "And now I have sent a cunning man endued with understanding," etc. In I Kings VII. 13, after the house of the Lord and the house of Solomon had been built, we are informed: "King Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre." In the one statement we are told that before the house was built a skillful man was sent to King Solomon by Hiram King of Tyre; in the other that after the house was built Solomon "sent and fetched" Hiram out of Tyre. These periods were twenty years apart; for the house of the Lord took seven years, and the house of Solomon and the courts of the Temple other thirteen years in building.

To understand the biblical narrative properly one has to keep in view that there are several "finishes" mentioned, and that these refer only to certain parts of the work at the building of the Temple. The first "finish" is mentioned in I. Kings VI. 9: " So he built the house and finished it"--that is the mason-work, or shell of the building. Then comes the second part of the work, consisting of the carpenter-work of the roof, and of the

chambers around about, as stated in verses 9 and 10; and in verse 14, the narrative goes on to say: "So Solomon built the house and finished it." The third part of the work described, consists of the decorations--the gold plating and gilding. Verse 22 says: "And the whole house he overlaid with gold, until he had finished all the house." The fourth part of the work is stated to have been the internal fittings and carvings of the house, and the building of the inner court, and the whole is summed up in verse 38, as follows: "And in the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, which is the eighth month, was the house finished throughout all the parts thereof, and according to all the fashion of it. So was he seven years in building it."

So far as we have followed the narrative, the **house** itself, in its plan and embellishments, has been finished; but the Temple is still far from being completed. The outer courts and the houses of the king, with all their magnificence and ornamentation; the pillars of the porch, and the altars and utensils of the inner court, have not yet been begun. These were to take other thirteen years to construct and finish. In the meantime, let us go on. The house of the forest of Lebanon, the porch of judgment, Solomon's Palace, the palace for Pharaoh's daughter, and the great court; had all just been built when the sacred narrative is abruptly interrupted by the statement: "And king Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre." All the work of building proper had been completed, but many things had yet to be done before the sacrifices and magnificent services of the Hebrew religion could be begun and maintained at the Temple. But, if Hiram was sent by the king of Tyre before the work was begun, why did Solomon, at this particular stage, need to send and "fetch" him out of Tyre ? Had he gone back to Tyre after some years of laborious work, and was he again needed to complete the building? There are one or two objections to the idea. If he did return to Tyre, we would naturally expect the historian to give us some indication of his having done so. But, search as we may, there is not the smallest hint, or indication of that. All writers on the subject, differing as they do on many points, agree that Hiram had the superintendence of the work at the building of the Temple. Is it likely then, that he could have gone back, while the work was unfinished? The time necessary for such a journey in those days would have so interfered with the progress of the building operations that we are scarcely entitled to assume such a thing, unless on something approaching substantial grounds. The custom then, and for many centuries afterwards, with artisans such as

Hiram, was to make their home for the time being wherever their work was. Building operations in connection with temples were necessarily of long duration. In the present case they had probably already stretched over fifteen years. The building of the holy house had occupied seven years, and the royal houses and the courts were finished, so far as mason and carpenter work were concerned; and, as they occupied thirteen years to complete, we may safely estimate that at least eight of these thirteen years had already passed when "Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre." In all probability then, Hiram had already spent thirteen years in Jerusalem and, if alive, was still there. If that was so, why and wherefore did Solomon need to send and fetch him out of Tyre? So far as all the records go, the periods named of Hiram's arrival at the Temple are not consistent with the course of events, and are contradictory to each other; so long as we assume there was only one Hiram engaged at the work of the Temple.

These three contradictions as to the Parentage, Qualifications, and Period of arrival at the Temple, which we have now been considering, must apparently remain inexplicable, unless on the natural and, at present, the only reasonable explanation that there were two artisans of the same name, engaged at the work of that famous structure. This hypothesis reconciles those contradictions, makes clear the biblical narrative, explains certain hitherto unintelligible statements, and lends corroborative testimony to the truth, in its substance, of the Masonic tradition of the death of Hiram Abif. In the light of this hypothesis let us now review the whole circumstances mentioned in the sacred narrative.

