

SECOND CHRONICLES

LESSON FOURTEEN 1-4

I. THE HISTORY OF KING SOLOMON (1:1-9:31)

SOLOMON'S KINGDOM

THE TEMPLE AND ITS FURNISHINGS

1. SOLOMON AT GIBEON (II Chronicles, Chapter 1)

INTRODUCTION

Solomon's choice of wisdom qualified him to be a very effective leader of Israel. He is faithful as he begins to carry out the work that his father, David had committed to him. The details of the Temple and the elaborate appointments for its adornment describe the beauty of this amazing building.

TEXT

Chapter 1:1. And Solomon the son of David was strengthened in his kingdom, and Jehovah his God was with him, and magnified him exceedingly. 2. And Solomon spake unto all Israel, to the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and to the judges, and to every prince in all Israel the heads of the fathers' houses. 3. So Solomon, and all the assembly with him, went to the high place that was at Gibeon; for there was the tent of meeting of God, which Moses the servant of Jehovah had made in the wilderness. 4. But the ark of God had David brought up from Kiriath-jearim to the place that David had prepared for it; for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem. 5. Moreover the brazen altar, that Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made, was there before the tabernacle of Jehovah: and Solomon and the assembly sought unto it. 6. And Solomon went up thither to the brazen altar before Jehovah, which was at the tent of meeting, and offered a thousand burnt-offerings upon it.

7. In that night did God appear unto Solomon, and said unto him, "Ask what I shall give thee." 8. And Solomon said

unto God, "Thou hast showed great lovingkindness unto David my father, and hast made me king in his stead. 9. "Now, O Jehovah God, let thy promise unto David my father be established; for thou hast made me king over a people like the dust of the earth in multitude. 10. "Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people; for who can judge this thy people, that is so great?" 11. And God said to Solomon, "Because this was in thy heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth, or honor, nor the life of them that hate thee, neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, that thou mayest judge my people, over whom I have made thee king: 12. wisdom and knowlege is granted unto thee? and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honor, such as none of the kings have had that have been before thee; neither shall there any after thee have the like." 13. So Solomon came from the high place that was at Gibeon, from before the tent of meeting, unto Jerusalem; and he reigned over Israel.

14. And Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen: for he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, that he placed in the chariot cities, and with the king at Jerusalem. 15. And the king made silver and gold to be in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he to be as the sycamore-trees that are in the lowland, for abundance. 16. And the horses which Solomon had were brought out of Egypt; the king's merchants received them in droves, each drove at a price. 17. And they fetched up and brought out of Egypt a chariot for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for a hundred and fifty: and so for all the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of Syria, did they bring them out by their means.

PARAPHRASE

Chapter 1:1. King David's son Solomon was now the undisputed ruler of Israel, for the Lord his God had made him a powerful monarch. 2, 3. He summoned all the army officers and judges to Gibeon as well as all the political and religious leaders of Israel. He led them up to the hill to the old Tabernacle

constructed by Moses, the Lord's assistant, while he was in the wilderness. 4. (There was a later Tabernacle in Jerusalem, built by King David for the Ark of God when he removed it from Kiriath-jearim.) 5, 6. The bronze altar made by Bezalel (son of Uri, son of Hur) still stood in front of the old Tabernacle, and now Solomon and those he had invited assembled themselves before it, as he sacrificed upon it 1,000 burnt offerings to the Lord.

7. That night God appeared to Solomon and told him, "Ask me for anything, and I will give it to you!" 8. Solomon replied, "O God, you have been so kind and good to my father David, and now you have given me the kingdom—9. this is all I want! For you have fulfilled your promise to David my father and have made me king over a nation as full of people as the earth is full of dust! 10. Now give me wisdom and knowledge to rule them properly, for who is able to govern by himself such a great nation as this one of yours?" 11. God replied, "Because your greatest desire is to help your people, and you haven't asked for personal wealth and honor, and you haven't asked me to curse your enemies, and you haven't asked for a long life, but for wisdom and knowledge to properly guide my people—12. yes, I am giving you the wisdom and knowledge you asked for! And I am also giving you such riches, wealth, and honor as no other king has ever had before you! And there will never again be so great a king in all the world!" 13. Solomon then left the Tabernacle, returned down the hill, and went back to Jerusalem to rule Israel.

