

The CHRONICLES of the KINGS

The Temple and Solomon's Final Years

Jeremiah 9:23-24

April 11, 2026

Last time was a grim revelation of the destructive life of the world's wisest man. It was not a good look to be sure.

Today, we will turn our attention to arguably Solomon's best known achievement – The construction of the Temple.

Along with the Temple, Solomon also ordered the construction of a new palace complex.

To accomplish these mighty tasks, he conscripted 153,600 foreign workmen to be carriers, stone cutters and overseers.

Additionally, he conscripted 30,000 Israelite men to rotate monthly to go to Lebanon to cut trees. Adoniram oversaw all forced labor.

Next, Solomon sent a message to Hiram, the king of Tyre requesting materials, including, cedar, pine and algum logs, as well as log cutters and a man skilled *"to work in silver, gold, bronze, and iron, in purple, crimson, blue yarn, and in engraving to work with my men."* That man's name was Hiram or Hiram (not the king).

1 Kings 6-8:11 and 2 Chronicles 3-5

The location of the Temple was chosen – on Mount Moriah where the threshing floor of Araunah, the Jebusite had been.

In the 480th year after leaving Egypt and on the 2nd day of the 2nd month in the 4th year of Solomon's reign, construction began on the Temple in Jerusalem. The date universally agreed upon: spring 967 BC.

- The foundation was 90x 30x 45 feet – or 2700 sq. ft. or 0.0619 acres – a relatively small structure.
Sistine Chapel in Rome = 132x44x68 feet – or 5808 sq. ft. or 0.133 acres
Parthenon in Athens = 228x101x45 feet – or 23,028 sq. ft. or 0.528 acres
My property = 132.86x72.97 or 9695 sq. ft. or .22 acres which means 2 ¾ Temples would fit.
- A portico 30x15 ft. was also built.
- 2 cedar pillars overlaid with bronze – each 60 ft. in height – were placed in front of the Temple – they were named Jachin and Boaz.
- The interior of the building was made of cedar and overlaid entirely with pure gold – including the floor. Carved cherubim, palm trees and flowers as well as inlaid precious stone covered the walls.

The Temple was a magnificent structure, but Yahweh was quick to remind Solomon that an impressive building did not guarantee his presence or his blessings. Instead, it was the covenant and the people's willingness to maintain it through obedience / heart response (relationship), which ensured God's presence and blessings (1 Kings 6:11-13).

Most Holy Place – 30x30x30 ft.

- Was partitioned from the Holy Place with a cedar wall creating an inner sanctuary with doors.
- 2 cherubim were carved out of olive wood and overlaid with gold. Each cherubim stood 15 f high and had a wing span of 15 f. They were placed facing the Holy Place – touching both the walls and each other – wingtip to wingtip.
- The weight of the gold used for the Most Holy Place alone was 600 talents or approximately 45,000 lbs. Even the nails were made of gold.....

- In the 1 Kings account there was a curtain separating the Holy and Most Holy made of blue, purple, crimson and fine linen, with Cherubim worked into it, but in Chronicles there is no mention of a curtain.

Holy Place – 60x30x45:

- 10 pure gold lampstands – 5 S and 5 N.
- 10 pure gold tables for the bread of the Presence – 5 S and 5 N
- All the bowls and utensils were made of gold.
- The Temple doors (pine) and the doors (olive wood) separating the holy from the most holy were overlaid with gold

Surrounding the Temple on 3 sides were 3 floors of rooms to be used for storage or for on-duty priests.

The Outer Court

- Bronze altar 30x30x15 ft.
- The "Sea" was made of cast bronze and was 15 ft across and 7 1/2 ft tall. It sat on a base of 12 cast bulls and held 3000 baths or between 11,500–12,000 gallons of water. The water was to be used exclusively by the priests for washing, which was done in 10 smaller bronze basins.
- All the court utensils and basins were made of bronze
- The doors separating the inner court (for the priests) from the outer court (for the Israelites) were overlaid with bronze.

