

SOLOMON AND THE HOUSE OF THE LORD



1 & 2 Kings (Part One)
Chapters 1-11

by Sue LeBoutillier

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Published by:
Calvary Chapel — Ontario, Oregon

❧ *Solomon & The House of the Lord* ❧

Dear Friend —

We're about to begin a study of the books of **1&2 Kings**. The focus of the first eleven chapters is King Solomon. His life and reign consume about one quarter of the entire text of **1&2 Kings**, which is quite a significant portion since there were 39 kings in total.

Almost everyone has heard the name Solomon, and most would even understand the phrase, "*the wisdom of Solomon*." Solomon did some pretty amazing things, but the high point of his reign was building a magnificent temple in Jerusalem for the God of Israel. It truly was a significant architectural achievement, but there is actually more to it than just a great temple of stone.

The greater significance lies in understanding God's dwelling places throughout history — from the Garden of Eden, to Mt. Sinai, to the Tabernacle, to the Temple.

You might ask, '*Doesn't God dwell in Heaven?*' Well, yes He does! But God has also desired to *dwell among His people*.

- ◆ His first dwelling place in the Garden was compromised by sin.
- ◆ His next dwelling at Mt. Sinai was only for a short season.
- ◆ The Tabernacle that Moses built allowed Him a mobile dwelling place with Israel through the Wilderness.
- ◆ Now that Israel was in the land of Promise, and God revealed ***the place He would put His name and make His habitation (Deut. 12:5)***, it was time for a permanent place for His name and His presence.

The history of Solomon's life will be interesting, the details of the temple will be impressive, but what will make this study personal is understanding that God's ultimate plan is to make His dwelling now among His people through His Holy Spirit! These chapters are but one piece of the puzzle, completed by the atonement of Jesus Christ.

May the Lord richly bless you as you study His Word!

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How to use this Bible Study

Solomon and the House of the Lord — is a verse-by-verse study through **1 Kings 1-11**, along with a study of the Tabernacle and the Temple.

Whether you are meeting with a friend, a small group, or doing this study on your own — the following would be the ideal path:

#1 Your first step will be to watch/listen to **Week One — Introduction** either independently or in your group.

#2 Begin **Week Two in your Study Guide**

- ◆ Read the assigned Scriptures and answer the questions for each day. This Study Guide is intended to be completed independently **before** you watch or listen to the teaching associated with each week's lesson. (Also note the *Questions for Thought and Discussion* for each week).
- ◆ Then watch/listen to that week's teaching using the links below. You can do this privately or in your group.
- ◆ Then discuss the week's lesson in your group and pray together about applying the passages to your lives.

Repeat this process as you do all six weeks in your Study Guide.

One last reminder — be sure to approach each of the above steps with prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to give you understanding and speak to your heart.

To watch the video teachings for this Bible Study go to:

ccontario.com/womens-studies

or

[YouTube.com/calvarychapelontario](https://www.youtube.com/calvarychapelontario)

The best translation of the Bible to use is the one you understand best, and using more than one translation can be a useful aid in your study! This study guide was created using the ESV (English Standard Version).



Table of Contents

Week One — The Plan

Introduction

Week Two — The Person

1 Kings 1-3

Week Three — The Purpose

History of the Tabernacle

1 Kings 4-5

Week Four — The Place

1 Kings 6-7

Week Five — The Promise

1 Kings 8-9

Week Six — The Problems

1 Kings 10-11

*"When your days are fulfilled to walk with your fathers,
I will raise up your offspring after you, one of your own sons,
and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for
me, and I will establish his throne forever."*

1 Chronicles 17:11-12

Week One — Introduction — The Plan

Use this page to accompany the Week One teaching video.

www.ccontario.com/wow-1-2kings-part1

If you're studying in a group, the questions on the following page may provide some good discussion starters following the video.

The two books of Samuel gave us the history of the first two kings of Israel:

The People's King: _____ and

God's King: _____

The two books of the Kings give us the history of

_____ and _____ kings of Israel

_____ kings of Judah

Beyond exceeding all other kings in wisdom and wealth, Solomon's most noteworthy achievement was:

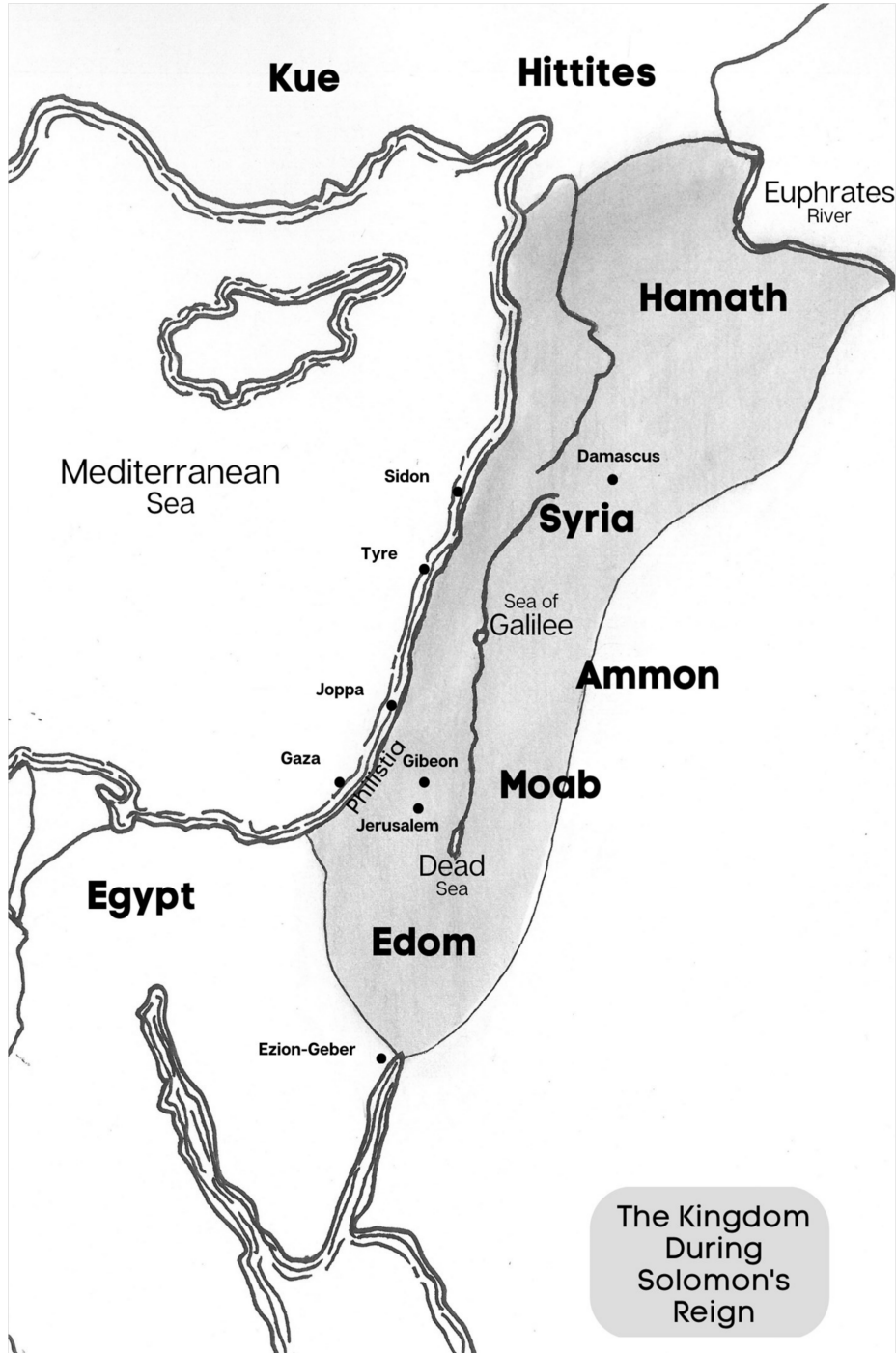
The *high point* in David's reign is in **2 Samuel** Chapter ____ when God made a _____ with David.

The *high point* in Solomon's reign is in **1 Kings** Chapter ____ when he dedicates the _____ of the _____ and the _____ of the Lord returns to dwell with His people.

*"Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.
Before the mountains were brought forth,
or ever you had formed the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God."*

Psalm 90:1

Map of Israel During Solomon's Reign



Questions for Thought & Discussion

1. Do you find it surprising that Solomon, a child from the union of David and Bathsheba, should be the one whom God chose as the next King of Israel after David? Discuss what that may imply about God's character.
2. Read **1 Chronicles 22:11-13**, where David exhorted Solomon about the task that lay before him. Read **Deuteronomy 31:7-8**, where Moses exhorted Joshua about the task that lay before him. What are some of the common themes? What are some similarities between their two tasks?
3. Read **1 Chronicles 22:19**. In what way might you customize this verse to your own life and areas where God is calling you?
4. In what ways did Solomon need the strength and perspective of the older generation to appreciate his calling? In what ways can you utilize the strength and perspective of the older generation in your life to appreciate and be inspired in your calling?

