

HAFTORAH SUMMARY FOR CHANUKAH 2

by Rabbi Aron Tendler

Shabbos Chanukah #2

I Kings 7:40 - 50

The Haftorah for the second Shabbos of Chanukah took place approximately 2833 years ago in the year 2928 after creation. In 2924 King Solomon ascended the throne of his father David and began his most ambitious project, the building of the first Bais Hamikdash.

The building of the first Temple in Jerusalem involved artisans from all over the ancient world. Foremost among them were craftsmen from Tyre. Hiram, King of Tyre and Solomon had forged a relationship that fulfilled the blessings of Noach to his son Yefes. "And Yefes will dwell in the house of Shem." Hiram was a descendent of Yefes, and his craftsmanship and artistry graced the home that the descendents of Shem, the Jewish people, built. The Haftorah describes the decorative construction that enhanced the beauty of the first Temple as well as the various vessels designed by Hiram's artists for use in the Bais Hamikdash.

The story of the construction of the first Bais Hamikdash details a ideal time of world peace and partnership. Shlomo Hamelech had captured the respect, admiration, and wonder of his contemporaries. Pilgrims from all over the ancient world flocked to Jerusalem to see the young king and witness first hand his wisdom and brilliance. Solomon forged alliances with numerous governments increasing the trade and might of Israel. It was a time of great scholarship and peacefulness, a foretaste of the messianic era.

At the time of Chanukah, 693 years later, the world scene was much different. Jerusalem had been defiled with pagan worship and Israel was beneath foreign rule. The forces of Judah were miraculously victorious recapturing Jerusalem and rededicating the second Bais Hamikdash.

Chanukah celebrates Jewish survival. It is our fervent hope that the light of the Menorah, reminiscent of the Menorah that once stood in the Temple, will once again illuminate the darkness of world strife and hatred with understanding and wisdom. Just as Hiram joined Shlomo in building the Bais Hamikdash and glorifying G-d's name so too will this year herald the coming of Mashiach, the building of the third Temple, and a return to world peace.