

1 Kings 6-7 Chapter Study

INTRO

Last week ended with . . .

II. SOLOMON'S REIGN 2:13-11:43

E. Solomon's Workforce 5:13-18

Solomon amassed a huge workforce to accomplish the monumental public work projects he planned.

Over 183,000 men were put to work in building the temple, Solomon's palace, the wall of Jerusalem, & the various fortress-cities Solomon built throughout the land to extend Israel's influence into the surrounding lands.

In ch. 4 we read of the 4,000 horses Solomon had stabled at select chariot cities throughout Israel.

Megiddo was one of these & archaeologists have discovered there the vast stable complex Solomon had built to house his horses. [Slides]

F. Solomon Builds The Temple ch. 6

¹ And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, [April-May] which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD.

The writer is precise. Solomon began building the temple in the second month of the 4th year of his reign.

It's been 480 years since the Exodus. Think about what's transpired so far in Israel's history –

- 1) Left Egypt under Moses' leadership
- 2) Received 10 Commandments at Mt. Sinai.
- 3) Spent 40 years in the wilderness
- 4) Conquered Canaan under Joshua's gifted leading
- 5) Gone through the period of the Judges
- 6) Been through the time of Samuel, Saul, & David.
- 7) Now, under Solomon, Israel will achieve the Golden Age of her history & reach the zenith of her power & wealth.

And though these are Israel's Golden Years, everything Samuel had warned them about when they asked for a king come *all too true* in Solomon's reign; high taxes, their sons conscripted into the king's service, the confiscation of their property, and a host of other causes of complaint on the part of the people.

² Now the house which King Solomon built for the LORD, its length was sixty cubits, its width twenty, and its height thirty cubits.

From an inscription in the tunnel of Siloam in Jerusalem, we know that a cubit was 18 inches a foot & a half.

So the temple measured 90' long by 30' wide & 45' high.

³ The vestibule in front of the sanctuary of the house was twenty cubits long across the width of the house, and the width of the vestibule extended ten cubits from the front of the house.

This was the porch that lead to the front door of the temple. It was as wide as the temple and 15' deep.

Now I'm just going to read the description of the temple then try to explain what we're seeing here.

4 And he made for the house windows with beveled frames. 5 Against the wall of the temple he built chambers all around, *against* the walls of the temple, all around the sanctuary and the inner sanctuary. Thus he made side chambers all around it. 6 The lowest chamber was five cubits wide, the middle was six cubits wide, and the third was seven cubits wide; for he made narrow ledges around the outside of the temple, so that *the support beams would not be fastened into the walls of the temple.*

Around the sides & back of the temple were side chambers used to store the temple treasures & for the use of the priests.

These side chambers were 3 stories & rose a total of about 30'.

Looking from the outside, the side chambers looked all the same size, but inside, the lower floor had thick walls with a room that was only 7½' wide.

The second floor had a bit thinner walls but the rooms were 9' wide.

The third floor had even thinner walls & the rooms were now 10½' wide.

This allowed for the roof/floor beams of each room to be laid on the offset, so that no beams needed to intrude into the temple itself.

Later we learn these side chambers were entered by doors on the south side of the temple.

An exterior staircase led up to the second floor then the third floor was entered by an interior stair from there.

Each of the 3 floors were 7½' high, allowing a space between the floors of about 2½'.

The wall of the temple rose another 15' above the top floor, and near the top v. 4 tells us were windows.

7 And the temple, when it was being built, was built with stone finished at the quarry, so that no hammer or chisel or any iron tool was heard in the temple while it was being built.

Usually, stones for construction were rough cut at the quarry, then moved to the construction site & finished by masons there.

All the masonry on the stones for the temple was done at the quarry because Solomon didn't want the coarse sounds of construction to mar the quiet reverence of the temple site.

There was still a lot of work to be done on the mount & a lot of hard work & sweat went into rearing the temple.

But the work was done with a sense of hushed awe as they realized where they were & what they were doing.

In Ephesians 2, Paul says *we* are the temple of God & that the Spirit is building us into a holy habitation.