"And you, Solomon my son, know the God of your father and serve him with a whole heart and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches all hearts and understands every plan and thought." ~ 1 Chronicles 28:9

Week Two — 1 Kings 1-3 — The Person

The book of **1 Kings** begins with a very similar pattern to **2 Samuel** — *conflict* and *conspiracy* surrounding the next king over God’s people. Since the title of this Study is “*Solomon and the House of the Lord*”, you can relax because you already know who will ascend to the throne. But one thing we appreciate about Biblical historians is that they do not conceal the struggle and strain that accompany history.

This week, we’ll study the first three chapters of **1 Kings**. But first, you may appreciate a very simple outline of the entire work.

1&2 Kings can easily be divided into three sections:

- ◆ **1 Kings 1—11** — A united Israel under the reign of Solomon
- ◆ **1 Kings 12—2 Kings 17** — A separation of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel with various kings ruling over each kingdom until Israel was taken into exile.
- ◆ **2 Kings 18—25** — Judah existing alone with various kings until she too was taken into exile.

This Bible study will focus on the first segment — Chapters 1-11 — the united kingdom under King Solomon, whose reign encompasses about one-fourth of the entire narrative of **1&2 Kings**.

Day 1:

🔗 READ **1 Kings 1:1-27** — Who Shall Be King?

V.1-4— It seems strange (and a bit too personal) to read of an aged king managing his failing circulation with the help of a warm young virgin. But it’s obvious that we’re intended to take note this woman for a later purpose. What was her name? _____.

V.5-10— We’re introduced to one of David’s sons, who determined *he* should be the one to inherit the throne. What was the name of the son who declared himself King? _____.

(Read **2 Samuel 3:2-4** as a reminder of the birth order of David’s sons. By this time, the first three had obviously perished.)

- What characteristics did Adonijah have in common with Absalom?
- Who had Adonijah enlisted to support him as he declared himself King?
The Priest: _____
The Commander: _____
- Why do you think he singled out Solomon (of all the king's sons) to be excluded from the feast that he arranged in En-rogel?

V.11-27— Nathan the Prophet had already played a prominent role in David's life. Now again, we find him playing an important part in the successful transfer of rulership.

- What do you think may have been the strategy behind drawing Bathsheba into the conversation with David, rather than just telling the king himself?
- If David hadn't been told, or hadn't taken action, what might have been the outcome for Bathsheba and Solomon?

- Who else may have been in peril if Adonijah had been allowed to reign?

...the eyes of all Israel are on you, to tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king... 1:20

Day 2:

🔗 READ 1 Kings 1:28-53 — Solomon Anointed

V.28-40— There hadn't been a precedent in Israel yet for a peaceful transfer of power, but David had a plan in mind and this was the time to execute that plan.

- Who was present at the anointing of Solomon?
- Where was this anointing held?
- Even though David himself was not present, what piece of personal property symbolized his blessing?

V.41-53— Obviously, when Adonijah was told, *"Solomon sits on the royal throne"* (v.46), he knew he was in big trouble!

- What action did Adonijah take to preserve his own life?

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who has granted someone to sit on my throne this day 1:48

Solomon is known to us as a man of wisdom. Here, we find that his first recorded words show a natural bent toward prudence.

- In what ways did Solomon's conversation with Adonijah (v.52-53) display wisdom?

It is an important life skill to learn how to *respond*, rather than *react*, to people. As you read the following verses, note how they instruct us to respond in wisdom, rather than react in emotion.

Proverbs 15:18

Proverbs 16:32

Proverbs 29:11

James 1:19

Day 3: _____

📖 READ 1 Kings 2 — David's Instructions to Solomon

V.1-12— There is something very endearing about one generation passing inspiration and exhortation to another. David finally got his chance to personally encourage his son before he died.

- List some of the phrases with which David exhorted Solomon:

- What had been the *condition* of God's promise to David that his sons would remain on the throne of Israel?

Solomon sat on the throne of David his father, and his kingdom was firmly established. 2:12

- List some of the actions of justice that David expected Solomon to perform toward certain people after his death:
 - Joab
 - Descendants of Barzillai
 - Shimei

David had reigned _____ years in Hebron and _____ in Jerusalem, for a total of _____ years.

V.13-25— These few verses form an intriguing study in both the delusions of Adonijah, and the gullibility of Bathsheba.

- Explain why Adonijah's reasoning in **v.15** was duplicitous.
- Even though David and Abishag did not have physical relations, what obvious message would have been proclaimed if Adonijah were to possess David's former *sleeping partner* as his own wife?

Solomon had said that if Adonijah was a worthy man, he would live — this episode revealed his true character. It probably wasn't easy for Solomon to deny his mother's request by pointing out her naivete. I'm sure he loved his mother, but sometimes, a leader has to stand back and consider the overall consequences of his/her actions, even above family needs or requests.

V.26-46— Adonijah's request became the spark that ignited the flame of justice requested by David.

- How did Solomon deal with Abiathar?

*So the kingdom
was established
in the hand of
Solomon* 2:46

Read **1 Samuel 2:27-35**, as a reminder of God's judgement upon Eli and his descendants because he had not obeyed God. The removal of Abiathar was the final fulfillment of God's Word to Eli decades ago.

- How did Solomon deal with Joab?
- Who became the new commander of the army in Joab's place?
- Who became the new priest in Abiathar's place?
- How did Solomon deal with Shimei?

Day 4:

🔗 READ 1 Kings 3:1-15 — Getting Things in Order

V.1-4— The writer foreshadows future complications, by introducing us to a new character — a new wife from Egypt. We're not sure if this is a problem yet or not — only time will tell.

We're also told about Israel's sacrifices at the *high places* — and we wonder if this is also a foreshadowing of future problems.

- Why were the people sacrificing at the high places (**v.2**)?

Realizing this, we are hopeful that, once Solomon builds the **House of the Lord**, this shouldn't be a problem any longer. Except...it will be. Here is a little information from the **ESV Study Bible** on high places.

What are High Places? A high place was a publicly accessible structure (an unenclosed altar or a temple with altars) within which, or on which, offerings were made to God or the gods. The continuation and proliferation of these local places of worship (as opposed to the one place of worship described in Deut. 12) is one of the main concerns of the authors of 1&2 Kings.

—ESV Study Bible¹

- Read **Deuteronomy 12:1-7** and explain God's original instructions in regard to high places.

So, the high places should have all been destroyed. But life sometimes gets complicated and this situation was complicated as well.

Read **2 Chronicles 1:2-6**. There, we learn that the Tent of Meeting was located at the high place at Gibeon, along with the bronze altar, but the Ark of God was in a tent that David had pitched in Jerusalem.

They were five miles apart and had been separated for many years. God seemed to have looked on this situation with forbearance toward the past and a plan for the future.

- Back to **1 Kings 3:3**, what do you learn about Solomon's spiritual state?

V.5-15— In Solomon's dream at Gibeon, the Lord extended to him a simple offer, "*Ask what I shall give you.*" Solomon's mind first reflected on God's faithfulness to his father, David.

- To what did Solomon attribute David's favor from the Lord (**v.6**)?

- Summarize Solomon's request from the Lord (**v.9**).

- Summarize God's response (**v.11-14**).

After worshipping at Gibeon, Solomon's next stop was to worship in **Jerusalem** — before the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord (**v.15**)!

This is thrilling! As we picture Solomon physically connecting the dots (with his steps) between the Tent of Meeting in Gibeon and the Ark of the Covenant in Jerusalem, we are hopeful that he will fulfill his life's work by reuniting all of the elements of the House of the Lord in a permanent dwelling place — a place that God Himself had chosen!

Day 5:

🔗 READ 1 Kings 3:16-28 — An Example of Exceptional Wisdom

V.16-23— As we move through 1&2 Kings, we'll frequently run into narratives similar to this one — brief but powerful stories intended to punctuate some reality or character quality we're meant to note. In this case, we observe the extraordinary wisdom that Solomon was given by the grace of God.

Two women, who were sharing a living space, brought their *case* before Solomon.

- Briefly describe the problem.

The first thing Solomon did was to restate the problem — which is always a wise strategy when hearing a dispute. In today's words, he may have said, "*What I hear you saying is...*"

V.24-28— Since no one corrected his assessment of the problem, he moved on to a solution.

