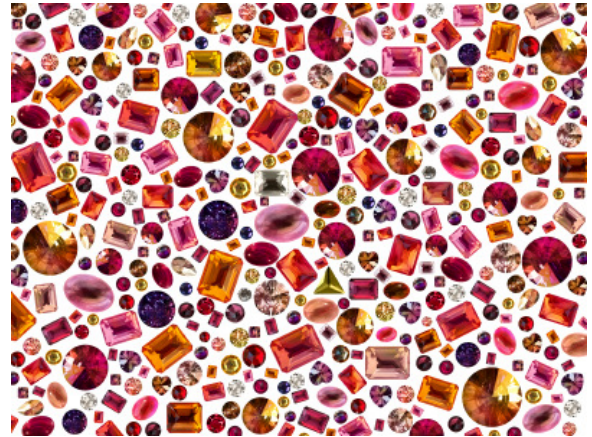


# God the Designer

## *1 Chronicles 28*

<sup>1</sup> David summoned all the officials of Israel to assemble at Jerusalem: the officers over the tribes, the commanders of the divisions in the service of the king, the commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds, and the officials in charge of all the property and livestock belonging to the king and his sons, together with the palace officials, the mighty men and all the brave warriors.



<sup>2</sup> King David rose to his feet and said: “Listen to me, my brothers and my people. I had it in my heart to build a house as a place of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, for the footstool of our God, and I made plans to build it. <sup>3</sup> But God said to me, ‘You are not to build a house for my Name, because you are a warrior and have shed blood.’ ...

<sup>11</sup> Then David gave his son Solomon the plans for the portico of the temple, its buildings, its storerooms, its upper parts, its inner rooms and the place of atonement. <sup>12</sup> He gave him the plans of all that the Spirit had put in his mind for the courts of the temple of the LORD and all the surrounding rooms, for the treasuries of the temple of God and for the treasuries for the dedicated things.

## *2 Chronicles 3*

<sup>1</sup> Then Solomon began to build the temple of the LORD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to his father David. ...

<sup>4</sup> The portico at the front of the temple was twenty cubits long across the width of the building and twenty cubits high.\*

He overlaid the inside with pure gold. <sup>5</sup> He paneled the main hall with pine and covered it with fine gold and decorated it with palm tree and chain designs. <sup>6</sup> He adorned the temple with precious stones. And the gold he used was gold of Parvaim. <sup>7</sup> He overlaid the ceiling beams, doorframes, walls and doors of the temple with gold, and he carved cherubim on the walls.

<sup>10</sup> In the Most Holy Place he made a pair of sculptured cherubim and overlaid them with gold.... <sup>14</sup> He made the curtain of blue, purple and crimson yarn and fine linen, with cherubim worked into it.

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\* A cubit was 12”, 18” or 20”; scholars disagree. So the measurement of the portico would have been from 20’-33’ wide, and the same height.

***Discuss (or think about):***

Since God's Spirit gave the design of the temple to David - it came from God, not from man - what does it reflect about Him?

What would it be like to worship God in this temple? What would the experience of the space be like for someone who worshipped other gods, or none at all?

In his excellent booklet, *Art and the Bible*<sup>†</sup>, Francis Schaeffer writes about this passage in 2 Chronicles:

What, therefore, was to be in the temple? For one thing, the temple was to be filled with art work.... The temple was covered with precious stones *for beauty*. There was no pragmatic reason for the precious stones. They had no utilitarian purpose. God simply wanted beauty in the temple. God is interested in beauty.

Come with me to the Alps and look at the snow-covered mountains. There can be no question. God is interested in beauty. God made people to be beautiful. And beauty has a place in the worship of God. (15-16)

***Discuss (or think about):***

What is beauty, and why does God care about it?

What makes something - whether it is a work of art, a mountain, or a person - beautiful? Does "beautiful" necessarily mean "attractive," "pleasant," or "inspiring"?

What does Schaeffer mean when he writes "beauty has a place in the worship of God"?

How could a commitment to beauty impact a Christian's life and journey of faith?

What could the Church's role be in making God's creation more beautiful?



***Try this (on your own or with a group):***

**Visit a church that is very beautiful in its architecture and design.** Walk around, and experience the space, as you are surrounded by beauty. Focus on particular aspects of the design or decoration - spend time viewing and considering them. Sit and continue taking in the space. Pray and praise God whenever and however you feel led. How did the experience of beauty affect your time of worship? Where did you feel your heart and spirit going? Did you have any thoughts about God, or your relationship with Him, which might have been triggered by the beauty of the space?

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<sup>†</sup> The Arts Ministry highly recommends *Art and the Bible*. Discounted copies are available during Arts Month from the Redeemer webstore: [http://www.redeemer2.com/rstore/moreinfo.cfm?Product\\_ID=862](http://www.redeemer2.com/rstore/moreinfo.cfm?Product_ID=862)

*Suggestions:*

St. Bartholomew's: Park Ave and 51<sup>st</sup> St  
St. John the Divine: 112<sup>th</sup> St and Amsterdam  
St. Patrick's: 5<sup>th</sup> Ave and 50<sup>th</sup> St

*Do you have a favorite church building in NYC that you think is beautiful? Why? Add your comment to our blog here: <http://redeemerarts.blogspot.com/2010/02/whats-your-favorite-church-building-in.html>*

**Consider several works of art, both those you immediately find “beautiful,” and those you don’t.** It’s preferable to view these works in person - in a gallery, studio, or museum - otherwise, you might try out the images below. What attracts you to those you immediately find beautiful? Color? Shape? The narrative content of the piece (the story it is telling)? What do you dislike about those you didn’t immediately find beautiful? Learn more about those works, and about the artists who created them. Has your opinion changed? Does knowing more about the artist’s intention help you to see things in the works that you didn’t see before?

*Works to consider:*

J.M.W. Turner, “Venice, from the Porch of Madonna della Salute”:

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/trnr/ho\\_99.31.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/trnr/ho_99.31.htm)

Pablo Picasso, “Dream and Lie of Franco”:

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/pica/ho\\_1986.1224.1%5b2%5d.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/pica/ho_1986.1224.1%5b2%5d.htm)

Mark Rothko, “No. 13 (White, Red on Yellow)”:

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/abex/ho\\_1985.63.5.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/abex/ho_1985.63.5.htm)

*Suggested arts outing with your fellowship group or friends:* The Metropolitan Museum of Art, which holds these works, is now open until 9:00pm on Fridays and Saturdays. They have several places to eat and relax, and are great for a group gathering. Met Museum is always “pay what you wish.” Do not hesitate to visit the museum and give what you can afford toward admission. [www.metmuseum.org](http://www.metmuseum.org)