

NOON BIBLE STUDY: 1 KINGS 6 & 7

PURPOSE & FUNCTION OF THE TEMPLE

THE TEMPLE IN JERUSALEM WILL BE THE SINGULAR LOCATION FOR THE WORSHIP OF YAHWEH, THE CREATOR AND GOD OF ISRAEL. THE COVENANT TERMS THAT GOD MADE WITH ISRAEL THROUGH MOSES INCLUDED A SPECIFIC SYSTEM OF WORSHIP AND SACRIFICE THAT REQUIRED SUCH A PLACE. UP TO THIS POINT THE WORSHIP OF THE LORD WAS DONE VIA A TEMPORARY AND PORTABLE STRUCTURE CALLED THE TABERNACLE. NOW, THROUGH SOLOMON'S CONSTRUCTION THE FRAMEWORK OF THE TABERNACLE WILL BE ENLARGED AND ENHANCED THROUGH THE PERMANENT BUILDING KNOWN AS SOLOMON'S TEMPLE. WE WILL LEARN OF IT'S SIZE AND DETAIL NOW IN CHAPTERS 6 AND 7 AND LEARN MORE OF THE SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PLACE IN CHAPTER 8.

1 KINGS 6:1-10 - TEMPLE CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

V. 2 - 90 FEET LONG, 30 FEET WIDE, AND 45 FEET HIGH

CUBIT: A CUBIT WAS A UNIT OF MEASURE ROUGHLY EQUIVALENT TO 18 INCHES OR 45 CM

V. 3 - NAVE: MAIN CENTRAL PART OF THE TEMPLE. SIMILAR TO THE MAIN SANCTUARY PORTION OF A TRADITIONAL CHURCH OR CATHEDRAL

V. 7 - NO HAMMER OR AXE HEARD IN TEMPLE

EXODUS 20:25 - 'IF YOU MAKE AN ALTAR OF STONE FOR ME, YOU SHALL NOT BUILD IT OF CUT STONES, FOR IF YOU WIELD YOUR TOOL ON IT, YOU WILL PROFANE IT.

DEUTERONOMY 27:5-6 - "MOREOVER, YOU SHALL BUILD THERE AN ALTAR TO THE LORD YOUR GOD, AN ALTAR OF STONES; YOU SHALL NOT WIELD AN IRON TOOL ON THEM. 6 "YOU SHALL BUILD THE ALTAR OF THE LORD YOUR GOD OF UNCUT STONES, AND YOU SHALL OFFER ON IT BURNT OFFERINGS TO THE LORD YOUR GOD;

APPARENTLY THEY CUT THE STONES OUTSIDE OF THE TEMPLE AND BROUGHT THEM IN TO BE USED FOR THE ALTAR AFTERWARDS.

1 KINGS 6:11-14 - COVENANT REMINDER

ESV STUDY BIBLE: "THE TEMPLE IS PLACED FIRMLY IN ITS PROPER THEOLOGICAL CONTEXT. GOD WILL CERTAINLY DWELL AMONG HIS PEOPLE ONCE THE TEMPLE IS BUILT (V. 13), BUT THIS "DWELLING" WILL BE ON THE SAME BASIS AS BEFORE: THE PEOPLE'S OBEDIENCE TO THE LAW (CF. LEV. 26:11—12). THE TEMPLE ITSELF, FOR ALL ITS SPLENDOR, DOES NOT CHANGE ANYTHING ABOUT THE NATURE OF THE DIVINE-HUMAN RELATIONSHIP. THIS WAS SOMETHING THAT THE ISRAELITES WERE APT TO FORGET AFTER THE TEMPLE HAD BEEN BUILT AND HAD BECOME A CENTRALLY IMPORTANT ASPECT OF NATIONAL LIFE (CF. JER. 7:1—34). GOD IS NOT AS IMPRESSED WITH STRUCTURES AS HE IS WITH OBEDIENCE, A POINT MADE LATER BY STEPHEN IN HIS SPEECH TO THE SANHEDRIN IN ACTS 7; AND THE BEAUTY OF TEMPLES IS NEVER ANY GUARANTEE THAT GOD WILL NOT LEAVE THEM OR BRING JUDGMENT ON THEM (CF. LUKE 21:5—6)."