- What was Solomon's solution to the '*one child, two mothers*' dilemma?
- What outcome do you think Solomon expected?
- What was the response of the people of Israel when they heard Solomon's judgment?

Questions for Thought & Discussion

1. The book of **1 Kings** could have opened with a simple account of Solomon's anointing, rather than a lengthy narrative of tension and trouble. In what ways can we benefit personalizing the difficulties associated Solomon's walking out his purpose in life?
2. In **1 Kings 1:6**, what do you see in David's parenting that created problems for him as his sons grew? What alternative would you suggest for parents today?
3. Discuss the similarities between Adonijah's and Absalom's ambitions toward the throne.
4. Solomon was put in a position to say *no* to his mother (in the matter of Abishag), after he had said that he would do anything for her. Discuss the wisdom of putting justice, even before family obligation or promises.
5. Solomon acted with courage as he administered the justice his father suggested in the matters of Joab, Abiathar, and Shemei. A leader's display of courage and justice can bring stability in their lives and the lives of others. In what ways might you display courage to bring stability into your world?

Week Three — 1 Kings 4-5 — The Purpose

The *person*, whom God intended to replace David as King, had now been firmly established. **“So the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon.” (2:46)**

Now, we move to the *purpose* of his reign — the building of the **House of the Lord!** David had it in his heart to build a house for God, but God said, *‘No, your son will be the one to build me a House.’*

Building a **House for the Lord** wouldn’t merely be a matter of erecting a permanent structure to replace a tent. It would accomplish much more. It would reunite the objects of worship and the symbols of God’s presence in a very significant way that would give Israel the best possible understanding of the relationship God wanted to have with them.

“It is Solomon your son who shall build my house and my courts, for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father.”
~ 1 Chronicles 28:6

We learned last week that the **Ark of the Covenant** and the **Tent of Moses** were in separate locations — the tent was in Gibeon and the Ark was in Jerusalem. This was not ideal, and it hadn’t been ideal for a long time — since the days of Eli, to be exact!

The original purpose for the **Wilderness Tabernacle** was for God to *dwell among* His people and *go with* His people into the land of promise. In the days of Solomon, God still desired to dwell among His people *in* the land of promise, and it was time to put things back into order and provide a place for that to happen.

God has always desired to dwell among His people — from the Garden of Eden right up to today! Today, we no longer seek Him in a temple since He sent His own Son, **Immanuel**, *God with us*. Now, God can dwell *in* us because we *are* the Temple of God on earth.

In *this* study, we’ll marvel at the high point of Solomon’s project, when the presence of the Lord actually settled upon the Temple built in honor of His name (**2 Chronicles 7:3**). And we’ll see how the **House of the Lord** temporarily returned a robust worship to the people of Israel. We’ll also learn why it was only temporary.

The beginning days of this week's lesson will be a little different than you're used to. Before we continue our study in **1 Kings**, we need to pause and take a look-back in Scripture at the **Tabernacle** that God had Moses construct in the Wilderness at Sinai. This will help us better understand the relevance of Solomon's building project. The **Tabernacle** had been God's most recent means of dwelling with His people (**Exodus 40:38, 1 Chron. 17:5**).

In this study, I'll refer to Solomon's building as the **House of the Lord**, even though it's often called **Solomon's Temple**. I think we can be a little fluid with our terminology since the Bible itself uses several names for God's dwelling place. Beginning in **Exodus 25** and through **Leviticus** and **Numbers**, the tent that Moses erected was often called the **Tabernacle**, but sometimes called the **Tent of Meeting**, and to confuse matters more, in the days of Eli and Samuel (**1 Samuel 1,3**), when it was still a literal tent, it was referred to as the **Temple!**

I like the phrase, **House of the Lord**. We even call our Churches, '*the Lord's house*' sometimes. But we usually mean a gathering place for worship and learning from the Scriptures. The purpose of the **House of the Lord** that Solomon built, was a place where God intended to draw near to His people — to literally dwell among them.

I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the House of the Lord!"

~ Psalm 122:1

For the next three days, we'll look at God's most recent dwelling place among His people — the **Tabernacle of Moses**. Having a visual picture of that dwelling place in our minds will help us connect with Solomon's great task of building the **House of the Lord** in his day.

The Wilderness Tabernacle

The Tabernacle that God instructed Moses to build when the nation of Israel was camped at Mt. Sinai had three main parts to it.

- ◆ The Courtyard
- ◆ The Holy Place
- ◆ The Most Holy Place (or the Holy of Holies)

We'll study one part each day this week and then return to 1 Kings.

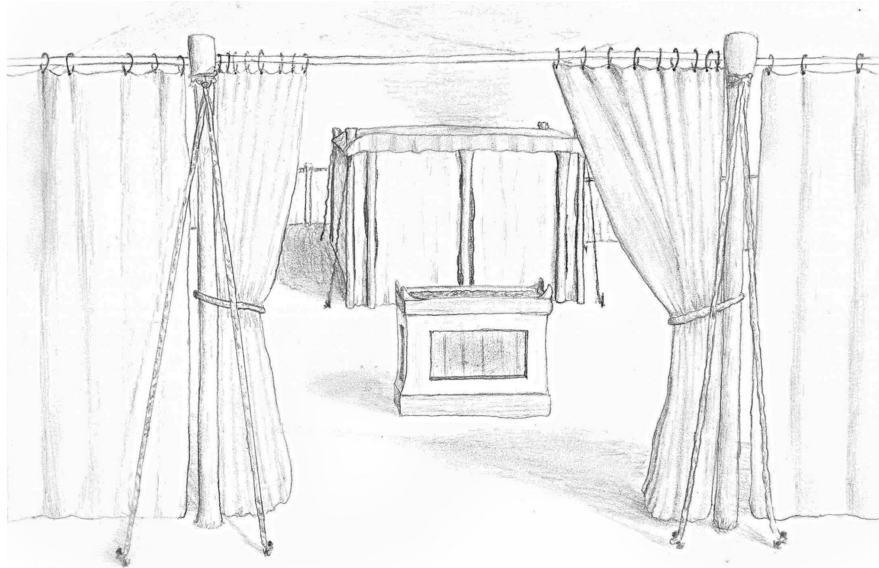
Day 1:

In the book of Exodus, we read that God delivered Israel out of Egypt and brought them to Mount Sinai. That mountain served as a dwelling place of the Lord for a short season. ***“The glory of the LORD dwelt on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days.”*** (Exodus 24:16) But God did not intend for either of them to stay at Sinai, so He needed a mobile dwelling place. ***“And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst.”*** (Exodus 25:8)

Moses was given a pattern for that **sanctuary** (which we’ll call the Tabernacle) and God told him multiple times to make it exactly the way he was shown. In **Exodus 25**, God began His instruction with the innermost space, where He would dwell — the Ark of the Covenant. In our studies, however, we will begin from the *exterior* and study our way toward the *inside*.

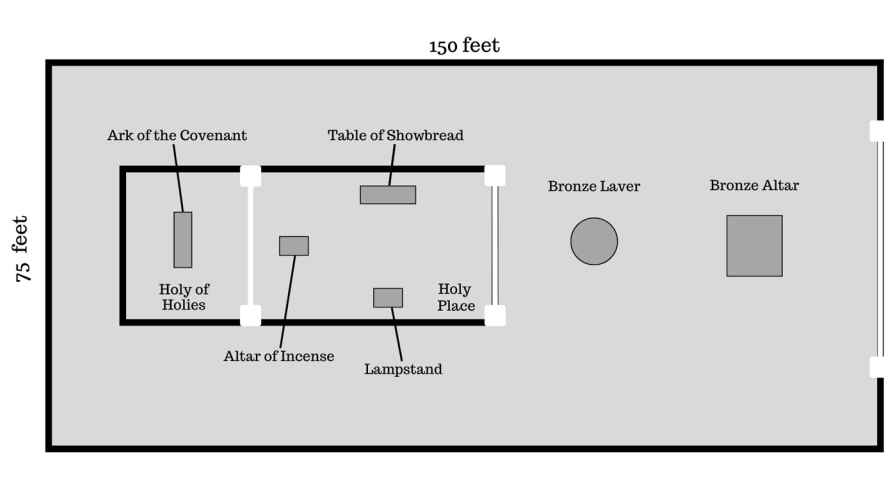
Today, we’ll read about the most exterior part of the Tabernacle — the courtyard. We’ll also take a close look at the objects, which were placed within the courtyard and we’ll study their purpose.

The Courtyard— (Exodus 27:9-19, Exodus 38:9-20) This was often the name used to describe the entire Tabernacle complex. There was a series of poles from which were hung fabric screens, thus establishing the exterior boundaries of the Tabernacle.