That happens both individually as we live our daily lives but it also happens in a special way when we gather here to worship God together.

And just as Solomon hushed the sounds of human work on the temple mount

so that people could maintain a sense of uninterrupted attention on God, we need to recognize the importance of hushing those sounds and disruptions that would distract us from the Lord.

This is why we repeatedly remind people to turn off their cell phones & pages and to put their children in class.

⁸ The doorway for the middle story was on the right [south] side of the temple. They went up by stairs to the middle story, and from the middle to the third. ⁹ So he built the temple and finished it, and he paneled the temple with beams and boards of cedar. ¹⁰ And he built side chambers against the entire temple, each five cubits high; they were attached to the temple with cedar beams. ¹¹ Then the word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying: ¹² “Concerning this temple which you are building, if you walk in My statutes, execute My judgments, keep all My commandments, and walk in them, then I will perform My word with you, which I spoke to your father David. ¹³ And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake My people Israel.”

God comes with a gracious word of promised blessing if Solomon will faithfully follow Him.

This renewed promise spurs Solomon on to *even greater zeal* in building the temple.

¹⁴ So Solomon built the temple and finished it. ¹⁵ And he built the inside walls of the temple with cedar boards; from the floor of the temple to the ceiling he paneled the inside with wood; and he covered the floor of the temple with planks of cypress. ¹⁶ Then he built the twenty-cubit room at the rear of the temple, from floor to ceiling, with cedar boards; he built *it* inside as the inner sanctuary, as the Most Holy Place. ¹⁷ And in front of it the temple sanctuary was forty cubits long. ¹⁸ The inside of the temple was cedar, carved with ornamental buds and open flowers. All was cedar; there was no stone to be seen. ¹⁹ And he prepared the inner sanctuary inside the temple, to set the ark of the covenant of the LORD there. ²⁰ The inner sanctuary was twenty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and twenty cubits high. He overlaid it with pure gold, and overlaid the altar of cedar.

The temple sanctuary had 2 rooms; the Holy place and the Most Holy place, or Holy of holies where the ark was kept.

The larger holy place was 60' long by 30' wide & 45' high.

The Holy of holies as a 30' cube.

The walls & ceilings of both rooms were paneled with cedar which had been richly carved in the shape of palm trees, cherubim, & flowers., which was in turn all overlaid with gold.

The *floor* of the Holy of holies was gold overlaid *cedar* while the floor of the holy place was gold overlaid *cypress*.

Sitting just in front of the door leading from the holy place to the Holy of holies

was the golden altar of incense.

21 So Solomon overlaid the inside of the temple with pure gold. He stretched gold chains across the front of the inner sanctuary, and overlaid it with gold.

These chains, made of pure gold, were meant to act as a barrier to entrance into the most holy place.

Only the high priest was allowed to enter then once a year.

While standing inside the temple, no sign of the massive stone walls was visible. It was all gold-covered engraved-wood.

22 The whole temple he overlaid with gold, until he had finished all the temple; also he overlaid with gold the entire altar that was by the inner sanctuary. 23 Inside the inner sanctuary he made two cherubim of olive wood, each ten cubits high.

These statues were 15' tall & made of precious olive wood covered in gold.

24 One wing of the cherub was five cubits, and the other wing of the cherub five cubits: ten cubits from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other. 25 And the other cherub was ten cubits; both cherubim were of the same size and shape. 26 The height of one cherub was ten cubits, and so was the other cherub. 27 Then he set the cherubim inside the inner room; and they stretched out the wings of the cherubim so that the wing of the one touched one wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall. And their wings touched each other in the middle of the room. 28 Also he overlaid the cherubim with gold.

While the cherubim on the top of the ark of the covenant faced each other & looked down at the ark, these 2 massive cherubim faced toward the door leading into the Holy of Holies.

One wingtip of each touched the side wall, while the other met the tip of the other's wing in the center of the room, right over where the ark would be installed.

These cherubim represented the presence of God, as that's where we always see the real creatures these statues represent.