In the midst of the description of the Temple we are given a glimpse of Solomon's Palace Complex. The Palace alone was more the 4 times the floor space of the Temple. It is suggested that the authors inserted this information on purpose to illustrate a sad point – that Solomon had a divided heart.

He used the same materials in his Palace Complex that were used in the Temple and while construction on the Temple Complex – where God would dwell – took just 7 years, it took 13 years to complete the place where Solomon would dwell.

The Temple and Palace were structurally joined, giving the king direct access to the Temple through a private entrance.

When all the work on the Temple was completed, Solomon brought all the things David had dedicated and placed them in the temple treasuries. Then the Ark, the Tent of Meeting and all the sacred furnishings were brought to the Temple.

King Solomon and the entire assembly of Israel went before the ark, sacrificing untold numbers of sheep and cattle.

The priests brought the Ark to its place in the Most Holy Place, and put it beneath the wings of the cherubim while all the musicians and singers joined together in praise and worship to Yahweh.

At that point, the temple was filled with a cloud. The priests could not perform their duties because the glory of Yahweh filled the temple.

1 Kings 8:12-66 and 2 Chronicles 6-7:3

Solomon stood on a bronze platform in the center of the outer court. He addressed the congregation then prayed. When he finished praying, he stood and blessed the whole assembly.

2 Chronicles 7:1-3 - ... fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and Yahweh's glory filled the temple. The priests could not enter the temple because Yahweh's glory filled it. When all the Israelites saw the fire coming down and Yahweh's glory above the temple, they knelt on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave thanks to Yahweh, saying, "He is good; his love endures forever."

The people did not want the dedication to end and so the celebrations were extended for an additional week.

Yahweh appeared to Solomon for a 2nd time in response to his prayer of dedication:

Chronicles 7:12-22 - ... *I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for myself as a temple for sacrifices. When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people, if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place. I have chosen and consecrated this temple so that my Name may be there forever. My eyes and my heart will always be there. As for you, if you walk before me as David your father did, and do all I command, and observe my decrees and laws, I will establish your royal throne, as I covenanted with David your father when I said, 'You shall never fail to have a man to rule over Israel.' But if you turn away and forsake the decrees and commands I have given you and go off to serve other gods and worship them, then I will uproot Israel from my land, which I have given them, and will reject this temple I have consecrated for my Name. I will make it a byword and an object of ridicule among all peoples. And though this temple is now so imposing, all who pass by will be appalled and say, 'Why has Yahweh done such a thing to this land and to this temple?' People will answer, 'Because they have forsaken Yahweh, the God of their fathers, who brought them out of Egypt, and have embraced other gods, worshiping and serving them – that is why he brought all this disaster on them.'*

1 Kings 9:10-28 and 2 Chronicles 8

At the end of 20 years, the Temple/Palace complex was complete and Solomon's life became routine, including going to the Temple 3 times per year to offer sacrifices – as all Israelite males were expected to do (Passover, Feast of Weeks and Feast of Tabernacles).

He also turned his attention to other building projects:

- The towns Hiram had given him were rebuilt utilizing the forced labor of captives living in Israel – then Israelites settled in them.
- A fleet of ships were built and based at the port of Elath on the Red Sea. Hiram sent sailors who knew the sea to serve alongside Solomon's men. They delivered 420 talents of gold from Ophir to Solomon.

1 Kings 10:1-13 and 2 Chronicles 9:1-12

Solomon was known world-wide for his wisdom and staggering wealth so a lot of foreign dignitaries came to visit – the Queen of Sheba among them.

She brought many gifts including spices, gold (9000 lbs.) and precious stones.

She asked Solomon many questions and he answered them all – holding nothing back.

When she saw his wisdom, his palace, the food on his table, his attendants and what they wore and his stairway between the palace and the Temple, scripture says she was breathless / overwhelmed.