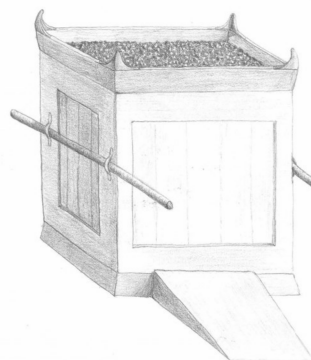
This was where the people of Israel would bring their sacrifices and offerings, as described in Leviticus. The people would enter through the wide gate (pictured on the previous page) and be met by priests, who would enable them to offer their sacrifices to the Lord.

In the overhead perspective below, you can see the outer boundary (poles with curtains) and the three main objects that resided in the courtyard — the **Bronze Altar**, the **Washbasin**, and the **Tabernacle**. We have converted *cubits* to *feet* to help us picture the size of the courtyard in units we're more familiar with.



The Bronze Altar— (Exodus 27:1-8, Exodus 38:1-6) Upon entering the courtyard, the first object to be seen was the **Brazen Altar** or **Altar of Burnt offering**. It was a hollow framed box made of acacia wood and covered in bronze. It served the very practical purpose of roasting or completely burning whatever sacrifice was brought by the worshipper.

The book of Leviticus describes several different types of sacrifices — there were sin offerings, guilt offerings, burnt offerings, and grain offerings, as well as fellowship offerings.



The different types of offerings required different handling. With some of the offerings, the entire animal was to be burned. With other offerings a portion was required to be given to the priests. And still other offerings allowed the worshiper to eat his portion right there — something like sharing a meal with God.

Based on the large population of Israelites and the multiple requirements for offerings, you can imagine this was usually a busy place.

The Washbasin— (Exodus 30:17-21, Exodus 38:8) The next object in the courtyard was the **Washbasin**, or the **Bronze Laver**, which was filled with fresh water so the priests could wash themselves from the messy ministry of sacrifices.

The dimensions and shape aren't given in Scripture, but we do know that it was overlaid with bronze and mirrors to enable the priests to more clearly see their reflection which helped with cleansing.



Before any priest could enter into the Holy Place, they would need to clean themselves in order to approach God's dwelling place.

Day 2:

Today, we come to the Tabernacle itself — the tent within the courtyard. We'll also study the objects in the first room of the tent.

The Tabernacle— (Exodus 26:1-37) This was a tent-like structure in the courtyard, which was covered with layers of animal skins and finished inside with fine linen. This was sometimes called the **Tent of Meeting**. It was constructed with two rooms — the first was called the **Holy Place**, as distinguished from the next room — called the **Most Holy Place**, which we will study tomorrow.

There were three objects inside **The Holy Place**:

- ◆ **The Table for Bread**
- ◆ **The Golden Lampstand**
- ◆ **The Altar of Incense**

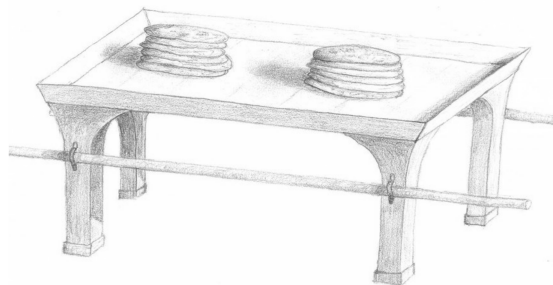
This was the Levitical priest's realm. Once a priest had washed himself in the washbasin and stepped into the Holy Place to carry out his duties, a different world awaited him. The multiple layers of animal skins and the fabric that covered the tent would have deadened the surrounding noise to create a very quiet space. The light from the lampstand would have illuminated the room very softly, compared to the harsh desert sunlight in the courtyard. The aroma would have been the sweet scent of incense in contrast to the smell of burning animal flesh. And finally, the fresh bread would have brought a comforting visual and aromatic presence as well.

The **Holy Place** was a place like no other in the daily life of the priests. And *only* the priests could enter into this space.

Table for Bread— (Exodus 25:23-30, Exodus 37:10-16) As one entered the Holy Place, there was a table on the right for the **Bread of the Presence**. Like the brazen altar, it was also made of acacia wood, but unlike the altar and basin in the courtyard, it was covered in gold rather than bronze.

Twelve loaves of fresh bread were prepared and placed on the table each Sabbath. The previous week's bread was removed and consumed by the priests as their portion.

The Table of Show Bread would have served as a reminder of God's gracious provision for His people in the wilderness. But it would also foreshadow Jesus, our Bread of Life, who was God's gracious provision for any who would receive.



Golden Lampstand— (Exodus 25:31-40, Exodus 37:17-24) The light inside the tent was produced by a lampstand, which was positioned on the left. It was crafted from pure gold for function and beauty.

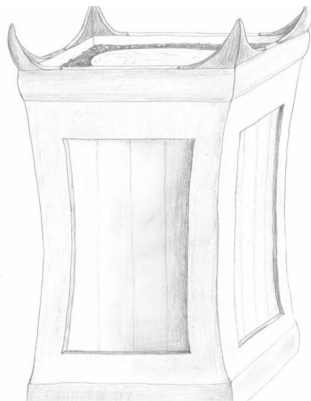
The lampstand didn't burn candles the way we think of a lampstand, but rather burned olive oil using a wick. (**Exodus 27:20-21**)

One of the priest's jobs was to tend to the lampstand so that the light was never allowed to grow dim.



The branches of the lampstand stood as a reminder to God's original dwelling place with man in the Garden of Eden with its Tree of Life. It also may have reminded the priests of the pillar of light with which God led Israel to the promised land. In a similar way as the bread, the lampstand would symbolize the coming Messiah, Jesus, who declared Himself the *Light of the World* (**John 8:12**).

Altar of Incense— (Exodus 30:1-10, Exodus 37:25-29) The final object inside of the **Holy Place**, was also constructed of acacia wood and overlaid with gold. Its purpose was for burning incense. It was located directly in front of the curtains that separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place.



One can imagine a cloud of smoke arising from this altar, creating an additional visual barrier between the two rooms of the Tabernacle. It stood as a reminder of other clouds in Israel's past — the cloud surrounding God's presence on Mt. Sinai (**Exodus 24:16**) — the cloud leading Israel through the Wilderness (**Exodus 13:21**) — and the cloud speaking with Moses in the tent of meeting (**Exodus 33:9**).

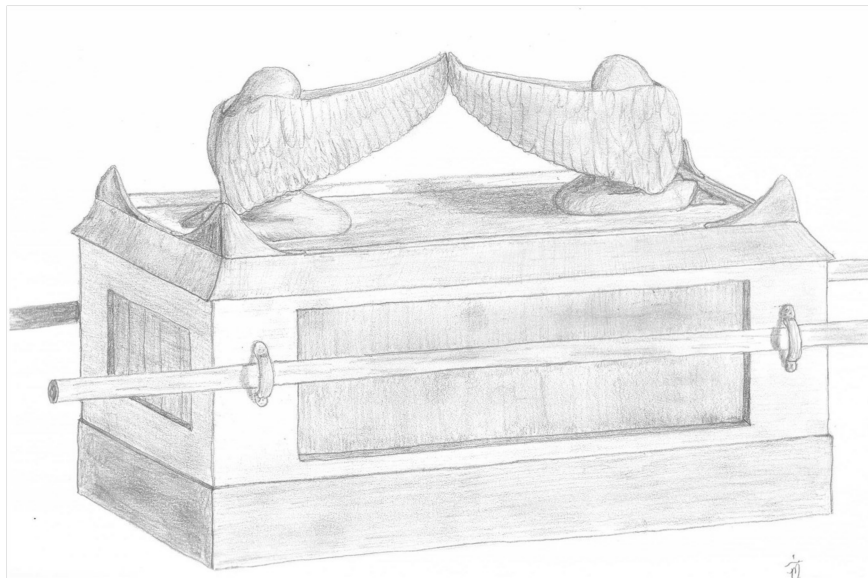
Day 3: _____

Finally, in our study of the Wilderness Tabernacle, we journey into the **Holy of Holies**, the innermost room inside the Tabernacle. During the days of Moses, this was the special location, where God said He would meet with him, talk with him and give him special instructions for the people of Israel (**Exodus 25:22**). Moses probably received most of **Deuteronomy** from talking with God in this inner room.

But aside from God's special relationship with Moses, this inner room was only accessed once a year by the High Priest himself (Aaron and later, his descendants) on the **Day of Atonement**. (In **Leviticus 16**, you can read more about instructions for the Day of Atonement.)