14. He built up a huge force of 1,400 chariots and recruited 12,000 cavalry to guard the cities where the chariots were garaged, though some, of course, were stationed at Jerusalem near the king. 15. During Solomon's reign, silver and gold were as plentiful in Jerusalem as rocks on the road! And expensive cedar lumber was used like common sycamore! 16. Solomon sent horse-traders to Egypt to purchase entire herds at wholesale prices. 17. At that time Egyptian chariots sold for \$400 each and horses for \$100, delivered at Jerusalem. Many of these were then resold to the kings of the Hittites and Syria.

COMMENTARY

—First and second Chronicles were considered as one book in the Hebrew canon. II Chronicles, chapter 1 concerns itself with the reign of Solomon, a very proper sequel to I Chronicles, chapter 29. II Chronicles 1:1 repeats I Chronicles 29:25. "Jehovah magnified Solomon exceedingly." In the transfer of authority from David to Solomon, the young king had every advantage which would promise a highly successful reign. As the human leader, Solomon was in complete control of the kingdom. All of the captains, judges, and princes gave attention to the king's words. Solomon was about twenty years of age when he became king. The prospects for a great era in Israel's history were exceptionally good. One of Solomon's first official acts was to call a grand assembly of all Israel to meet in Gibeon in Benjamin about five miles north of Jerusalem. At some time prior to this assembly the tabernacle (tent of meeting) had been set up at Gibeon. Everything that pertained to the tabernacle was there at Gibeon except the ark of the covenant which was in Jerusalem.¹ That which seemed so very important at this time in connection with the tabernacle was the altar of burnt offering. Bezalel is named as the one who had constructed the altar. This had been done in Moses' day at Mount Sinai (Exodus 31:1-11). The high place at Gibeon became very sacred to Solomon. "He offered a thousand burnt offerings" upon the altar. In spite of all the preparations made for the Temple, Solomon did not begin to build the great building until the fourth year of his reign (I Kings 6:1). In this period Solomon was often at Gibeon worshiping Jehovah.

On one of these occasions at Gibeon God appeared to Solomon in a very vivid visitation. Jehovah graciously offered to grant any request Solomon might make. Considering the circumstances and the timing of this proposition, it was a time of real testing for the new king. The promised establishment of the house of David (II Samuel 7) was a consideration of primary importance. Solomon was very appreciative of Jehovah's blessings and he humbly admitted that he had a most

¹Spence, H. D. M., *The Pulpit Commentary*, II Chronicles, p. 5

demanding position to fill in behalf of a people who "were like the dust of the earth", a great multitude. Solomon's request for "wisdom and knowledge" revealed his strength of character. "Knowledge" has to do with any kind of factual information which might come to a person's consciousness. "Wisdom" is the practical application of knowledge. One acts wisely when he searches for all the facts that pertain to a given subject and decides what to do and say on the basis of what he has learned. On another occasion Solomon said, "the fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom" (Proverbs 9:10). In order to be able to use all of the resources at his command, the king knew that he had to be humble in his relationship with Jehovah. The king had to move among God's people. His every word and deed would be tested by fire. No mere human being relying upon himself could succeed in this high office. Jehovah knew Solomon's heart and He was pleased at the king's request.

