

LESSON TWO

THE TEMPLE

A. SOLOMON'S TEMPLE:

The Temple, which Solomon built, was the most costly and magnificent building upon earth at that time.

It was built on the site of Araunah's threshing floor (II Samuel 24:16-25) which was Mt. Moriah where Abraham had been commanded to sacrifice Isaac (Genesis 22:2).

It was built similar to the plan of the Tabernacle, but twice the size. Figuring the cubit to be a foot and one half, the Temple was built 90 feet long, 30 feet wide and 45 feet high (I Kings 6:2). The Temple faced east, in front of which was a porch, 15 feet deep, across the entire width. The west 30 feet was the Most Holy Place or Oracle. The east 60 feet was the Holy Place or House. A veil of blue, purple, crimson and fine linen (II Chronicles 3:14) separated them.

The Temple was built of stone, but paneled with cedar overlaid with gold.

The Ark was placed in the Holy of Holies along with the Mercy Seat overshadowed by cherubims. In here shone the mysterious light, the Shekinah, the symbol of the presence of God. Only the High Priest could enter here, and only once a year, on the Day of Atonement. In the Holy Place were the Altar of Incense, ten golden lamp stands standing five on each side and ten tables of shewbread (I Kings 7:48-49).

Along the sides and rear of the Temple were three stories of side chambers for the priests.

In front of the Temple was the Brazen Altar of Burnt Offering, 30 feet square and 15 feet high. This is now called the "Rock of the Dome," directly under the center of the present Mohammedan Mosque. To the south was the Brazen Laver, 15 feet in diameter, 8 feet deep and set on 12 brazen oxen. There were also ten smaller portable lavers.

There were two courts, an Inner Court and a Great Court. The Inner Court was for the priests and the Great Court was intended for the people (II Chronicles 4:9).

B. THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE: (I Kings 5-7 & II Chronicles 2-4).

David wanted to build the Temple but was forbidden because he was a man of war. However, God had revealed to him the plans for the structure that he passed on to Solomon. Before he died, he gathered much material for it.

The actual building began during Solomon's fourth year and was completed seven years later. Solomon entered into a contract with Hiram, king of Tyre, to supply the cedar and to help prepare the stone needed. It required 30,000 Israelites to cut the timber in the Lebanon forests. It took 80,000 slaves to quarry and shape the stones. The logs were floated down the coast in rafts, picked up at Joppa. The stones were transported on the backs of 70,000 slaves. The Phoenicians supervised the work, taking for their pay annually 200,000 bushels of wheat and 180,000 gallons of olive oil.

C. THE DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE:

When the Temple was finished, Solomon called all Israel to come to the great feast when the Temple would be dedicated.

First of all, Solomon had the Ark of the covenant brought from the tent where David had placed it. Since it was the Ark constructed at Mt. Sinai, it represented God's presence. When it was placed in the Holy of Holies, the cloud of God's glory filled the building (I Kings 8:1-11 & II Chronicles 5:1-14).

Then Solomon preached a short sermon and followed with a longer prayer of dedication. When he finished, miraculous fire fell from the heaven to ignite the offering placed on the Brazen Altar.

One should note the song of thanksgiving with which the priests and musicians praised the Lord: *"For he is good, for his mercy endureth forever."* When the glory of the Lord filled the house, the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud.

One should note and study carefully Solomon's prayer. He had made a platform four and one-half feet high. On this platform, he knelt and spread forth his hands. He prayed for forgiveness and that the Lord would always hear the prayers of His people.

D. GOD'S PROMISE AND WARNING: (II Chronicles 7:14-22).

The Lord appeared to Solomon by night and told him that his prayer had been heard. The Lord said that He had chosen and sanctified the Temple that His name might be there forever.

In II Chronicles 7:14, we read the promise the Lord made to Solomon. This is a promise of forgiveness and restoration. However, there were conditions attached, which must be met by His people who are called by His name. The conditions were four in number:

1. They must humble themselves;
2. They must pray;
3. They must seek the Lord's face;
4. They must turn from their wicked way.

The Lord promised Solomon that if he would walk before Him as David walked, He would establish the kingdom.

Along with the promise, the Lord gave a serious warning. If Solomon forsook the Lord and worshipped other gods, He would pluck Israel up by the roots and He would cast the Temple out of His sight.

Tragically, Solomon forgot the warning and the judgment came to pass as the Lord said.

E. OTHER BUILDINGS BUILT BY SOLOMON: (I Kings 7:1-12).

Solomon erected many other buildings. His palace took 13 years to build. He also built a "Hall of Judgment." In this building, Solomon sat for judgment on a six-step throne of ivory overlaid with gold. He also built a special house for one of his wives, the daughter of Pharaoh.

Throughout all his building projects, Hiram continued to help with material, workmen and gold.

LESSON TWO

SELF HELP TEST

- A. Write a full description of Solomon's Temple.

- B. Describe the dedication of the Temple.

- C. In your own words, write Solomon's prayer.

- D. What are the four conditions to be met for revival given by God in II Chronicles 7:14-22?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.

- E. What help did Solomon receive from Hiram, king of Tyre?