Ark of the Covenant— (**Exodus 25:10-21**, **Exodus 37:1-9**) One solitary object resided within the walls of the Holy of Holies. It was another box of acacia wood which was overlaid with gold. On the cover were two cherubim facing each other but looking downward, their wings outstretched and touching (see the image below).

The top of the Ark was called the **Cover**, or the **Mercy Seat**. Once a year, on the **Day of Atonement**, the High Priest would enter into the **Holy of Holies** and smear blood from the special sacrifice on the Mercy Seat, *making atonement* for or *covering*, Israel's sins.



Inside the **Ark of the Covenant** (sometimes called the **Ark of the Testimony**) were three items:

- ◆ The tablets on which were written the 10 Commandments
- ◆ A jar containing manna from the wilderness
- ◆ The staff of Aaron, which had budded

For additional reading on the Tabernacle itself,
You can also read Exodus 26

It was important that the Tabernacle be made exactly as instructed, that's why we read multiple chapters in Exodus explaining God's pattern, as well as a detailed history of the building process.

The Tabernacle was not only made as a dwelling place for God among His people, but it was also meant to tell a story. If some of the objects were altered, or eliminated, the story would no longer be complete.

The writer of the letter to the Hebrews connects the dots for us as to the significance of this Tabernacle. Let's consider these passages to help us even further.

Read Hebrews 9:1-12.

- What was the purpose for the first section of the Tabernacle?

- What took place in the second section and how often (v.7)?

- In what way did Jesus act as High Priest (v.11-12)?

Read **Hebrews 9:23-26**.

- In what ways was the Tabernacle (Temple) constructed to tell a story of the work of Jesus as our ultimate High Priest?

There are many other Scriptures that explain that the Tabernacle, as well as the sacrifices and the work of the priests in the first covenant was always meant to prepare people to understand the work of Christ and the new Covenant.

Remember, at this present point on our timeline — the beginning of Solomon’s reign — the Tabernacle was NOT thus arranged! There was a tent in Gibeon and what seemed to be the original altar, but it had become disassociated from the Ark, which was in Jerusalem.

This raises some questions in our mind...

- ◆ Was the Holy of Holies empty in the tent?
- ◆ Was the golden altar of incense even burning?
- ◆ If so, what did it conceal — an empty room?
- ◆ Was there any Day of Atonement without the Ark?

We can see that the worship system of Israel had broken down in many ways because the pattern had become corrupted long ago.

We can also see that God had been patient with this situation for many years and that Solomon’s current task was very important, having the potential to usher in a great revival among God’s people.

Lastly, we can see that David understood all of this and the reuniting of the pattern was on his mind as he inspired his son, when he said, ***“Arise and build the sanctuary of the LORD God, so that the ark of the covenant of the LORD and the holy vessels of God may be brought into a house built for the name of the LORD.”*** (1 Chronicles 22:19)

King David had gathered an abundance of costly *resources* over his lifetime that he handed over to Solomon for building the Temple. But we find, in 1 Chronicles, that he spent his final years preparing for the *ministry* within the House of the Lord. Chapters 23-26 explain how David organized the Levites and priests for their ministry. He also added the important ministries of musicians, gatekeepers, and treasurers.

God had told him that he would not be the one to build a House for His Name. Nonetheless, David applied his energy to make sure that the ministry inside the House would honor God!

Day 4: _____

Now, we are ready to resume our study of **1 Kings**. Chapters 4 and 5 aren't packed with thrilling commentary like the first three chapters, as they lean toward records and lists, but there *will* be a few tidbits for us to learn.

READ 1 Kings 4:1-28 — Solomon's Kingdom

Write 2-3 words/phrases that would be accurate descriptions of Solomon's reign. I'll give you one for starters: *organized!*

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- According to **v.20** and **v.25**, what benefits did the people of Israel receive from Solomon's reign?

🌀 READ 1 Kings 5:1-18 — Collaboration with Hiram & the Draft

A character is introduced here that we've met once before, when he provided materials for King David's palace (2 Samuel 5:11). We're clearly meant to take note of this man since he is mentioned by name 10 times in this chapter and a total of 21 times in 1 Kings.

- Who is he and where is he from?

Tyre was a Phoenician city on the coast known for its wood, wealth and worship — but not worship of Israel's true God. In fact, it's king, Hiram was quite a temple-builder — responsible for the construction of a temple to Ba'al Melqart (Hercules)². Hiram had premium wood but was lacking premium food, so an alliance was formed in both David and Solomon's day to share resources. We're left to watch and wonder if this was a positive alliance benefiting the building project, or a compromise to rely so heavily on a pagan king.

- Why did Solomon believe the time was right for building the House of the Lord (v.4)?

*I intend to build
a house for the
name of the Lord
my God. 5:5*

The building project was huge and would require a lot of supplies and a lot of labor.

- Summarize how Solomon secured the supplies required.
- Summarize how Solomon secured the workforce required.

*"Blessed be the Lord this day, who has given to David a
wise son to be over this great people." 5:7*

Questions for Thought & Discussion

1. Read **1 Chronicles 22:8**. What reason was given to David as to why he wouldn't be the one to build a house for the Lord?
2. Read **Deuteronomy 4:5-8**. How was the current setting in Israel fulfilling Moses words?
3. The words *wisdom* and *wise* are used eight times in **1 Kings 4**. Do you think the phrase '*Once wise, always wise*' is a true statement? Why or why not?
4. Is there anything you find ominous in **4:26-28**? Why?
5. Name one element of the original Tabernacle, whose symbolism you find the most compelling. Explain why.
6. Knowing that the House of God, and the original Tabernacle were places that God intended to dwell with His people, how would you describe the New Testament place that God desires to dwell with his people? **1 Corinthians 3:16 and 6:19**

Week Four — 1 Kings 6-7 — The Place

We're moving forward now to study more of the reign of Solomon and **The Place** that became the House of the Lord. Both of these chapters project a lot of detail because the Temple *was* indeed a magnificent structure. As we read about both the wealth and wisdom applied to the building project, we will be quite impressed.

But even in these chapters, the author is subtly suggesting that we peer beneath the surface layer of cedar and gold, crafting and stone cutting to assess how Solomon stewarded all of that wealth and wisdom that had been offered to him.

God had already appeared to Solomon once at Gibeon, calling upon him to walk righteously and to keep his statutes (**3:4-14**). A similar appeal is repeated in today's lesson (**6:11-13**) and will surface two more times in our study (**9:1-9, 11:11-13**).

We are intended to consider these four directives to Solomon. God's frequent messages should cause us to look beyond the plans, the details, and the success of the building project, and peer into the heart of the builder. The question is — will we find faithfulness?

"What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?" ~ Matthew 16:26

Day 1:

READ 1 Kings 6:1-14 — Will You Walk in My Ways?

- How long had it been from the time Israel left Egypt until the House of the Lord started to be built (**v.1**)?
- How long had Solomon had to establish his kingdom before he began work on the House of the Lord (**v.1**)?

These dates would put us around the year **966 BC** for the beginning of the construction of the House of the Lord.

I don't want to bury us in the details of measurements in this lesson, but there are a few dimensions that we'll note for comparison's sake.

- Note the dimensions given for the House of the Lord in **v.2** and record what you find on the chart on **p.44**. We'll add to the chart later in the week.

V.3-10— We learn that most of the crafting and preparations for the project were done off-site. This created a building site without the atmosphere of a typical construction zone.

But it *was* a construction zone, and Solomon certainly must have had his head buried in the details when God came along with a special priority. In **v.11-13**, God said, “***concerning this house that you are building...***” and then said nothing more at all about the house itself but turned the conversation to the people and the relationship.

God communicated His expectations and stated what He would do in return. It's easy to identify because of the classic *if/then* form.

- What did God ask of Solomon? ***If...***

- What did God offer in return? ***Then...***

The reminder to truly worship God through obedience is relevant for us today. How easy is it for us to get focused on a *project* we're doing for God, as if that's what He requires of us? He could legitimately come to you or me today, and bring the same appeal.

*He has told you, O man, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?*

~Micah 6:8

Day 2:

🔗 READ 1 Kings 6:15-38 — Finishing the Inside of the House

V.15-22— We learn in these verses how the inner sanctuary was finished. In the Tabernacle, these rooms were usually called the **Holy Place** and the **Most Holy Place**. The writer uses the terms *nave* and *inner sanctuary* here to refer to those spaces.

One dimension we find interesting is that the *inner sanctuary* in the Temple was 20x20x20, which is exactly twice as large as the 10x10x10 room, which was the **Most Holy Place** in the Tabernacle. Interesting!

V.23-36— More description of the interior of the Temple.

- What new addition do we learn of in **v.23**?