- **2 Chronicles 9:5-8** - *She said to the king, "The report I heard in my own country about your achievements and your wisdom is true. But I did not believe what they said until I came and saw with my own eyes. Indeed, not even half the greatness of your wisdom was told me; you have far exceeded the report I heard. How happy your men must be! How happy your officials, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom! Praise be to Yahweh your God, who has delighted in you and placed you on his throne as king to rule for the LORD your God. Because of the love of your God for Israel and his desire to uphold them forever, he has made you king over them, to maintain justice and righteousness."*

The Magnificent Temple was complete and Solomon's wisdom was world renown.

How wonderful it would be if the story ended there, but, as we know, in addition to accumulating wealth, Solomon also accumulated wives in disobedience to the very explicit instructions of God. Solomon loved his wives and they turned his heart away from his devotion to Yahweh.

1 Kings 11:4-40 reveals the sad details.....

Solomon's heart was not fully devoted to Yahweh, as the heart of David his father had been. He followed Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians and Molech the detestable god of the Ammonites.

He did evil in the eyes of Yahweh. He built a high place for Chemosh (Moab), and for Molech (Ammonites). He did the same for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and offered sacrifices to their gods.

By doing these things, Solomon had for all intent, nullified the Covenant. From a legal point, God was within His rights to walk away, but he didn't. Instead, he became angry with Solomon, indicating that he still felt a deep passion for the people, Solomon was leading astray. The "if" had become reality, so now God would act in justice, yet would continue to extent mercy.

This is what Yahweh said, *"Since this is your attitude and you have not kept my covenant and my decrees, which I commanded you, I will most certainly tear the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your subordinates. Nevertheless, for the sake of David your father, I will not do it during your lifetime. I will tear it out of the hand of your son. Yet I will not tear the whole kingdom from him, but will give him one tribe for the sake of David my servant and for the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen."*

Yahweh raised up Hadad the Edomite against Solomon (see 11:15-22) as well as Rezon of Zobah (see 11:24-25).

The most significant rebellion, however, came from Jeroboam, one of Solomon's officials.

Jeroboam was a man of standing, so Solomon put him in charge of the entire labor force of the house of Joseph.

One day as Jeroboam was leaving Jerusalem, Ahijah the prophet met him on the road and said to him, *"Take ten pieces for yourself, for this is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says: 'See, I am going to tear the kingdom out of Solomon's hand and give you ten tribes. But for the sake of my servant David and the city of Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, he will have one tribe. I will do this because they have forsaken me and worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Molech the god of the Ammonites, and have not walked in my ways, nor done what is right in my eyes, nor kept my statutes and laws as David, Solomon's father, did. But I will not take the whole kingdom out of Solomon's hand; I have made him ruler all the days of his life for the sake of David my servant, whom I chose and who observed my commands and statutes. I will take the kingdom from his son's hands and give you ten tribes. I will give one tribe to his son so that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city where I chose to put my Name. However, as for you, I will take you, and you will rule over all that your heart desires; you will be king over Israel. If you do whatever I command you and walk in my ways and do what is right in my eyes by keeping my statutes and commands, as David my servant did, I will be with you. I will build you a dynasty as enduring as the one I built for David and will give Israel to you. I will humble David's descendants because of this, but not forever."*

Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam, but he fled to Egypt and stayed with Pharaoh Shishak until Solomon's death.

The other events of Solomon's reign were written in the annals of Solomon, in the records of Nathan the prophet, in the prophecy of Ahijah and in the visions of Iddo the seer.

Solomon reigned at Jerusalem - over all Israel - 40 years. He died and was buried in the city of David - Rehoboam his son succeeded him as king.

Many centuries later, Paul would pen this warning, *"if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!"* – 1 Corinthians 10:12.

An appropriate warning for all ages and yet the world's wisest man ignored the danger - He began to glory in what he possessed and turned away from God and the results were catastrophic.

Solomon's fall stands as a powerful warning of just how easy it is to move from adoration to idolatry.

Until Next Time.....