The young king had made his decision and Jehovah did not hesitate to answer. For one in such a place as that in which Solomon found himself the kinds of things he could have requested were without limit. Without regard for others, the king could have acted like the prodigal son in Jesus' parable. He chose the best way when he asked for wisdom and knowledge for the peoples' benefit. Jehovah was well pleased. When God gives a person the capacity to know, there is no limit to the dimensions of that consciousness. Is it possible that the wonderful intellectual sensitivity which was Adam's before he sinned is now in large measure given to Solomon by Jehovah's decree? Solomon was to be wise, not by natural endowment, not by diligent study on his own part. Solomon's wisdom was Jehovah's gift to this select person. These unique gifts would bless the king and his people as long as both kept faith with God. If the king and Israel should break covenant, the very life-line with Jehovah would be severed. "Riches, wealth, and honor" would be Solomon's portion. Even in these matters as a wise king he would use the kingdom's wealth to benefit the citizens and he would find in his personal honor additional opportunity to be Jehovah's humble servant. No king ever

enjoyed a more exciting and promising beginning of a reign. In the glow of the sacred experience at Gibeon Solomon climbed the road to Jerusalem and began his reign.

Solomon soon involved himself in establishing chariotry installations in strategic places in the kingdom. Considered from a military standpoint, the horses and chariots were useful, but probably not necessary. Israel was already strong militarily. Fourteen hundred chariots and twelve thousand horses imported into Israel would cause some concern in Egypt and other surrounding countries. Egypt became a famous market for horses and chariots. People who lived in Asia Minor and other people who lived in the regions of Syria traded with Egypt. Horses could be purchased more cheaply than chariots. These were days of great prosperity in Israel. Tribute flowed into Solomon's treasury in great abundance. The proverbial expression, "gold like stones and cedars like sycamore trees", in an exaggerated way described good days in Israel.

2. PREPARATIONS FOR THE TEMPLE (Chapter 2)

TEXT

Chapter 2:1. Now Solomon purposed to build a house for the name of Jehovah, and a house for his kingdom. 2. And Solomon counted out threescore and ten thousand men to bear burdens, and fourscore thousand men that were hewers in the mountains, and three thousand six hundred to oversee them. 3. And Solomon sent to Hiram the king of Tyre, saying, "As thou didst deal with David my father, and didst send him cedars to build him a house to dwell therein, even so deal with me. 4. "Behold, I am about to build a house for the name of Jehovah my God, to dedicate it to him, and to burn before him incense of sweet spices, and for the continual showbread, and for the burnt-offerings morning and evening, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the set feasts of Jehovah our God. This is an ordinance forever to Israel. 5. "And the house which I build is great; for great is our God above all gods. 6. "But who is able to build him a house, seeing heaven and the heaven of

heavens cannot contain him? Who am I then, that I should build him a house, save only to burn incense before him? 7. "Now therefore send me a man skillful to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in iron, and in purple, and crimson, and blue, and that knoweth how to grave all manner of gravings, to be with the skillful men that are with me in Judah and in Jerusalem, whom David my father did provide. 8. "Send me also cedar-trees, fir-trees, and algum-trees, out of Lebanon; for I know that thy servants know how to cut timber in Lebanon. And, behold, my servants shall be with thy servants, 9. even to prepare me timber in abundance; for the house which I am about to build shall be great and wonderful. 10. "And, behold, I will give to thy servants, the hewers that cut timber, twenty thousand measures of beaten wheat, and twenty thousand measures of barley, and twenty thousand baths of wine, and twenty thousand baths of oil."

11. Then Hiram the king of Tyre answered in writing, which he sent to Solomon, Because Jehovah loveth his people, he hath made thee king over them. 12. Hiram said moreover, "Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Israel, that made heaven and earth, who hath given to David the king a wise son, endued with discretion and understanding, that should build a house for Jehovah, and a house for his kingdom. 13. "And now I have sent a skillful man, endued with understanding, of Hiram my father's, 14. the son of a woman of the daughters of Dan; and his father was a man of Tyre, skillful to work in gold, and in silver, in brass, in iron, in stone, and in timber, in purple, in blue, and in fine linen, and in crimson, also to grave any manner of graving, and to devise any device; that there may be a place appointed unto him with thy skillful men, and with the skillful men of my lord David thy father. 15. "Now therefore the wheat and the barley, the oil and the wine, which my lord hath spoken of, let him send unto his servants: 16. "and we will cut wood out of Lebanon, as much as thou shalt need; and we will bring it to thee in floats by sea to Joppa; and thou shalt carry it up to Jerusalem."