We have already learned about the two cherubim, who were crafted for the top of the **Ark of the Covenant**. So these extra, much-larger cherubim don't seem out of place, but are certainly a new feature.

- In the Tabernacle, the doorway from the **Holy Place** to the **Most Holy Place** was a veil or curtain. What new feature is crafted for the entrance to the *inner sanctuary* of the Temple (**v.31**)?

Doors were also installed at the entrance to the *nave*, which was the place where one entered into the building from the outside.

Now you might be wondering about these new dimensions, changes in design, super-tall additional cherubim — and we'll read about even more changes with the courtyard objects in the next chapter. The natural question a reader might ask would be, "*Was this all okay?*" "*Was there a pattern given for the Temple, like there was for the Tabernacle?*" "*Did Solomon just get to add his own flourishes and inspiration?*" Let's investigate some answers...

- ◆ First, we find no pattern recorded in Scripture for the Temple. There *was* a pattern given to Moses for the Tabernacle in **Exodus**. In that pattern, God said multiples times, “*See that you make it exactly as I’ve shown you!*”
- ◆ We *do* have a record of David giving Solomon some pretty specific instructions before he died. Read **1 Chronicles 28:11-19**. David said they were from the Lord.
- ◆ Although the Temple had some size and material differences, the basic system for courtyard sacrifices, the Levitical duties related to bread, light, and incense in the Holy Place, and the High Priest duties in the Most Holy Place with the Ark of the Covenant were all intact.

Perhaps some of the changes that we read about can be attributed to the differences between a mobile tent for the wilderness and a permanent structure for Jerusalem — which are understandably very different types of dwellings.

Perhaps what God showed David was a blueprint, which allowed a certain amount of creative license in the building process.

Perhaps we can find a parallel in the way many of our Christian Churches look and operate quite differently, depending on geography, economic condition, personality of the pastor, age of the fellowship, etc. As long as the basic tenants of the faith are in place — the people are worshiping, praying, being taught from the Word, and serving one another — God allows quite a bit of creative license.

However, we still need to read the narrative with an eye toward Solomon’s continued obedience, which is where we begin tomorrow.

In the meantime, let’s note the historical time stamp from **v.37-38**.

- How many years did the building of the House of the Lord take from start to finish?

Day 3:

At this point in our text, Solomon has been on the throne for eleven years now. Four of those years were pre-building years, while the next seven were filled with construction.

When we study the Old Testament, we're often looking for a spiritual layer that usually lies just beneath the natural layer. In our current text, there is a *construction layer* on top, filled with descriptions of materials and dimensions, as well as details of craftsmanship. Lest we get swept away with all those particulars, we'll use our time today to reflect on God's instructions for the spiritual layer of the kings of Israel — specifically how they should conduct themselves.

Let's take a little detour back to the days of Moses in **Deuteronomy** and consider the instructions that God gave at that time for future kings of Israel.

Read **Deuteronomy 17:14-20**. We learn that...

- ◆ God gave permission for Israel to have a king in future years.
- ◆ The king must be from among the Israelites.
- ◆ He must be of God's own choosing.

Additionally, according to this passage, what were some of the prohibitions and instructions that were given?

V.16— He must not acquire many _____.

Specifically, he should not go to which country to retrieve them?

V.17— He must not acquire many _____.

What would be the danger in having many wives?

V.17— He must not acquire excessive _____ and _____.

V.18— He should make his own personal copy of _____.

God instructed the king to read His Word all the days of his life. What benefit would that bring? List as many phrases as you can find that would benefit the king's spiritual life.

Now we'll pause to give Solomon a letter grade on how obedient he has been to these instructions up to this point. Read **2 Chronicles 1:14-17** (which takes us back a few years on our current timeline).

- What problem do you find with horses?

- What problem do you find with silver and gold?

In the next chapter we'll find a few more troubling parts of Solomon's life.

Day 4: _____

📖 **READ 1 Kings 7:1-12— Solomon's Palace**

Yesterday's passage in **Deuteronomy** is an insightful passage to have in mind before proceeding because, in chapter seven, we'll find an abrupt interruption in the Temple narrative that will include details about other massive buildings — one of which being a home for Solomon's Egyptian wife. It seems like more-than-a-gentle nudge to pay attention and think through the implications of what's going on.

The Temple itself occupied only a small portion of the entire compound.

- It took 7 years for Solomon to complete the Temple. But according to **v.1**, how many additional years did it take to build his own house?

Complete the chart below by including the dimensions of the structure called *The House of the Forest of Lebanon* (**v.2**). This building seems to be a different structure than Solomon's palace, but **v.8** tells us that his house and his wife's house were '*of like workmanship*'. So all of these additional buildings were probably a similar size.

Dimensions of Buildings (in cubits)			
Wilderness Tabernacle	_____ long	_____ wide	_____ high
Solomon's Temple	_____ long	_____ wide	_____ high
House of the Forest Of Lebanon	_____ long	_____ wide	_____ high

It's at **v.8** that we should stop to ponder several choices that Solomon made, especially in light of yesterday's **Deuteronomy** passage.

First, let's consider Solomon's Egyptian wife. When we first read about her in **3:1-3**, we wondered if we should be concerned. Now, we find another reason for concern — a house being built for her within the Temple complex.

- Understanding that a king of Israel should not even send for horses from Egypt, what are we to think of taking a wife from there and placing her in the worship center of Israel?

- Secondly, given the fact that a king should not acquire for himself excessive silver or gold, what are we to think of these additional dwellings that were so massive that they took many more years to complete than the Temple itself?

Historians give information but rarely tell us how to think. Prophets, on the other hand, tell us exactly how to think.

- Read **Jeremiah 22:15-16** (which was *not* written during the time of Solomon, but during a different king's reign). How might these words be appropriate for what we suspect is happening currently in Solomon's reign?

Day 5:

READ 1 Kings 7:13-26 — Crafting the Temple Furnishings

Solomon brought a man from Tyre to create the objects to be used in the courtyard and the temple. This text uses the name **Hiram**, while 2 Chronicles calls him **Huram**. This was *not* the king, but a different Hiram who was half Jewish, and lived in Tyre. Apparently, he was an excellent craftsman!

V.15-22— Two large pillars of bronze flanked the opening of the Temple.

- What was the name given to the south pillar? _____
- What was the name given to the north pillar? _____

Hebrew names always carry meanings. Reading those names from right (north) to left (south), in the direction of Hebrew writing, the names produce the phrase, ***"In strength He establishes."***³

V.23-26— This describes a very large basin, whose diameter was half the width of the Temple itself! It must have been a striking piece as worshipers first entered the courtyard. It rested on twelve cast oxen, three facing each of the ordinal directions with their rears toward the center, probably to symbolize God's rule over all that exists.

V.27-39— There were ten stands and ten basins for washing. This is probably one of the most substantial changes in scale from the original Tabernacle, which only had one bronze washbasin. Now there were ten! Additionally, **2 Chronicles 4** tells us that, instead of one lampstand and one table for bread, there were now ten lampstands and ten tables for the show bread.

V.40-51— We're given a summary of all the work that Hiram did for Solomon and where it was accomplished.

The final verses build a great excitement for the dedication of this new House of the Lord, which we'll read about next week.

Even after all the questions we've raised about the building of this house, and our additional concerns about Solomon's spiritual life, we're soon to discover that God was willing to physically enter into Israel's imperfect reality to dwell among them and remind them exactly who He is!

*Now set your mind and heart to seek the Lord your God.
Arise and build the sanctuary of the Lord God, so that the
ark of the covenant of the Lord and the holy vessels of God
may be brought into a house built for the name of the Lord.*

~ 1 Chronicles 22:19

Questions for Thought & Discussion

1. Solomon was reminded by the Lord (**6:11-13**) to focus more on his relationship *with* God than the projects he was doing *for* God. In what way is this relevant to you? In what area of serving is this a challenge for you?
2. In **Deuteronomy 17:19-20**, we learn that a king of Israel was to review God's Word all the days of his life. What benefit does daily reading in the Word of God have for you? Share how some of the specific phrases in that verse relate to a Christian today.
3. Beside the probability that a foreign wife may want to continue worshipping pagan gods, what might be the problem for a king of Israel to have offspring from that relationship? What parallel might this have to a Christian's life?
4. The *other* buildings that were part of Solomon's project seemed to be larger and took more time and attention than the Temple itself — which causes us to wonder if he got a little carried away. In what areas of your life is it a temptation to get carried away with projects or activities that may begin to eclipse your time and attention to serve the Lord?
5. Does it trouble you, or comfort you, that God would come to inhabit this Temple, given some of the imperfections we've noted about Solomon and his reign? Why?