IT IS POSSIBLE, BASED ON THE WORDING OF V. 11 & 12A THAT GOD COMMUNICATED THIS AS A REMINDER TO SOLOMON WHILE HE WAS BUILDING THE TEMPLE. EVEN THE VERY PLACEMENT OF THESE VERSES IN THE TEXT OF THIS CHAPTER SORT OF INTERRUPTS THE FLOW, AS IF TO SAY - "HEY WHAT YOU'RE DOING FOR A SECOND -- REMEMBER WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT AND WHAT REALLY MATTERS → ME."

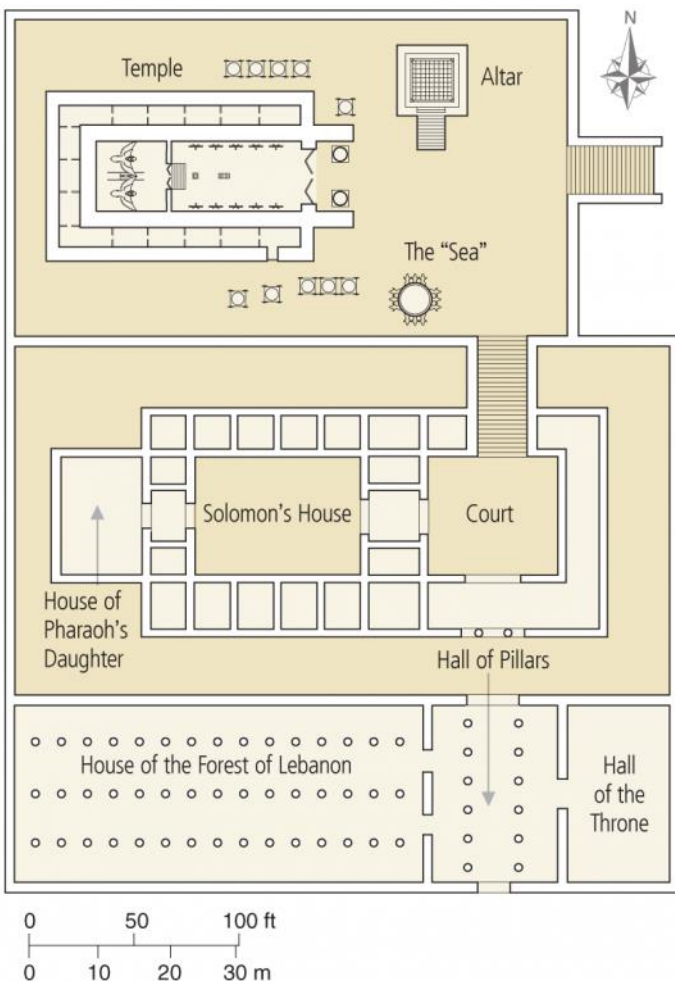
(1 KINGS 6:15-36 - INSIDE OF TEMPLE)

1 KINGS 6:15-18 - WOODEN WALLS

1 KINGS 6:19-28 - INNER SANCTUARY

V. 38 - 7 YEARS TO COMPLETE TEMPLE CONSTRUCTION

"NOTE THAT THE WRITER SPENDS CONSIDERABLY MORE SPACE DEPICTING THE INTERIOR OF THE HOUSE (V. 14-38) AS OPPOSED TO THE EXTERIOR (V. 1-10). RICHARD NELSON POINTS OUT THAT THE AVERAGE ISRAELITE WOULD NEVER HAVE SEEN THE INTERIOR OF THE TEMPLE. SO PERHAPS WE CAN UNDERSTAND THE WRITER'S FOCUS ON THE INTERIOR: HE GIVES JOE AND JANE ISRAELITE AT LEAST AN "AUDIO TOUR" OF YAHWEH'S HOLY PLACE, ENABLING THEM TO ENVISAGE WHAT IT IS LIKE, 'GIVING THE READERS A CHANCE TO GAWK AT THE CHERUBIM IN THE HOLY OF HOLIES' (DALE RALPH DAVIS, "FOCUS ON THE BIBLE: 1 KINGS" PG 63).