The first Hiram is "the son of a woman of the daughters of Dan," and arrives at the beginning of the building of the Temple. He is an all around artisan, skillful to work in stone, timber, gold, iron, etc. He superintends the building operations. It is a task of no common difficulty. A great Temple has to be built on the top of a rugged hill, almost entirely surrounded by sharp precipices. Immense walls, the lowest of which is to be 450 feet high, have to be reared up in the valley out from the precipices, and the intervening space has to be filled up with earth in order to make room for the Temple with all its courts and palaces on the top. This work has to be done under the peculiar conditions that neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron is to be heard in the main structure, that is the sanctuary; while it is being built. All this would require great skill, knowledge and experience. Stonework, timber-work, and metal-work of various kinds

have to be executed. The Sanctuary has to be covered inside and outside with gold. Great curtains, with cherubims and other devices, have to be manufactured. Carvings on stone, and on timber; engravings on gold and silver; have to be done, and done in the highest and most skillful manner possible. The work is not only stupendous in its nature; it is also magnificent in its character. Well, the years pass on and, at the seventh, the house of the Lord and the inner court have been built. Then began the work of the outer courts and the royal palaces. These, while parts of the Temple scheme, were not considered as parts of the sanctuary, and hence, sacred silence was no longer a necessary condition. All was now bustle. The sounds of hammer and chisel, and the stir of toil filled the air, while the great courts and palaces were gradually erected. Other eight years passed in this work, and Hiram the first, with his wonderful genius and skill, built a structure whose fame has been echoed down through the long corridors of Time. Now it is at this stage that Hiram the first disappeared and Hiram the second, "the son of a widow woman of the tribe of Naphtali" came into view. Everything, except the molten brass-work, has been done. Why did Hiram the first not do it? That he was perfectly capable, there can be no reasonable doubt. Why then, did Solomon need to send for Hiram the second to do it? It is evident that Hiram the first was no longer available. Why? Neither scripture narrative nor profane history, so far as we can trace, give any answer to this question. But the traditions of Masonry supply a very clear and natural answer. **Hiram the first was dead, and hence Solomon sent and fetched Hiram (the second) out of Tyre, to finish the work.** Everything had been completed except the brass-work. and Hiram the second is described specially as "**a worker in brass.**" Five more years passed and the final finish of the Temple came. The mighty brass pillars--the casting of which was a wonderful achievement--the various altars and utensils, the golden candlesticks etc., were all made and put in their places and, with full pomp and sacrifice, Solomon dedicated and consecrated the house of the Lord.

In this way, on the assumption that there were two Hiram's engaged at the work of the Temple the sacred narrative is clear and coherent; and the seeming inconsistencies and contradictions we have referred to, disappear.

But there still remain one or two passages in the narrative which puzzle us. In I. Kings VII. 45, we read: "And the pots and the shovels and the basins, and all these vessels, which Hiram made to king Solomon for the house of the Lord, were of bright

brass." In II. Chronicles IV. 16, after ascribing as in the book of Kings, the various things made by Hiram--the pillars, the bases, the layers, and the sea with twelve oxen under it--we read: "And the pots also, and the shovels, and the flesh-hooks and all their instruments, did Hiram, **his father** make to king Solomon, for the house of the Lord, of bright brass." Here we have evidently a parenthetical remark interjected by the writer of the narrative with the object of making plain to the reader some fact which would be otherwise obscure. The words "**of bright brass**" arrest our attention. What do they mean? They evidently want to emphasize that the pots, shovels, and all the work of brass done by "Hiram, **his father**" were of **bright** brass that is, malleable brass; while the pillars, the bases, the lavers, as mentioned in the context were of cast brass. This distinction is associated with the words "**his father**." Whose father could it be, but the father of the person whose work is being described? In verse II of the last mentioned chapter in Chronicles, we read: "And Hiram made the pots and the shovels and the basins. And Hiram finished the work that he was to make for King Solomon for the house of God." Now, according to Hebrew scholars the words here translated "Hiram" in both instances, are distinct, and different in the original. In I. Kings VII. 40, our translation should read: "And **Chirom** made the layers and the shovels and the basins. So **Chiram** made an end of doing all the work, etc.": and in II. Chronicles IV. 11, it should read: "And **Chiram** finished the work that he was to make for king Solomon" etc.