Cherubim surround the throne of God, acting much like His honor guard.

29 Then he carved all the walls of the temple all around, both the inner and outer sanctuaries, with carved figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers. 30 And the floor of the temple he overlaid with gold, both the inner and outer sanctuaries. 31 For the entrance of the inner sanctuary he made doors of olive wood; the lintel and doorposts were one-fifth of the wall.

Literally – 5-sided. The door frames were ornately beveled like the windows in v. 4.

The way the doors leading from the holy place to the Most holy place are described, scholars believe they were sliding doors, like the modern pocket door that slides into the wall.

32 The two doors were of olive wood; and he carved on them figures

of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, and overlaid *them* with gold; and he spread gold on the cherubim and on the palm trees. ³³ So for the door of the sanctuary

These are the *front doors* of the temple.

he also made doorposts of olive wood, one-fourth of the wall. ³⁴ And the two doors were of cypress wood; two panels comprised one folding door, and two panels comprised the other folding door. ³⁵ Then he carved cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers on *them*, and overlaid *them* with gold applied evenly on the carved work.

These doors were folding doors, like you see in some closets.

³⁶ And he built the inner court with three rows of hewn stone and a row of cedar beams.

This was the wall that separated the inner court of the priests from the outer court.

It was 3 layers of stone capped by a cedar header.

Interesting that this exact construction style is found in Megiddo in the level dated to Solomon's time.

³⁷ In the fourth year the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid, in the month of Ziv. ³⁸ And in the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, [October-Novemeber] which is the eighth month, the house was finished in all its details and according to all its plans. So he was seven years in building it.

G. Solomon's Other Buildings 7:1-12

¹ But Solomon took thirteen years to build his own house; so he finished all his house.

Some see a negative here, that Solomon *only spent 7 years* on the temple but *13* on his palace.

They say he was more interested in his own house than God's.

But this could just as easily mean Solomon used *most* of the labor in getting the temple done first because it was the greater priority.

Since this is still early in his reign when his heart was right with God, it's safe to see this second explanation as more likely.

Five buildings comprised Solomon's palace complex which was located near the temple to the SW.

² He also built the House of the Forest of Lebanon; its length was one hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits, with four rows of cedar pillars, and cedar beams on the pillars. ³ And it was paneled with cedar above the beams that were on forty-five pillars, fifteen to a row. ⁴ There were windows with beveled frames in three rows, and window was opposite window in three tiers. ⁵ And all the doorways and doorposts had rectangular frames; and window was opposite window in three tiers.

This large building measured 150' by 75' by 45'.

From ch. 10 it seems this building was Solomon's armory.

⁶ He also made the Hall of Pillars: its length was fifty cubits, and its width thirty cubits; and in front of them was a portico with pillars, and a canopy was in front of them.

This colonnade measured 75' by 45' & as probably used for entertaining.

⁷ Then he made a hall for the throne, the Hall of Judgment, where he might judge; and *it* was paneled with cedar from floor to ceiling.

The throne room where he heard cases & made rulings regarding the kingdom.

⁸ And the house where he dwelt *had* another court inside the hall, of like workmanship. Solomon also made a house like this hall for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had taken as wife.

Both his personal house & the special house he built for his chief wife, the daughter of the Pharaoh of Egypt, were made of similar construction.

Everything was made of finely crafted limestone that was then covered on the interior with ornately engraved cedar panels from floor to ceiling.

⁹ All these were of costly stones cut to size, trimmed with saws, inside and out, from the foundation to the eaves, and also on the outside to the great court. ¹⁰ The foundation was of costly stones, large stones, some ten cubits and some eight cubits. ¹¹ And above were costly stones, hewn to size, and cedar wood. ¹² The great court was enclosed with three rows of hewn stones and a row of cedar beams. So were the inner court of the house of the LORD and the vestibule of the temple.

Critics often complain that there's no archaeological evidence of Solomon in Jerusalem.

They admit that there's significant evidence of his building in other sites around Israel, but not in Jerusalem.

Really, it would be extraordinary if there was evidence remaining.