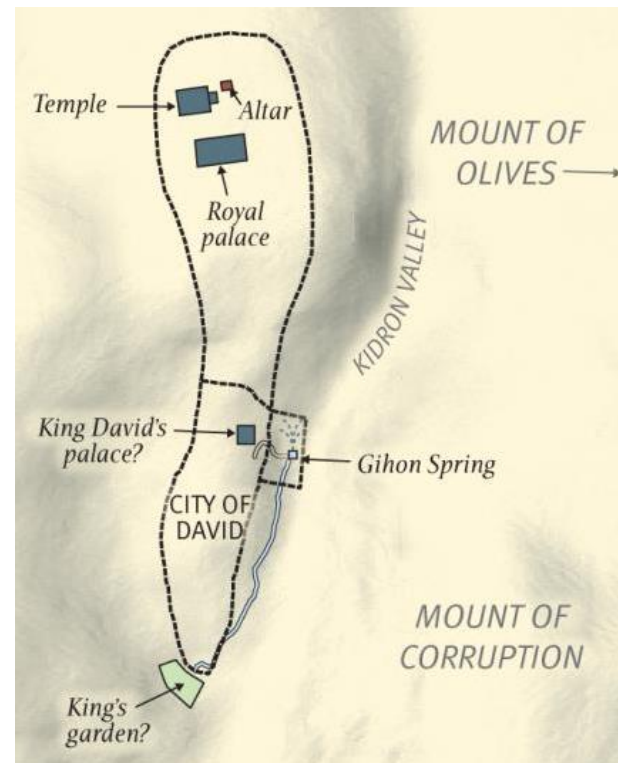


1 KINGS 7:1-12 - SOLOMON'S PALACE

V. 1 - PALACE TOOK 13 YEARS (COMPARED TO 7 YEARS OF TEMPLE - PERHAPS SOME INDICATION OF A DIVIDED HEART?)

V. 2 - NLT - ONE OF SOLOMON'S BUILDINGS WAS CALLED THE PALACE OF THE FOREST OF LEBANON. IT WAS 150 FEET LONG, 75 FEET WIDE, AND 45 FEET HIGH. THERE WERE FOUR ROWS OF CEDAR PILLARS, AND GREAT CEDAR BEAMS RESTED ON THE PILLARS."

V. 6 - NLT - SOLOMON ALSO BUILT THE HALL OF PILLARS, WHICH WAS 75 FEET LONG AND 45 FEET WIDE. THERE WAS A PORCH IN FRONT, ALONG WITH A CANOPY SUPPORTED BY PILLARS.



V. 10 - NLT - SOME OF THE HUGE FOUNDATION STONES WERE 15 FEET LONG, AND SOME WERE 12 FEET LONG.

V. 13-14 - HIRAM OF TYRE: THIS HIRAM WHO MAKES THE TEMPLE FURNISHINGS FASHIONED FROM BRONZE IS NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH THE KING OF CH. 5. ALTHOUGH HE IS SUMMONED FROM TYRE, THE AUTHORS ARE IN FACT MOST CAREFUL TO POINT OUT THAT IT WAS ONLY HIS FATHER, FROM WHOM HE HAD LEARNED HIS TRADE, WHO IS A NATIVE OF THAT CITY. HIS MOTHER WAS AN ISRAELITE WIDOW OF THE TRIBE OF NAPHTALI IN THE FAR NORTH OF THE COUNTRY, NEAR THE PHOENICIAN COAST. THEREFORE, HIRAM, WHO HAD ONE JEWISH PARENT, WAS NOT SIMPLY A GENTILE WITH NO ISRAELITE ROOTS. HE IS DESCRIBED IN A WAY REMINISCENT OF A FAMOUS ISRAELITE WITH A SIMILAR JOB TO DO, BEZALEL SON OF URI, THE CHIEF CRAFTSMAN INVOLVED IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE TABERNACLE (EX. 31:1-11; 35:30-35). BOTH MEN ARE SAID TO BE FULL OF WISDOM, UNDERSTANDING, AND SKILL WITH REGARD TO WORK IN BRONZE. (ESV STUDY BIBLE ON 1 KINGS 7:13-14)

