



Good day Worthy Knights,

In this part 84: Adonhiram

Wikipedia

### **Adoniram**

In Hebrew, אֲדוֹנִירָם, 'my Lord has exalted'; alternate form Adoram, אֲדוֹרָם 'adoram', 'the Lord has exalted'. Also, from the noun אֲדוֹן (*adon*), lord or sir, and the verb רוּם (*rum*), to be high. The son of Abda. He was the tax collector in the United Kingdom of Israel for over forty years, from the late years of King David's reign until the reign of Rehoboam.

In the language of the Tanakh, he was "over the tribute", i.e., the levy or forced labour. He oversaw the 30,000 conscripted timber cutters in the forests of Lebanon during the building of King Solomon's temple. Hundreds of thousands of people were involved in this extraordinary project.

This obviously ties him directly to the building of the temple as even though the temple was so holy that it was to be built without making noise (without using proper tools — 1 Kings 6:7), it was earthly enough to necessitate the abuse of myriads of slaves. Many of these slaves were levied from the Israelite households that owned them (1 Kings 5:13), but a great many more were drawn from the indigenous peoples of Canaan (9:20-22).

"Now King Solomon levied forced laborers from all Israel; and the forced laborers numbered 30,000 men. He sent them to Lebanon, 10,000 a month in relays; they were in Lebanon a month and two months at home." In other words, he has these forced laborers, probably slaves, working four months of the year, and then eight months they could stay and work as laborers on private farms. But that is not all. The Bible also describes other sectors of this massive workforce. "Now Solomon had 70,000 transporters and 80,000 hewers of stone in the mountains, besides Solomon's 3,300 chief deputies, who were over the project and who ruled over the people who were doing the work."

So, Hiram sent word to Solomon: "I have received the message you sent me and will do all you want in providing the cedar and juniper logs."

### **Adoniram in the Bible**

The first notice that we have of Adoniram in Scripture is in the Second Book of Samuel (20:24), where, in the abbreviated form of his name Adoram, he is said to have been over the tribute in the house of David, or, as Gesenius translates it: prefect over the tribute service, tribute master, in modern phrase, he was the chief receiver of the taxes.

Seven years afterward we find him exercising the same office in the household of Solomon, for it is said, First Kings (iv, 6), that "Adoniram the son of Abda was over the tribute."

Lastly, we hear of him still occupying the same station in the household of King Rehoboam, the successor of Solomon. Forty-seven years after he is first mentioned in the Book of Samuel, he is stated under the name of Adoram, First Kings (xii, 18), or Hadoram, Second Chronicles (X,18), to have been stoned to death, while in the discharge of his duty, by the people, who were justly indignant at the oppressions of his master.

Although commentators have been at a loss to determine whether the tax-receiver under David, under Solomon, and under Rehoboam was the same person, there seems to be no reason to doubt it; for, as Kitto says, "It appears very unlikely that even two persons of the same name should successively bear the same office, in an age when no example occurs of the father's name being given to his son. We find, also, that not more than forty-seven years elapse between the first and last mention of the Adoniram who was 'over the tribute and as this, although a long term of service, is not too long for one life and as the person who held the office in the beginning of Rehoboam's reign had served in it long enough to make himself odious to the people, it appears, on the whole, most probable that one and the same person is intended throughout" (John Kitto in his Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature).

### **The name Adoniram in the Bible**

There is only one Adoniram in the Bible but there is something noteworthy curious about his name. What is curious about this Adoniram is that, when he is still working for David — he is called אָדוֹרָם (Adoram).

Rehoboam (the son of Solomon) is not very diplomatic and in his early reign he promises to wield the whip much fiercer than his father ever did. This causes the northern tribes to follow the rebel Jeroboam in secession, and to counteract this, Rehoboam sends in tax collector, called הָדוֹרָם (Hadoram) who ended up stoned to death.

Alternation between the letters א (*aleph*) and the letter ה (*he*) is common enough for Adoram and Hadoram to be the same person.

