

KING SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

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English Composition

Mrs. Sutton

April 21, 1980

*(reformatted with slight corrections January 25, 2010)*

## Outline

- I. There were one hundred eighty thousand Israelites who worked on the temple.
- II. Materials for the temple came from far and near.
- III. The temple was elegantly built in both:
  - A. The interior which was in three major sections:
    1. The Porch which was in the front of the temple.
    2. The Holy Place which was in the middle of the temple.
    3. The Holy of Holies which was in the rear of the temple.
  - B. The exterior which encircled the temple proper.

## KING SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

In approximately 950 BC,<sup>1</sup> just outside of Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, one of the world's most marvelous temples was dedicated: King Solomon's Temple. The construction began in Solomon's fourth year of reign and took seven years to complete.<sup>2</sup>

There were one hundred eighty thousand Israelites who worked on the temple. Over these were three thousand eight hundred fifty overseers with Solomon over all of these.<sup>3</sup>

Thirty thousand men were given the task of getting the cedar timber from Lebanon to Mount Moriah. They worked in shifts of ten thousand with one month away and two months at home to take care of family matters.<sup>4</sup>

One hundred fifty thousand men worked in the quarries. Eighty thousand were skilled in stone cutting and the other seventy thousand served as apprentice.

Not only Israelites worked on the temple. There were also carpenters from Tyre.

These men used many tools in their work. Some of these tools included the ax, adze, saw, chisel, knife, scraper, and bow drill, all of which were made of bronze. There were also hardwood mallets and try square. There were no iron tools used in the temple.<sup>5</sup>

These men worked three of the seven years gathering for the temple material which came from far and near. Cedars from Lebanon were cut down in that country, dragged to the coast, floated down the Mediterranean Sea to Joppa, hauled overland to Jerusalem, then up to Mount Moriah.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> William C. Martin, These Were God's People (Nashville: The Southwestern Co., 1966), p.159.

<sup>2</sup> Merril C. Tenny, Pictorial Bible Dictionary (Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1969), p. 830.

<sup>3</sup> Masonic Bible (Philadelphia PA: National Publishing Co., 1944), p. 84.

<sup>4</sup> Holy Bible (Philadelphia: National Publishing Co., 1958), p. 337.

<sup>5</sup> Holy Bible, p337.

<sup>6</sup> Mina C. Klein and Author H. Klein, Temple Beyond Time (New York, NY: Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1970), p. 36.

The stones came from Solomon's Quarries. They were roughly cut by the quarrymen then sent to Mount Moriah. These stones have been described as "great and costly stones."<sup>7</sup>

With these materials and more, the elegant temple was built. The temple proper was ninety feet long, thirty feet wide and forty-five feet tall.<sup>8</sup> The first room in the temple was the Porch which was fifteen feet long.

From the Porch twenty feet double doors, made of fir and olive wood, led to the Holy Place. This was the largest room of the temple, sixty-six feet long. It had walls of fragrant cedar overlaid in gold. Flowers, palm trees and cherubim were carved into these walls. The roof of this beautiful room was of plank and beam construction, with the planks possibly plastered to the beams.

The Holy Place, unlike the Porch, was thoroughly furnished. In it were ten lampstands, ten tables of shewbread and an altar of incense. The lampstands were made of pottery lamps on gold stands. They used olive oil for fuel.<sup>9</sup> The tables of shewbread, probably corresponding to the lampstands, were used only one at the time by the priest. The altar was in the rear of the Holy Place. It was made of cedar overlaid with gold. Incense was burnt on it daily.

A double screen separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. The first was made of a dyed fabric and the second was a wooden door. The door was divided so that the top or bottom half could be opened<sup>10</sup> independent of the other.

The Holy of Holies was the last room in the temple proper. It was a thirty feet cube with walls of carved cedar overlaid with gold. It was also windowless and "filled with thick darkness."<sup>11</sup>

The only furnishings that were in this room were the Ark of the Covenant and two Cherubim which served as the "upholders of the Ark."<sup>12</sup> The Ark stood in the

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<sup>7</sup> Holy Bible, p. 337.

<sup>8</sup> Double and Company, The Living Bible (Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, 1971), p. 285.

<sup>9</sup> Masonic Bible, p. 84.

<sup>10</sup> Klein, p. 44.

<sup>11</sup> Holy Bible, p. 340.

<sup>12</sup> Klein, p. 44.

middle of the Holy of Holies and served as the mercy seat. Once a year, on the Day of Atonement, the High Priest sprinkled blood on the mercy seat for the sin offering.

The two Cherubim sat on top of the Ark. They had a lion's body, a human face and great wings.<sup>13</sup> They were fifteen feet tall with a wingspan of the same length. The two were identical in every respect. They were made of olive wood overlaid with gold.

Beside all the beauty inside, there was the elegant exterior which encircled the temple proper. Around the sides and back were three levels of chambers, seven and one half feet high each. The bottom floor was seven and one half feet wide, the middle level was nine feet and the third was ten and one half.<sup>14</sup> There were approximately thirty chambers on each level and were reached by a winding staircase. These rooms were used to store garments and utensils which the priest used in their ceremonies. And in other were stored the temple treasury and in still others were imperishable food.

The rooms (chambers) were connected to the walls of the temple by beams resting on blocks built out of the walls so that the beams were not inserted into the walls themselves.<sup>15</sup>

In front of the Porch were two free-standing pillars. Jachin, on the north, signified establishment and Boaz, on the south, stood for power.<sup>16</sup> They were each twenty seven feet tall and six feet in diameter. These two pillars were made of three inch bronze. The two stood eighteen feet apart and were on either side of the door leading to the Porch.

In the middle of the courtyard which lay in front of the temple was a bronze altar. It was sixteen by thirty by thirty feet. The altar rested on an eight feet square by five feet tall platform and was reached by a staircase.

Also in the courtyard was the Brazen Sea: a huge basin which held an estimated ten to sixteen thousand gallons of water. It was made of three and one half

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<sup>13</sup> Klein, p. 44.

<sup>14</sup> Doubleday and Company, p. 285.

<sup>15</sup> Doubleday and Company, p. 285.

<sup>16</sup> Klein, p. 41.

inch shell. This basin was held by twelve oxen, three of which faced north, three faced east, three toward south and three to the west.<sup>17</sup>

Arranged on each side of the courtyard were five rolling lavers which were used in the constant blood sacrifice. Each held about two hundred gallons of water.

With the many beautiful articles in the courtyard plus all the splendor of the temple itself, King Solomon's Temple must have been a heavenly sight. The Queen of Sheba summed it up very nicely when she said, "Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me. . . ."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Klein, p. 48.

<sup>18</sup> Holy Bible, p. 337.

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