Jerusalem has seen several episodes of conquest since Solomon's time nearly 3500 years ago!

And we know it was the practice of ancient people to tear down & use the materials of previous building when making their new projects.

The massive stone blocks mentioned here were cut up and used again & again,

Who knows where they are today but they are probably found in the construction of literally hundreds of buildings in Jerusalem today.

H. Solomon Employs Hiram 7:13-51

¹³ Now King Solomon sent and brought Hiram from Tyre.

In Hebrew, the name is *Hiram*.

¹⁴ He was the son of a widow from the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a bronze worker; he was filled with wisdom and understanding and skill in working with all kinds of bronze work. So he came to King Solomon and did all his work.

Although we read about some basic bronze-working skill among some of the Jews during the Exodus, it seems that over the last couple hundred years, Israel had lost its ability to forge bronze.

Though this was the Bronze age, Israel was still pretty much living with a stone age technology.

The only bronze weapons & implements they had were what they were able to acquire through war or trade.

Hiram, who was Jew living up north in Lebanon restored to Israel a bronze-working technology.

This is one more reason why Israel entered it's Golden Age & became the premier nation in the Middle East at this time.

¹⁵ And he cast two pillars of bronze, each one eighteen cubits high, and a line of twelve cubits measured the circumference of each. ¹⁶ Then he made two capitals of cast bronze, to set on the tops of the pillars. The height of one capital was five cubits, and the height of the other capital was five cubits. ¹⁷ He made a lattice network, with wreaths of chainwork, for the capitals which were on top of the pillars: seven chains for one capital and seven for the other capital. ¹⁸ So he made the pillars, and two rows of pomegranates above the network all around to cover the capitals that were on top; and thus he did for the other capital. ¹⁹ The capitals which were on top of the pillars in the hall were in the shape of lilies, four cubits. ²⁰ The capitals on the two pillars also had pomegranates above, by the convex surface which was next to the network; and there were two hundred such pomegranates in rows on each of the capitals all around. ²¹ Then he set up the pillars by the vestibule of the temple; he set up the pillar on the right and called its name Jachin, and he set up the pillar on the left and called its name Boaz. ²² The tops of the pillars were in the shape of lilies. So the work of the pillars was finished.

No explanation for these pillars is given.

There's no mention of anything like this in the tabernacle so some scholars wonder if this was an innovation Solomon's part that stands as a sign of his willingness to fiddle with the design of the temple.

But again, there's no mention here of God's disapproval; on the contrary, the detailed description of their construction seems to suggest God was honored by this.

They were 27' high & nearly 6' in diameter.

Each pillar had a 7½' ultra-ornate capital that made it a total of 34½' tall.

These capitals looked like open lilies, with chains on them that linked the petals, and hanging from the chains were bronze pomegranates.

Each pillar had a name.

The one set to the south side of the front door of the temple was called *Jachin* = "He establishes."

The one set on the north side was named *Boaz* = "He strengthens."

It's believed by most scholars these were the first words of inscriptions on them.

Solomon was memorializing God's promises that if Israel faithfully followed

Him, He would establish them in the land forever and that He was their strength.

What's remarkable is that bronze was what the best weapons were made of.

These massive bronze pillars would remind Israel that her real strength came from her worship of God, not her military technology.

It's sad that Solomon, who commissioned these pillars, was the one who violated God's command about amassing horses.

It may be that these pillars weren't Solomon's idea at all. We know that David is the one who designed the temple and it may be that these pillars were his idea & not Solomon's at all.

Too bad Sol didn't take the time to meditate on their meaning before heading off to beef up Israel's military in defiance of God's law.

Something for us to think about. The Us is arguably the most advanced nation in the world when it comes to military technology.

We saw it do amazing things in the first Gulf War.

But it doesn't seem to be availing us much in the current conflict in Iraq & Afghanistan.

It's the duty of civil government to protect it's citizens.

So it's right & proper to invest in research to find efficient & effective ways to defend the nation.

But we err when we put our trust in technology rather than God.

In fact, God will humble any people that puts it's trust in anything other than Him.