Week Five — 1 Kings 8-9 — The Promise

This chapter describes a national day of celebration as hadn't been seen since David brought the Ark into Jerusalem many years ago. Everything in this chapter is positive — which I think speaks of God's magnificent forbearance. We've been scrutinizing Solomon's life, and already we know it was far from exemplary. But God, in His mercy, still desired to dwell with His people and keep His promise to David.

In many ways, the surface layer will highlight celebration and dedication, and the layer beneath will teach us about God's long-suffering and mercy.

Day 1:

READ 1 Kings 8:1-11 — The Ark Returns to Its Rest

The **Ark** is the focal point of this passage. It is mentioned eight times in these eleven verses. It would have been possible to simply have the priests move the Ark into its new resting place, but an important opportunity for celebration and unity would have been lost.

- From **v.1-3**, what words/phrases describe the unifying effect this feast had on the nation?

- Who did the actual carrying of the Ark (**v.3**)?

- What activities accompanied this transfer of the Ark (**v.5**)?

- What was inside the Ark that represented the *covenant* that God had made with Israel (**v.9**)?

Now think about this for a moment. The **Law** resided inside the Ark, under the covering called the Mercy Seat. We know that the Law was given to help us understand how far short we fall from God's requirements (**Galatians 3:10-13**). Write a sentence describing the incredible symbolism conveyed by the **Law** residing *underneath* the **Mercy Seat**.

- Describe what happened once the Ark was placed in the inner sanctuary (**v.10-11**).

Consider the completion of the Wilderness Tabernacle and how God revealed His presence in the days of Moses.

- Compare **v.10** with **Exodus 40:34**. What are the similarities?
- Compare **v.11** with **Exodus 40:35**. What are the similarities?

What a magnificent event! God allowed His presence to descend and fill the House that had been built for His name.

...a cloud filled the house of the Lord...for the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord. 8:10-11

Day 2:

The title of this week's lesson is *The Promise*. Today's text is where the light really shines on God's promises — mentioned seven times. Solomon mentions God's promise given to David, but he also reaches back to the exodus from Egypt to draw a more complete timeline of God's steadfast love and care for His covenant people.

✞ READ 1 Kings 8:12-21 — In which Solomon Addresses the People

This chapter is almost identical to 2 Chronicles 6, with one very small addition in the later text.

- Read 2 Chronicles 6:13 and describe the arrangement that Solomon had put together for this occasion.

As we said, Solomon clearly linked the fulfillment of God's promise with the nation's rescue from Egypt and he framed his message with that reminder. Complete the missing words from these verses.

"Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who with his hand has fulfilled what he promised with his mouth to David my father, saying,

v.16 Since the day that I brought _____ out of

_____ ...

v.21 the covenant of the Lord that he made with _____

when he brought them out of the land of _____ ...

There is an interesting phrase that surfaces regularly in the Solomon texts (six times). It is found here in **v.20: *I have built the house for the***

It will make a lot of sense as we read on in this dedication ceremony to hear Solomon speak to God Himself.

"But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have built!" 8:27

📖 READ 1 Kings 8:22-30 — In which Solomon Addresses God

Here we have Solomon turning his attention to God and speaking directly to Him.

- What impresses you about his first sentence (v.23-24)?

- In what ways do you see a positive model for your own prayers?

Solomon just spent the better part of a decade building a House for the *Name of the Lord*, and yet, look at his statement in v.27, "*Heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have built!*"

- What do you think Solomon hoped for as he admitted that God can't be contained in a house, but still asked that His eyes and ears would be toward that place?

...the place of which you have said, 'My name shall be there'

8:29

- The very last word in v.30 is the word _____.

In tomorrow's lesson, we'll study the remainder of the chapter in which Solomon lists all sorts of situations, where disobedience could be a reality. The God of mercy would remain the nation's only hope.

Day 3:

READ 1 Kings 8:31-53 — Prayer of Dedication—Please Forgive

In today's passage, we'll study seven situations in which something might not be right in the people's lives. Solomon mentioned each of these situations to the Lord and they each have a similar pattern:

- ◆ If/when something is not right...
- ◆ If/when people pray...
- ◆ Then please hear from Heaven and act or restore

We'll keep today's lesson simple. Read through each of the seven sections, noting what is *not right*, and how Solomon asked that God would hear, act, restore, forgive, etc.

V.31-32:

V.33-34:

V.35-36:

V.37-40:

V.41-43:

V.44-45:

V.46-53:

The text of the final plight is about four times longer than any of the other six situations.

- If you know the approaching history in the Old Testament, what is strangely prophetic about this situation of which Solomon speaks?
- What reminder did Solomon give God once more in **v.51**?
- Why do you think that was significant?

"For you separated them from among all the peoples of the earth to be your heritage ... when you brought our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord GOD." 8:53

Day 4:

🔗 READ 1 Kings 8:54-61 — A Benediction of Blessing

These eight verses are worth reading very slowly and intentionally. They are a classic example of the benefit we receive in our study when we ask, *What does it say? What does it mean? What does it mean to me?*

- What do you think Solomon meant by his words, ‘God had given rest to his people’, as stated in **v.56**?

- What is significant about Solomon asking for God’s help to incline all of their hearts to him (**v.58**)?

- What was the desired result of Israel walking in obedience and depending on the Lord, as stated in **v.60**?

🔗 READ 1 Kings 8:62-66 — A Send-off of Blessing

Can you imagine all of those peace offerings? It *was* over a seven-day period, but still, that must have been a dedication like no one had ever experienced before!

- Describe the condition of the people, as they all left for their homes.

"Blessed be the Lord who has given rest to his people Israel, according to all that he promised." 8:56

 **READ 1 Kings 9:1-9 — The Lord Appeared to Solomon**

Right on the heels of the grand dedication, God appeared to Solomon again. This was the second *appearance* (similar to the time at Gibeon when Solomon also worshiped and offered sacrifices). But this is actually the third in a string of similar messages to Solomon — all containing warnings for disobedience or turning toward other gods.

God affirmed Solomon's prayer and honored the House built for his name by *consecrating* it, meaning *setting it apart as holy*.

- In **v.3**, what did God promise to *associate* with the House?

- In **v.4-5**, what did He promise Solomon and his descendants if he would walk before God with integrity and uprightness?

God had **consecrated**. Now, it was up to the king and the people to **obey**! In order to make His point clear, God punctuated His message with an unexpected warning of the destruction of the very Temple that had just been consecrated.

We've already noticed in our study that Solomon hasn't been 100% obedient to God's commands. Once again, we sense God's abundant long-suffering as He gives extra warnings and extra time. The core focus of this message is a warning of spiritual and covenantal unfaithfulness. Consider what God was saying by finishing these phrases:

V.6 *But if you _____ from following _____*

V.6 *but go and serve _____ and _____ them*

V.9 *Because they _____ the _____ their _____*

Day 5:

🔗 READ 1 Kings 9:10-28 — A King and a Business Man

The rest of this chapter outlines a few things that we should note:

- What did Solomon give to Hiram in payment for all of his help with building the temple complex and palaces (v.11)?
- Based on what you know about God's instructions to Israel to conquer the land (since the days of Joshua), how is this gift a reversal of God's command?

Another problem we encounter is Solomon's wife — Pharaoh's daughter. In this chapter, it merely says that she went up to her own house.

- Read also the companion passage in **2 Chronicles 8:11**. Why did Solomon think that a change was necessary for her housing?

And finally, when all the building was accomplished and Solomon was free to use his time in whatever way he wanted...

- Who did Solomon link arms with in business (v.27)?
- For what purpose?
- Read **Deuteronomy 17:17** again and explain why this is a problem.

It will all become more clear in the next and final week's study, which is entitled, *The Problem*.

Questions for Thought & Discussion

1. Read **John 1:14**. What comparison can you make between that verse and the events from these chapters?
2. In what ways did Solomon draw upon the love and faithfulness of God in his prayer? How is that an example for your prayers?
3. In what ways did Solomon lean upon the power of God in his prayer? How can that be an example to you for your prayer life?
4. Solomon asked that God would help incline His people's hearts to him (**8:58**). Why would this be a useful prayer in your own life? How does your heart need to be inclined toward God?
5. Solomon stated, in **8:60**, that his desire to see God's work in their lives would be so *that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God; there is no other*. How important is it to you that people see the grace and power of God in your life?
6. Are there any aspects of worship that you have noticed in these chapters that you feel could be implemented or improved upon in your life?

Week Six — 1 Kings 10-11 — The Problem

It hasn't been enjoyable to point out the many shortfalls in Solomon's life. It may even cause us to reflect more on our own shortcomings, like Solomon said in chapter 8, "*for there is no one who does not sin.*" We also wonder if it's even fair to indict him on charges of excesses since it was God Himself who gave him wisdom and wealth (3:12-13).