V. 15-22 - PILLARS, CAPS, AND RELATED WORK

V. 23-26 - "THE SEA" CONTAINS 12,000 GALLONS OF WATER WHICH WERE TO BE USED FOR THE WASHING OF THE PRIESTS.



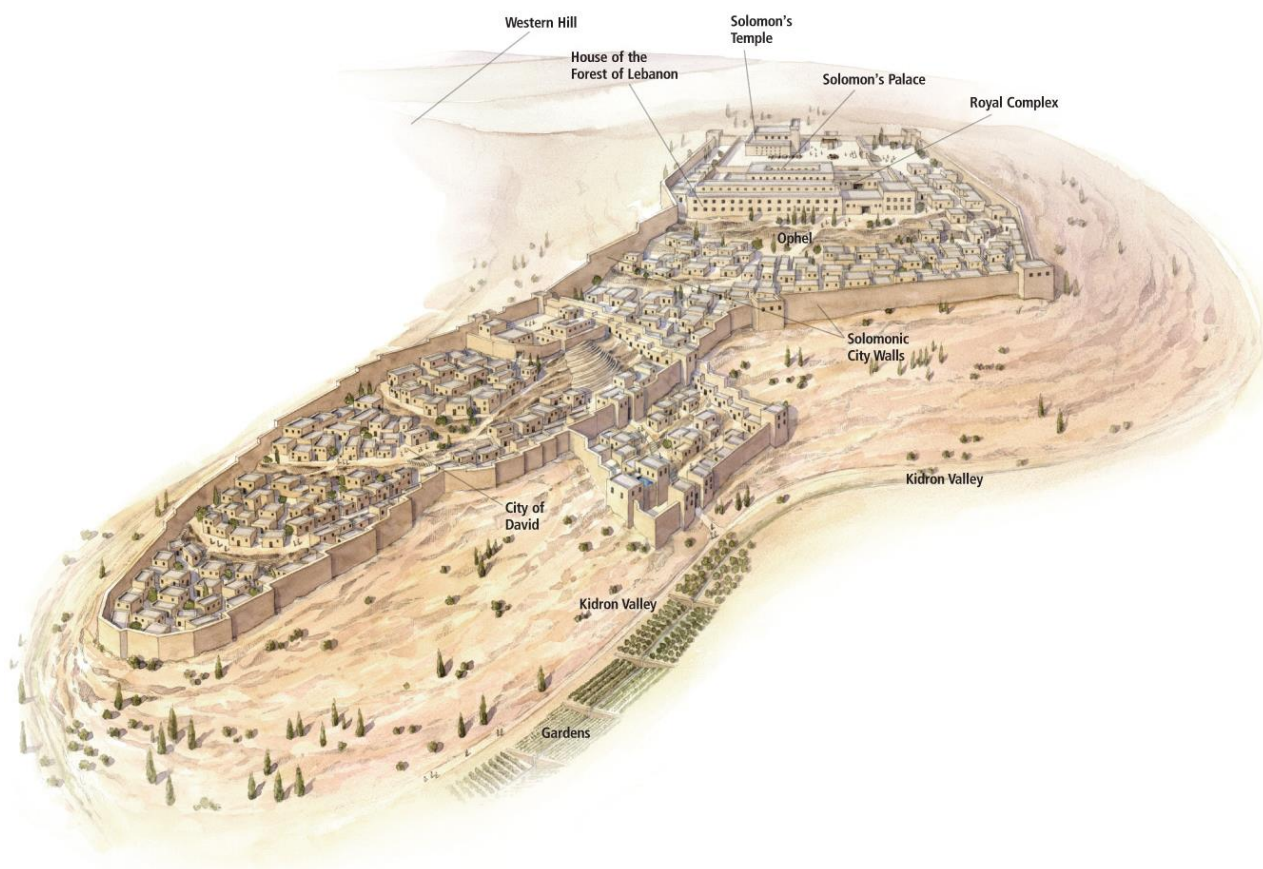
V. 27-37 - 10 STANDS. THESE STANDS WERE MOVABLE AND WOULD HOLD BASIN'S OF WATER TO ASSIST WITH WASHING OF THE SACRIFICIAL ANIMALS.

V. 38-39 - 10 BASINS. THESE BASINS WOULD HOLD THE WATER AND BE PLACED ON THE 10 STANDS (V. 27-37). EACH BASIN HELD 240 GALLONS OF WATER.

