

Solomon Builds the Temple of the LORD

King Solomon fulfills David's dream by constructing a magnificent temple for the LORD in Jerusalem. At its dedication, God's glory fills the house in a cloud.

1 Kings 5:1-18 • 1 Kings 6:1-38 • 1 Kings 7:13-51 • 1 Kings 8:1-66

CHARACTERS: Solomon, Hiram king of Tyre, Zadok the priest, Levites

THEMES: Fulfillment of God's promises, Worship and God's presence, Wisdom and administration, God's glory, Prayer and dedication

IN THE FOUR hundred and eightieth year after Israel's exodus from Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign, the king began the work his father David could not complete—building a house for the LORD. David had been a man of war; Solomon, whose name means 'peace,' would build in peace. Solomon contracted with Hiram, king of Tyre, for cedar and cypress timber from Lebanon, and conscripted laborers—30,000 sent to Lebanon in shifts, plus 70,000 burden-bearers and 80,000 stonecutters. The temple's dimensions were precise: sixty cubits long, twenty wide, thirty high, overlaid within with pure gold. Great stones were prepared at the quarry, 'so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building.' After seven years, the house was finished—a structure of breathtaking beauty with carved cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, all covered with gold. Hiram of Tyre, a master craftsman, created two bronze pillars (Jachin and Boaz), the molten sea resting on twelve bronze oxen, and all the vessels of service. When the temple stood complete, Solomon assembled all Israel for dedication. The priests brought the ark of the covenant into the Holy of Holies, beneath the overshadowing cherubim. When they emerged, 'the cloud filled the house of the LORD, so that the priests could not stand to

minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house.' Solomon blessed the congregation and prayed a magnificent dedicatory prayer, acknowledging that 'heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded.' He besought God to hear prayers made toward this place, whether by Israel or by foreigners, asking forgiveness for sin and deliverance from enemies. God appeared to Solomon, promising, 'I have hallowed this house... mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.' The temple stood as the center of Israel's worship until Nebuchadnezzar's destruction, a symbol of God dwelling among His people.

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