But the question remains, *What did Solomon do with his wisdom?* It doesn't seem as though he applied his wisdom to searching out God's commands. And what about his wealth? Yes, he built the House of the Lord — but he built an even larger house for himself. Also, you'll note that the word **gold** is mentioned fourteen times in chapter ten. Solomon had indeed cultivated an appetite for excess.

Is that the worst sin there is, you ask? Maybe not, but God repeatedly warned Solomon about his excesses and their consequences. God had been long-suffering for twenty-plus years! Now, we have the sad task of witnessing his kingdom unravel. But first, along comes the Queen of Sheba to remind us that *pride comes before the fall!*

Day 1: _____

READ 1 Kings 10:1-13 — The Queen of Sheba

V.1-8— Everything on the surface of these verses seems fantastic! What a positive representative of the Lord, Solomon must have seemed to the Queen of Sheba.

- What were some of the aspects of her visit that really made an impression on her?

V.9-13— The Queen of Sheba praised Solomon’s God for making him King and making him a successful king. She gave him an abundance of gifts and also received an abundance of gifts from Solomon.

- What do you think the Queen’s praise may have been intended to produce?

V.11-12— We find an abrupt interruption, in the narrative of Solomon and the Queen, giving and receiving gifts, to mention Hiram again.

- What do you think the author may have intended us to think about that?

Day 2:

READ 1 Kings 10:14-29 — Solomon’s Great Wealth

This is the focus of Solomon’s life now — hobnobbing with other wealthy political figures and merchants — making deals — receiving lavish and exotic products from faraway lands.

- We never want to make more of some detail than we should, but what is suspicious about the weight of the gold told us in **v.14**?

Shields are very important to a successful military. Since gold isn't actually a very hard metal, bronze may have made a sturdier shield if hand-to-hand combat was in view.

- What do you suppose was the purpose of all of those gold shields that were placed in the House of the Forest of Lebanon?

- List some of the other excesses and extravagances that were detailed in **v.18-22**.

V.26-29— This section concludes with a record of the horses, chariots and attending horsemen that were part of Solomon's collection and business. We already considered God's prohibition in Deuteronomy about not sending His people down to Egypt for horses, which would be a reversal of God's deliverance *out of Egypt*, in which He drowned the horses and chariots in the sea.

- Also read **Psalms 20:7** (which Solomon's father penned) and **Isaiah 31:1-3** and explain why this final summary is so troubling.

*There is a way that seems right to a man,
but its end is the way to death. ~ Proverbs 14:12*

Day 3:

📖 READ 1 Kings 11:1-8 — Solomon Turns from the Lord

Of all the prohibitions from **Deuteronomy 17** that Solomon violated, we hadn't yet technically read about *many* wives. We were troubled that he took a wife from Egypt, but now, in **v.1**, our suspicions are confirmed — he had crossed the forbidden boundaries on *all* counts.

- To drive home the example of his excesses, list all of the nations from which Solomon took wives (**v.1**).

- Why did God forbid marriage between His people and the people from the surrounding nations (**v.2**)?

- Record the tally of Solomon's partners:
_____ wives (princesses) _____ concubines.

- What did Solomon do to help his wives worship their gods (**v.7-8**)?

- What was the spiritual result of his affection for all these foreign women (**v.3-4**)?

In **v.6**, we are told that what Solomon did *was evil in the sight of the Lord*. That phrase begins here and will be used almost three dozen times in the remainder of **1&2 Kings** to describe the actions of future kings and the people of Israel themselves.

- Given the immediate context of this passage, explain the significance of this phrase.

When an unbeliever sins, they are merely walking in step with their nature. But when God's children commit evil, they do damage to the name of God.

Day 4: _____

🔗 READ 1 Kings 11:9-25 — Hadad and Rezon

The Lord is long-suffering with His people's failures, and He has been patient with Solomon for a couple of decades now. He's also warned him twice via personal visits! Now, the aspect of God's character that rises to the surface is that of a Father who is unwilling to tolerate disobedience indefinitely but must resort to discipline.

- Why was the Lord's anger kindled (**v.9**)?

- What was the Lord's disciplinary action against Solomon (**v.11**)?

- What was the one vestige of the kingdom that God intended to preserve (v.13)?

V.14–22— We’re given the *back story* of Hadad the Edomite, a man God would use as a disciplinary force from the south in Solomon’s kingdom once Solomon, himself, was gone. We learn that Pharaoh is an equal opportunity treaty-maker and wife-giver to not only Israel, but also Edom.

V.23-25— We also learn the *backstory* of Rezon of Syria, another adversary whom God would use for His purpose, from the north.

As the narrative moves on, neither of these two men amount to much more than an adversarial nuisance. But perhaps their inclusion here is meant to signal that God’s hand of protection from Israel’s enemies was beginning to be lifted.

Day 5: _____

READ 1 Kings 11:26-43 — Jeroboam and Reheboam

Immediately, we’re introduced, by name, to a third adversary that will amount to something!

- What was the name of Solomon’s servant in v.26?
- Describe some of his attributes from v.28 that likely could have appealed to Solomon.
- Name the prophet who is introduced in v.29.

Ahijah demonstrated what was to come with an object lesson from a torn garment.

Comment on the surprising amount of detail given to Jeroboam.

- What would happen (v.31-32)?
- Why would it happen (v.33)?
- When would it happen (v.34-35)?
- Who would receive the remaining tribe (v.36)?
- Who would receive the rest of the nation of Israel (v.37)?

Surprisingly, God not only offered the majority of the nation to a man who was NOT a descendant of David, but then promised him a sure house if he would only follow God's ways. Obviously, Solomon felt the threat and Jeroboam had to flee until the fullness of time when Solomon breathed his last.

This is *not* a satisfying place to end — but from this point through the remainder of the Old Testament, there is precious little satisfaction found in the story of God's desire to dwell among His people! UNTIL, we turn the page to the Gospels and find Jesus Himself entering into Israel's reality, entering the Temple once more, bringing the promise that God's plan to dwell *with* (in) His people was about to be fulfilled.

My prayer is that you've invited God to come *dwell* with you in your own heart through the forgiveness of Jesus, and that you treasure that reality and abide richly in Him as well!

Until our next study — be blessed and dwell safely in God's presence!

Sue

Questions for Thought & Discussion

1. There are many ways in which Solomon's life was different than our lives — but one striking feature is that his life was devoid of trouble (for the most part). Read **James 1:1-5** and explain how a life that includes trouble may be superior to a life of ease.
2. Read **Matthew 6:28-30**. How did Jesus view the wealth and splendor of Solomon? What does that mean for your life?
3. David was a man after God's heart and Solomon was the wisest man who lived, yet neither of them was able to walk completely upright before God. Discuss what this teaches us about mankind's need for a Savior.
4. What are some of the most useful lessons that you can apply in your own life, as you have studied Solomon's mistakes?
5. Taking these eleven chapters as a whole, share with your group the character trait of God you have found most prominent and explain why.

*For we are the temple of the living God; as God said,
"I will make my dwelling among them and walk among
them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."
~ 2 Corinthians 6:16*

REFERENCES

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Map on p.8 courtesy of **Alexander Cooney**

Drawings on p.24-29 courtesy of **Miriam Barbee**

Women of the Word Bible Studies

The following WOW Bible Studies written by Sue LeBoutillier are available through the **Calvary Chapel Ontario bookstore**, and through our online store at www.ccontario.com.

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- **Genesis** — Divine Design, From Eden to Egypt
- **Exodus** — Divine Deliverance, From Egypt to Sinai
- **Numbers** — The Wilderness Way, From Sinai to the Jordan
- **Joshua** — The Path of Promise, From the Jordan into Canaan
- **Judges** — A Time of Turning
- **Ruth** — Walking with My Redeemer
- **1 Samuel** — The Coming King
- **2 Samuel** — The Reigning King
- **1 & 2 Kings (Part One)** — Solomon and the House of the Lord
- **Jonah** — The Call of Compassion

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- **Simply Jesus** — The “I AMs” of Christ in the Gospel of John
- **Acts** — Walking in the Spirit, The First Days of the Last Days
- **Romans 12** — Living with Purpose
- **Galatians** — Finding Grace in a Demanding World
- **Philippians** — Finding Joy in a Disjointed World
- **Colossians** — Finding Stability in a Changing World
- **Titus** — While We Wait
- **James** — Real Faith for Daily Life
- **1 & 2 Peter** — Hope, Holiness and Humility in a Hostile World
- **1,2,3 John** — Light, Love and Logic, Lessons from the Apostle John