

• LESSON 9 •

The Temple: House for the Name of the LORD

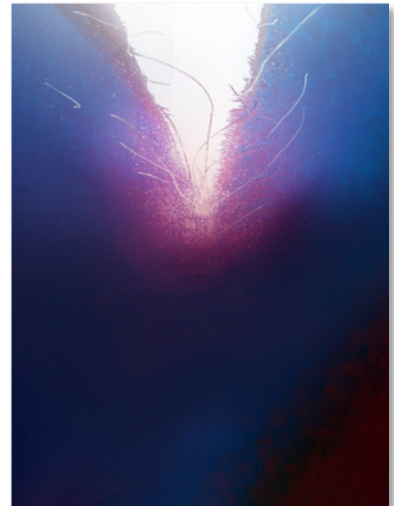
For nearly 500 years, the tabernacle served as a place for the LORD to dwell in the midst of his people and his people to render service and offer sacrifice to him. A glorious evolution was experienced in the days of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel. You can read of the expansive wealth and wisdom of Solomon in [1 Kings 4:20-34](#), but good luck wrapping your mind around the grandeur of what is being described. This, in more than one way, was the “golden age” of Israel.

Now Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon when he heard that they had anointed him king in place of his father, for Hiram always loved David. And Solomon sent word to Hiram, “You know that David my father could not build a house for the name of the LORD his God because of the warfare with which his enemies surrounded him, until the LORD put them under the soles of his feet. But now the LORD my God has given me rest on every side. There is neither adversary nor misfortune. And so I intend to build a house for the name of the LORD my God, as the LORD said to David my father, ‘Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, shall build the house for my name.’” ([1 Kings 5:1-5](#))

If ever there was a worthy attempt to build a house for the name of the LORD, surely this was it.

King Solomon drafted forced labor out of all Israel, and the draft numbered 30,000 men. And he sent them to Lebanon, 10,000 a month in shifts... Solomon also had 70,000 burden-bearers and 80,000 stonecutters in the hill country, besides Solomon’s 3,300 chief officers who were over the work, who had charge of the people who carried on the work. At the king’s command they quarried out great, costly stones in order to lay the foundation of the house with dressed stones. ([1 Kings 5:13-17](#))

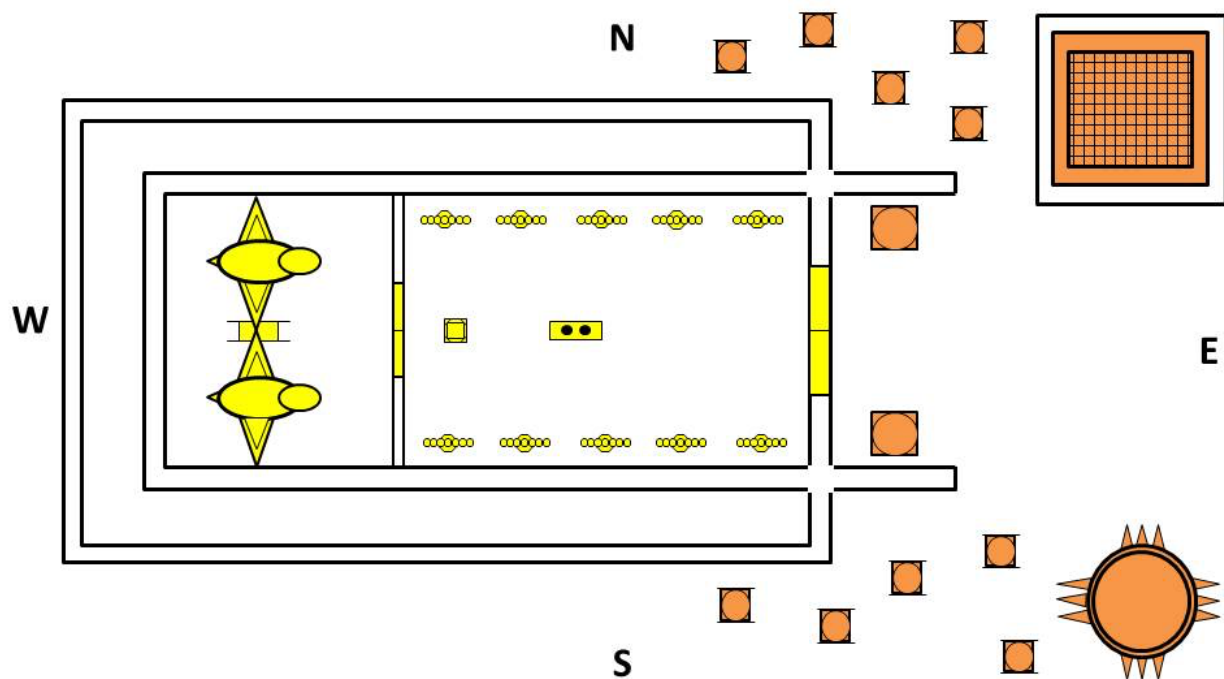
It took seven years (967-960 B.C.) to build this “house of the LORD” ([1 Kings 6:37-38](#)). The temple itself, not including the



Why couldn’t David, a man after God’s own heart, build a house for the name of the LORD? Take the time to read [2 Samuel 7](#) and [1 Chronicles 22:6-10](#) to understand the answer.