In view of the distinction in the names, and of the apparent parenthetical character of the 45th verse in I. Kings VII. and of the 16th verse in II. Chronicles IV., the reading of the sacred narrative appears to be as follows, beginning at I. Kings VII. 40:

"But **Chirom** made the lavers and the shovels and the basins, and Chiram made an end of the work that **Chiram** was to have made king Solomon for the house of the Lord: the two pillars, and the two bowls of the chapiters that were on the top of the two pillars; and the two net-works, to cover the two bowls of the chapiters which were upon the top of the pillars; and four hundred pomegranates for the two net-works, even two rows of pomegranates for one net-work, to cover the two bowls of the chapiters that were upon the pillars; and the ten bases, and ten lavers on the bases; and one sea, and twelve oxen under the sea:--but the pots and the shovels, and the basins; and all those vessels which Chirom made to king Solomon for the house of the Lord were of **bright brass**."

In the same way beginning at II. Chronicles IV. 11, we would read: "**But Churam** made the pots, and the shovels, and the basins; and **Chiram** finished the work which Churam was to have made for king Solomon for the house of God--to-wit: the two pillars, and the pommels, and the chapters which were on the top of the two pillars, and the two wreaths to cover the two pommels of the chapters which were upon the pillars. He made also bases, and lavers made he upon the bases: One sea and twelve oxen under it; **But** the pots, and the shovels and the flesh-hooks, and all the instruments which Churam, **his father**, did make to king Solomon for the house of the Lord were of **bright** brass."

This reading of the narrative, seems to us, the only one that gives any appearance of consistency and plain sense. The repetition of the name "**Hiram**" in I. Kings VII. 40, and its use in verse 45; the repetition of "**Huram**" in II. Chronicles IV. 11, and the words "Hiram his father" are all inexplicable and confusing, as they stand. The explanation that makes everything plain and clear is that Hiram the son made the pillars, the lavers, etc., of cast-brass, and that Hiram his father made the pots, basins, etc., of bright or malleable brass. In this view the words "**his father**" (in the original "**Abif**") is rendered quite natural and intelligible, and accords with Masonic tradition.

In all the variations of the Masonic traditions, the Hiram whose death occurred immediately preceding the completion of the Temple is named "Hiram Abif." This designation becomes significant only in view of the fact that another Hiram, his son, also superintended at the building of the Temple and finished the work which his father would no doubt have finished had he lived a few years longer. Why should the designation "Abif" have been given if there was no other Hiram engaged at the Temple? It surely indicates not only another Hiram, but also that the other was the son of the Hiram so named.

The Hiram whom Solomon "fetched out of Tyre" is described as the son of a widow. This description accords exactly with the theory now advanced. If Hiram Abif was dead and his wife alive, his son Hiram would naturally be the son of a widow.

The expression "sent and fetched" is peculiar and is also perhaps very significant. It seems to indicate in all probability that the King Solomon sent an escort for Hiram. Our Rev. Brother Rosenbaum thinks this was to protect him from his father's enemies. With this we can scarcely agree. These enemies were all too insignificant to

demand for him a royal escort. Ordinary guards as was usual for travelers, would have been sufficient so far as safety was concerned. A royal escort was, and is a mark of honour and it seems much more probable that this respect was shown to the son, in honour of the fame and memory of the father.

This theory of the two Hiram-Artisans at the building of the Temple also harmonizes with the statement made by Dr. Oliver to which reference has already been made, viz: "It is well known that the celebrated artist was living in Tyre many years after the Temple was completed." This statement has been used as an argument against the truth of the Masonic tradition regarding the death of Hiram. But if there were two Hiram's the statement of Dr. Oliver and the tradition of Hiram's death may both be true. Hiram the son may very probably have returned to Tyre and lived, let us fondly believe, many years the worthy son of a noble father.