

## LESSON 3. Solomon Built The Temple

1 Kings 6-8

**MEMORY VERSE:** “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest” (Ecclesiastes 9:10).

### DAVID WANTED TO BUILD THE TEMPLE

God had dwelt among the Israelites in the tabernacle since their encampment at mount Sinai on the way to the promised land. The tabernacle was taken down and moved many times during their wilderness wanderings. David felt it was wrong for him to live in a king’s mansion while the Lord had only a portable tabernacle made of animal skins and linen in which to dwell among His people. David had asked God if he could build a permanent temple for the Lord (2 Samuel 7:1-13). God refused his request. David was a “man of war” and God wanted a “man of peace” to build his first permanent dwelling here on earth. God told David his son Solomon would build the Lord’s temple (1 Chronicles 22:7-19).

David accepted the Lord’s decision. He loved the Lord and gladly obeyed even though he yearned to build the temple himself. David wanted God to have a magnificent temple that was famous for its beauty throughout the world (1 Chronicles 22:5). He helped gather materials for Solomon to use to build the temple. He gave much gold himself and urged the Israelites to give freely of their possessions.

### WORK ON THE TEMPLE BEGAN

Solomon asked Hiram, king of Tyre, to send cedars from Lebanon for use in building the temple. Hiram had been a close friend of David and was delighted to provide timbers for use in the temple. The logs were floated down the sea to Jerusalem where they were hewn into boards and timbers for the building. The Sidonians, neighbors of Tyre at mount Lebanon, were skilled craftsmen, and Hiram sent them to hew the wood. In return, Solomon sent food for the household of Hiram. Great and costly stones were hewn and prepared for the foundation of the temple. Like his father David, Solomon wanted God’s house to be made of the best materials and magnificent in appearance.

In the fourth year of Solomon’s reign, construction of the temple began. The temple, itself was sixty cubits long, twenty cubits wide and thirty cubits high (a cubit was about 18 inches). Outside the temple was a porch, and chambers were built against its walls. All the timbers and stones had been hewn before they were brought to the temple. “And 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 while it was in building” (1 Kings 6:7).

The finished house was covered with beams and boards of cedars. The inside walls and ceiling of the temple were of cedar. The floor was made of planks from fir trees. Inside the temple was built an “oracle” or the most holy place where the ark of the covenant was to be placed. Solomon had sent to Tyre for a man by the name of Hiram (not the same as the king of Tyre) who

was skilled in working with gold, silver, brass and iron (2 Chronicles 2:14). With the help of skilled Israelites, Hiram made all the metal parts for the temple and the furniture.

Much of the wood had carvings of cherubims, palm trees and open flowers (1 Kings 6:29). All of the inside was overlaid with gold, that showed the carvings underneath (1 Kings 6:21, 22).

Solomon had enlisted the help of 70,000 workers, 80,000 hewers and 3300 officers who oversaw the work on the temple. Seven years after construction began, the temple was finished. Solomon then brought into the temple all the things his father had gathered of silver and gold.

### **THE TEMPLE DEDICATED**

In the seventh month of the following year, Solomon gathered all the elders and leaders of the Israelites to bring the ark of the covenant into the temple. As God had commanded long ago, the ark was carried by priests designated to do that job. Inside the ark were the two tablets of stone given to Moses on mount Sinai. On the tablets were written the ten commandments. At one time the ark had also contained Aaron's rod which budded and the manna from the wilderness wanderings (Hebrews 9:4). However, the rod and the manna had evidently been removed either by command from God, or by enemies who had previously captured the ark. Solomon and the people made an offering to God of sheep and oxen in such numbers they could not be counted.

When the ark was set down in the most holy place, and the priests had departed from it, a cloud filled the temple. The cloud was so heavy the priests could not stand to minister there. God's glory filled the house of the Lord! Solomon told the people that God was in the cloud and this would be His dwelling place. All the congregation of the Israelites stood as they recognized they were in the presence of God. Solomon blessed them and told them again how David wanted to build the temple, but God had chosen him to be its builder.

Solomon offered to God a long prayer, praising Him for keeping His promises, and asking His blessings on the Israelites. Solomon must have been a little in awe at what God had allowed him to do. He prayed, "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded" (1 Kings 8:27). Solomon realized the insignificance of the temple compared to God's majesty and eternal being. Even in all its earthly beauty, the temple was nothing compared to God's glory.

Solomon prayed for the people to heed God's Word, and follow His statutes. If they did, God would be with them. Those who chose to sin against God would be smitten, Solomon said. Yet, he pleaded with God to forgive those who repented and turned back to Him. After his prayer, Solomon again stood and blessed the people. He said, "That all the people of the earth may know that the Lord is God, and there is none else" (1 Kings 8:60).

Solomon offered more sacrifices to God. He held a great feast for the Israelites that lasted seven days. On the eighth day he sent the people home. The temple had been dedicated and God had been praised. Solomon was a wise and great king. God had blessed him as He had no other man. Yet, Solomon would later forget his own words about following God.

### **MATCH**

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|---------------------------|--|
| _____ 1. Hiram            | a. height of the temple                      |
| _____ 2. Cubit            | b. came from Lebanon                         |
| _____ 3. Tablets of stone | c. Solomon had been king when temple started |
| _____ 4. David            | d. eighteen inches                           |
| _____ 5. Seven years      | e. the time it took to build the temple      |
| _____ 6. Four years       | f. king of Tyre                              |
| _____ 7. Thirty cubits    | g. were in the ark of the covenant           |
| _____ 8. Cedars           | h. wanted to build the temple                |

### **SCRIPTURE SEARCH**

1. “And the house, when it was in building, was built of \_\_\_\_\_ made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither \_\_\_\_\_ nor axe nor any tool of \_\_\_\_\_ heard in the house while it was in building” (1 Kings 6:7).
2. “That all the \_\_\_\_\_ of the earth may know that the Lord is God, and that there is \_\_\_\_\_ else” (1 Kings 8:60).
3. “So \_\_\_\_\_ overlaid the house within with pure \_\_\_\_\_” (1 Kings 6:21).
4. “And the \_\_\_\_\_ brought in the ark of the covenant of the Lord unto his place, into the oracle of the house, to the \_\_\_\_\_ holy \_\_\_\_\_, even under the \_\_\_\_\_ of the cherubims” (1 Kings 8:6).
5. At one time the ark of the covenant had contained “the golden pot that had \_\_\_\_\_, and Aaron’s \_\_\_\_\_ that budded, and the \_\_\_\_\_ of the covenant” (Hebrews 9:4).

### **UNDERLINE THE CORRECT ANSWER**

1. (David, Moses, Nathan) wanted God to have a magnificent temple that was famous for its beauty throughout the world.
2. The skilled gold and brass worker that Solomon brought from Tyre was named (King Hiram, Sidon, Hiram).
3. Work on the temple began in the (480<sup>th</sup>, 830<sup>th</sup>, 180<sup>th</sup>) year after Israel came out of Egypt (1 Kings 6:1).

### **POINTS TO PONDER**

1. Solomon built a beautiful temple for the Lord. What was the original source of all the gold and material Solomon used in the building? (THINK!)
2. Who first thought of building the Lord a permanent house? Why? (2 Samuel 7:1-7).
3. Why did God choose Solomon to build the temple?