V. 40-47 - SUMMARY OF HIRAM'S WORK

1 KINGS 7:48-51 - HOLY ITEMS FOR TEMPLE MADE BY SOLOMON

HIRAM MAKES ALL OF THE BRONZE ITEMS, BUT SOLOMON IS IN CHARGE OF THE GOLD AND SACRED OBJECTS. BELIEVE IT OR NOT, THERE IS A LOT OF DETAIL LEFT OUT! THE DESCRIPTION OF HOW TO MAKE ALL OF THESE SACRED OBJECTS WAS GIVEN TO MOSES WHEN HE SPOKE WITH GOD ON THE MOUNTAIN. SO IN THIS INSTANCE THE ITEMS ARE MENTIONED, WITHOUT PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION MEASUREMENTS ETC.



A structure with three levels was built around the walls of the temple. The lower chamber was 7.5 feet (2.3 m) wide, the middle chamber was 9 feet (2.7 m) wide, and the upper chamber was 10.5 feet (3.2 m) wide (1 Kings 6:5–6, 8, 10).

Two ornate wooden doors, overlaid with gold, separated the inner sanctuary from the nave (1 Kings 6:31–32).

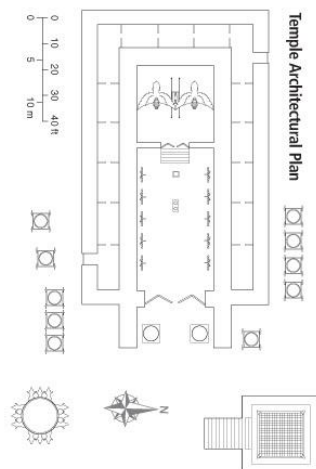
The nave had decorative windows with recessed frames (1 Kings 6:4).

The vestibule was 30 feet (9.1 m) wide and 15 feet (4.6 m) deep (1 Kings 6:3; cf. 2 Chron. 3:4).

The hollow bronze pillar on the north was called "Boaz," and the one on the south was called "Jachin" (1 Kings 7:21; cf. 2 Chron. 3:17).

Two ornate wooden, folding doors, overlaid with gold, separated the nave from the vestibule (1 Kings 6:33–35).

The bronze altar for burnt offerings was 15 feet (4.6 m) high and 30 feet (9.1 m) long and wide (cf. 2 Chron. 4:1).



The inner sanctuary (or Most Holy Place) was a 30-foot (9.1-m) cube (1 Kings 6:15–29; 2 Chron. 3:8–14). Such rooms were often elevated in temples of the ancient Near East. Two massive golden cherubim stood on either side of the ark, each 15 feet (4.6 m) tall with 15-foot (4.6-m) wingspans (1 Kings 6:23–28). The ark of the covenant stood between the two cherubim (1 Kings 8:1–11; cf. 2 Chron. 5:2–14).

The nave (or Holy Place) was 60 feet (18 m) long and 30 feet (9.1 m) wide (1 Kings 6:15, 17–18; cf. 2 Chron. 3:5–7). It contained the golden altar of incense, the golden table for the bread of the Presence, and 10 golden lampstands, five on the north and five on the south (1 Kings 7:48–49; cf. 2 Chron. 4:7).

Ten bronze wheeled stands, each holding a large basin, contained water for rinsing off the animal parts that were used for the burnt offerings (1 Kings 7:27–38; cf. 2 Chron. 4:6).

The "sea" was a metal basin 7.5 feet (2.3 m) high and 15 feet (4.6 m) in diameter. It held 12,000 gallons (44,000 liters) of water for the priests to wash in. It was supported by 12 bronze oxen in sets of three, facing in each direction (1 Kings 7:23–26; cf. 2 Chron. 4:2–5).

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

Solomon began to build "the house of the Lord" in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah in the spring of 967 or 966 B.C. (1 Kings 6:1; 2 Chron. 3:1–2) and completed it seven years later, in the fall of 960 or 959 (1 Kings 6:38). The temple itself, not including the surrounding chambers on three sides, was 50 feet (27 m) long, 30 feet (9 m) wide, and 45 feet (14 m) high. It stood in the middle of a court with boundary walls.