All the technology in the world will not suffice if God makes fools of those who wield it; if he turns their counsel to folly, the latest & greatest weapons will do nothing but becomes the means of their humbling!

It's not surprising that a rag-tag little group like Al-Qaeda is able to give us such grief in battle when the courts & leaders of our nation continue to defy God & disregard His existence.

Look at history: Maccabees – American Revolution.

23 And he made the Sea of cast bronze, ten cubits from one brim to the other; it was completely round. Its height was five cubits, and a line of thirty cubits measured its circumference.

This was the laver that sat next to the altar of burnt offering in the courtyard in front of the temple.

It's where the priests washed before offering their service to God.

It was 15 ft. in diameter & sat 7½' high, so it had to be reached by stairs.

Critics love to point out that simple geometry upends the account here because circumference is the diameter multiplied by π which is 3.14, while the circumference here is only **3 times** the diameter.

Silly skeptics! The diameter is 15' from outer edge to outer edge.

The circumference of the inside of the laver was 45' leaving a wall thickness of 4 inches, which is *precisely* what v. 26 says.

24 Below its brim were ornamental buds encircling it all around, ten to a cubit, all the way around the Sea. The ornamental buds were cast in

two rows when it was cast. ²⁵ It stood on twelve oxen: three looking toward the north, three looking toward the west, three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east; the Sea was set upon them, and all their back parts *pointed inward*. ²⁶ It was a handbreadth thick; and its brim was shaped like the brim of a cup, *like a lily blossom*. It contained two thousand baths.

About 12,000 gallons of water.

In vs. 27-39 we're given a description of 10 moveable workstations Hiram made. These were 6' square, 4½' high carts the priests used to prepare sacrifices for offering on the altar.

There was a hole in the top of each one where the blood would drain & a large basin that held about 240 gallons of water for washing the sacrifices.

5 were placed on one side of the yard in front of the temple, and 5 on the other side.

These large bronze carts were set on wheels so that they could be moved out of the way for celebrations when the courtyard would be filled with people.

⁴⁰ Hiram made the lavers and the shovels and the bowls. So Hiram finished doing all the work that he was to do for King Solomon *for the house of the LORD*: ⁴¹ the two pillars, the *two bowl-shaped capitals that were on top of the two pillars*; the two networks covering the two bowl-shaped capitals which were on top of the pillars; ⁴² four hundred pomegranates for the two networks (two rows of pomegranates for each network, to cover the two bowl-shaped capitals that were on top of the pillars); ⁴³ the ten carts, and ten lavers on the carts; ⁴⁴ one Sea, and twelve oxen under the Sea; ⁴⁵ the pots, the shovels, and the bowls. All these articles which Hiram made for King Solomon *for the house of the LORD were of burnished bronze*. ⁴⁶ In the plain of Jordan the king had them cast in clay molds, between Succoth and Zaretan.

The way they made these bronze works was by making clay molds that they poured the molten metal into.

The grand size of all these things required a huge amount of the purest clay which was located east of Jerusalem in the Jordan Plain.

⁴⁷ And Solomon did not weigh all the articles, because *there were so many*; the weight of the bronze was not determined. ⁴⁸ Thus Solomon had all the furnishings made for the house of the LORD: the altar of gold, and the table of gold on which was the showbread; ⁴⁹ the lampstands of pure gold, five on the right *side* and five on the left in front of the inner sanctuary, with the flowers and the lamps and the wick-trimmers of gold; ⁵⁰ the basins, the trimmers, the bowls, the ladles, and the censers of pure gold; and the hinges of gold, *both* for the doors of the inner room (the Most Holy *Place*) *and* for the doors of the main hall of the temple. ⁵¹ So all the work that King Solomon had done for the house of the LORD was finished; and Solomon brought

in the things which his father David had dedicated: the silver and the gold and the furnishings. He put them in the treasuries of the house of the LORD.

The treasure was stored in those side rooms built next to the temple.

Note that the temple had 10 lamp stands instead of the 1 that had been in the tabernacle.