What is meant by referring to the temple as “a house for the name of the LORD”?

surrounding chambers, was 90 feet long, 30 feet wide—twice the dimensions of the tabernacle—and 45 feet high! Envision the incredible details:



- Two 40-foot bronze pillars at the entrance named Boaz and Jachin with capitals on top, each decorated with 200 imitation pomegranates (1 Kings 7:15-22; 2 Chron 3:15-17).
- A vestibule, 30 feet wide and 15 feet deep (1 Kings 6:33-35)
- Two folding doors of cypress wood on doorposts of olivewood, leading from the vestibule into the nave (Holy Place); carved into the doors were cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers; the doors were overlaid with gold (1 Kings 6:33-35)
- The nave (Holy Place) was 60 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 45 feet high (1 Kings 6:15, 17-18; 2 Chron 3:5-7). The walls were lined with boards of cedar carved in the form of gourds and open flowers. “All was cedar; no stone was seen... And Solomon overlaid the inside of the house with pure gold” (1 Kings 6:18, 21). The nave contained the golden altar of incense, the golden table for the bread of the Presence, and ten golden lampstands—five on the north side and five on the south (1 Kings 7:48-50; 2 Chron 4:7)
- Two doors of olivewood carved with cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers formed the entrance from the nave to the inner sanctuary (the Most Holy Place); they were overlaid with gold (1 Kings 6:31-32).
- The inner sanctuary (the Most Holy Place) was a 30-foot cube overlaid with pure gold. In this inner sanctuary were two cherubim of olivewood overlaid with gold, each 15 feet tall with 15-foot wingspans; their wings were spread out so that a wing of one touched one wall, a wing of the other touched the other wall; their other wings touched

each other in the middle. The ark of the covenant rested between the two cherubim (1 Kings 6:15-29; 2 Chron 3:8-14).

- A three-level structure was built around the walls of the temple. The lower chamber was 7.5 feet wide, the middle chamber was 9 feet wide, and the upper chamber was 10.5 feet wide (1 Kings 6:5-6, 8, 10).

The temple stood in the middle of a court with boundary walls. Outside the temple, within the court, was:

- An altar of bronze for burnt offerings—15 feet high, 30 feet long, 30 feet wide (2 Chron 4:1).
- The “sea,” a basin of cast metal—7.5 feet high and 15 feet in diameter—that held 12,000 gallons of water for the priests to cleanse themselves. It stood on 12 bronze oxen in sets of three, facing in each direction (1 Kings 7:23-26; 2 Chron 4:2-5).
- Ten bronze wheeled stands—6 feet long, 6 feet wide, and 4.5 feet high—each supporting a large basin 4.5 feet in diameter which held 240 gallons of water for rinsing off what was used for burnt offerings (1 Kings 7:27-38; 2 Chron 4:6). Five stands were on the north side and five were on the south.

Now the word of the LORD came to Solomon, “Concerning this house that you are building, if you will walk in my statutes and obey my rules and keep all my commandments and walk in them, then I will establish my word with you, which I spoke to David your father. And I will dwell among the children of Israel and will not forsake my people Israel.” (1 Kings 6:11-13)

What should we make of the LORD’s words to Solomon in 1 Kings 6:11-13?

Once seven years’ worth of construction was finished,

Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the leaders of the fathers’ houses of the people of Israel, before King Solomon in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is Zion. And all the men of Israel assembled to King Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month. And all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark. And they brought up the ark of the LORD, the tent of meeting, and all the holy vessels that were in the tent; the priests and the Levites brought them up. And King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel, who had assembled before him, were with him before the

ark, sacrificing so many sheep and oxen that they could not be counted or numbered. Then the priests brought the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its place in the inner sanctuary of the house, in the Most Holy Place, underneath the wings of the cherubim. (1 Kings 8:1-6)

When the priests came out of the Holy Place, “a 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 filled the house of the LORD” (1 Kings 8:10-11).

There is a wealth of heartfelt praise, thanksgiving, and petition to God in 1 Kings 8:12-61. You would be well-served by taking the time to study Solomon’s prayer.

Then the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the LORD. Solomon offered as peace offerings to the LORD 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep. So the king and all the people of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD. The same day the king consecrated the middle of the court that was before the house of the LORD, for there he offered the burnt offering and the grain offering and the fat pieces of the peace offerings, because the bronze altar that was before the LORD was too small to receive the burnt offering and the grain offering and the fat pieces of the peace offerings. So Solomon held the feast at that time, and all Israel with him, a great assembly, from Lebo-hamath to the Brook of Egypt, before the LORD our God, seven days. On the eighth day he sent the people away, and they blessed the king and went to their homes joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the LORD had shown to David his servant and to Israel his people. (1 Kings 8:62-66)

CLOSING THOUGHT: “The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything” (Acts 17:24-25).

1 Kings 8:12-61 contains (1) Solomon’s blessing of the LORD, (2) Solomon’s prayer of dedication, (3) Solomon’s blessing of the people. What can we learn from his words spoken on this monumental occasion?

In light of the grandeur of what was just described in 1 Kings 5-8, what should we make of Paul’s affirmation in Acts 17:24-25?