

### The Construction of the Temple in Jerusalem

#### 1 Kings 6

1 Kings 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, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD.”*

#### Background Notes

1 Kings 6:1 is a very important verse in the Bible, because it references the precise date of the Exodus of Israel from Egypt. A simple calculation from the chronological data in this verse dates the Exodus at about 1446BC. All the so-called “evidence” for a later date of the Exodus can be adequately explained to support of this early date of 1446BC.

The last verse of this chapter states that it took seven years to build the Temple. This was the beautiful Temple of Solomon, known as the first Jewish Temple. The Temple was an important part of Israel’s government and religion. That’s why it’s more proper to refer to this Temple as the Lord’s Temple, rather than Solomon’s Temple.

#### Doctrinal Points

##### 1. The Temple was the focus of God’s relationship with Israel.

1 Kings 6:2-22 - *“Now the house which King Solomon built for the LORD, its length was sixty cubits, its width twenty, and its height thirty cubits. 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. And he made for the house windows with beveled frames.*

*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. 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. 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. The doorway for the middle story was on the right side of the temple. They went up by stairs to the middle story, and from the middle to the third.*

*So he built the temple and finished it, and he paneled the temple with beams and boards of cedar. And he built side chambers against the entire temple, each five cubits high; they were attached to the temple with cedar beams.*

*Then the word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying, '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. And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake My people Israel.'*

*So Solomon built the temple and finished it. 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. 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. And in front of it the temple sanctuary was forty cubits long. The inside of the temple was cedar, carved with ornamental buds and open flowers. All was cedar; there was no stone to be seen.*

*And he prepared the inner sanctuary inside the temple, to set the ark of the covenant of the LORD there. 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. 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. 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."*

A cubit is eighteen inches, or 1 1/2 feet in length. The Temple was ninety feet long, thirty feet wide and forty-five feet high, twice as large as the Tabernacle. Like the Tabernacle, the Temple was divided into the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, the inner sanctuary. The Holy of Holies was a cube - thirty feet by thirty feet by thirty feet. The Temple also had a thirty-foot vestibule, or porch. There were three stories of rooms surrounding and adjoining the Temple for storage and for the service of the priests.

The Temple was constructed of white limestone blocks, lined with cedar wood, and then the whole interior was covered with gold. It was a beautiful building! If you visit the Egypt Museum in Cairo today, your breath will be taken away when you see all the gold that was in King Tut's tomb – but that was nothing compared to all the gold and grandeur of Israel's Temple!

The Temple was a beautiful building that was the focus of God's relationship with Israel. The Temple was the center and focus of the religious life and the government of Israel.

It was the center of Israel's political life, because Israel was a theocracy. **God governed Israel.** The king was only the representative who carried out God's will. God dwelled in the midst of His people, and the Temple was where His presence was focused. This was the meeting place between God and His people, Israel.

The Temple the center of government in Israel, and it was the center of worship in Israel as well. The religious life of Israel was centered about the Temple. The people of Israel brought their sacrifices to the Temple.. The singers and musicians appointed by David praised the Lord with song and music in the Temple (1 Chronicles 25). The blood of the atoning sacrifice was brought into Temple, into the Holy of Holies, once a year on the Day of Atonement, and placed on

the Mercy Seat of the Ark of the Covenant. Thus the sins of the nation were covered, and the relationship between God and Israel was maintained. The Temple was the focus of God's relationship with Israel.

## **2. The Temple was a figure of God's fellowship with the Church.**

1 Kings 6:23-38 - *"Inside the inner sanctuary he made two cherubim of olive wood, each ten cubits high. 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. And the other cherub was ten cubits; both cherubim were of the same size and shape. The height of one cherub was ten cubits, and so was the other cherub. 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. Also he overlaid the cherubim with gold. [The two angelic cherubim mentioned in these verses were not the two cherubim on the Ark of the Covenant. These were two large olive wood figures covered with gold that dominated the Holy of Holies where the Ark of the Covenant was placed.]*

*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. And the floor of the temple he overlaid with gold, both the inner and outer sanctuaries. For the entrance of the inner sanctuary he made doors of olive wood; the lintel and the doorposts were one-fifth of the wall. 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. So for the door of the sanctuary he also made doorposts of olive wood, one-fourth of the wall. And the two doors were of cypress wood; two panels comprised one folding door, and two panels comprised the other folding door. Then he carved cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers on them, and overlaid them with gold applied evenly on the carved work. And he built the inner court with three rows of hewn stone and a row of cedar beams.*

*In the fourth year the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid, in the month of Ziv. And in the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, 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."*

The Temple of Solomon's day pre-figured the spiritual Temple that God is building today. 1 Corinthians 3:16 says, "Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" From the context, we see that this spiritual Temple is the Church. The Spirit of God dwells in the universal Church.

Many aspects of the Church are pictured in the description and construction of the Temple. Verse 7 says, "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." The Temple went up quietly. All the stones were shaped at the quarry, and all were put in the proper place in the Temple without hammers and without noise. What a beautiful picture of the way our Lord is quietly building His Church today!

Believers are *living stones*, quietly shaped by God for their special function, and added to the spiritual house that God is building. 1 Peter 2:5 says, “*You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*”

And 1 Kings 6:22 says, “*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.*” In the Bible, gold speaks of God’s divine righteousness and glory. Every member of the spiritual Temple that God is building today is covered or clothed in gold, because we’re clothed with the righteousness of Christ! 2 Corinthians 5:21 says that we have become the righteousness of God in Christ.

The purpose of the Temple was to provide a place for God to dwell in the midst of His people and fellowship with them. Today the Spirit of God indwells His spiritual Temple. Today there is fellowship between God and His people in the Church. The Temple was a figure of God’s fellowship with the Church.

## **Practical Application**

### **Finish the work that God gives you to do!**

In verse 14 we read, “*So Solomon built the temple and finished it.*” I love this verse! Solomon finished the work that the Lord gave him to do. Let me ask you - Are we finishing the work that the Lord asks us to do? This question can be applied in a couple of different ways.

First, it can be applied to our entire life’s work - our ministry for the Lord. As the apostle Paul said in Colossians 4:17, “*Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it.*” It can also be applied to our day-by-day Christian service. Do we complete the work we commit ourselves to - or do we tend to fade away and quit half way through? Do we shirk our responsibilities? Do we let other believers down because we don’t show up? Do we finish the job?

Solomon took on a big job for the Lord - and he finished it! What about us? Finish the work that God gives you to do!