17. And Solomon numbered all the sojourners that were in

the land of Israel, after the numbering wherewith David his father had numbered them; and they were found a hundred and fifty thousand and three thousand and six hundred. 18. And he set threescore and ten thousand of them to bear burdens, and fourscore thousand that were hewers in the mountains, and three thousand and six hundred overseers to set the people at work.

PARAPHRASE

Chapter 2:1. Solomon now decided that the time had come to build a temple for the Lord and a palace for himself. 2. This required a force of 70,000 laborers, 80,000 stonemasons in the hills, and 3,600 foremen. 3. Solomon sent an ambassador to King Hiram at Tyre, requesting shipments of cedar lumber such as Hiram had supplied to David when he was building his palace. 4. "I am about to build a temple for the Lord my God," Solomon told Hiram. "It will be a place where I can burn incense and sweet spices before God, and display the special sacrificial bread, and sacrifice burnt offerings each morning, and evening, and on the Sabbaths, and at the new moon celebration and other regular festivals of the Lord our God. For God wants Israel always to celebrate these special occasions. 5. It is going to be a wonderful temple because he is a great God, greater than any other. 6. But who can ever build him a worthy home? Not even the highest heaven would be beautiful enough! And who am I to be allowed to build a temple for God? But it will be a place to worship him.

7. "So send me skilled craftsmen—goldsmiths and silversmiths, brass and iron workers; and send me weavers to make purple, crimson, and blue cloth; and skilled engravers to work beside the craftsmen of Judah and Jerusalem who were selected by my father David. 8. Also send me cedar trees, fir trees, and algum trees from the Forests of Lebanon, for your men are without equal as lumbermen, and I will send my men to help them. 9. An immense amount of lumber will be needed, for the temple I am going to build will be huge and incredibly beautiful. 10. As to the financial arrangements, I will pay your

men 20,000 sacks of crushed wheat, 20,000 barrels of barley, 20,000 barrels of wine, and 20,000 barrels of olive oil.”

11. King Hiram replied to King Solomon: “It is because the Lord loves his people that he has made you their king!” 12. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel who made the heavens and the earth and who has given to David such a wise, intelligent, and understanding son to build God’s Temple, and a royal palace for himself. 13. “I am sending you a master craftsman—my famous Hiramabi! He is a brilliant man, 14. the son of a Jewish woman from Dan in Israel; his father is from here in Tyre. He is a skillful goldsmith and silversmith, and also does exquisite work with brass and iron, and knows all about stonework, carpentry, and weaving; and he is an expert in the dying of purple and blue linen and crimson cloth. He is an engraver besides, and an inventor! He will work with your craftsmen and those appointed by my lord David, your father. 15. So send along the wheat, barley, olive oil, and wine you mentioned, 16. and we will begin cutting wood from the Lebanon mountains, as much as you need, and bring it to you in log floats across the sea to Joppa, and from there you can take them inland to Jerusalem.”

17. Solomon now took a census of all foreigners in the country (just as his father David had done) and found that there were 153,600 of them. 18. He indentured 70,000 as common laborers, 80,000 as loggers and 3,600 as foremen.

COMMENTARY

As Solomon considered the Temple, he desired “to build a house for the name of Jehovah”.¹ It should be the kind of building that would give wings to a man’s imagination as he thought of the character of Jehovah. Two kinds of houses are suggested in 2:1. Solomon would build Jehovah’s Temple and he would also build for himself a whole range of palaces. Seventy thousand men would bear burdens. Eighty thousand

¹Larue, Gerald A., *Old Testament Life and Literature*, Allyn and Bacon Inc., Boston, 1968, p. 351. Grosvenor, Melville B., *Everyday Life in Bible Times*, National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C., 1967, p. 222.

men would cut timbers in the Lebanon Forests. Men who would oversee these laborers numbered three thousand six hundred. In David's day good relations had been established with the Phoenician people. Solomon turned to Hiram (Hiram), king of Tyre and requested provision of cedar timbers. He would, at the same time, assure the Phoenicians that Israel would allow them to keep their territory by the sea. In the word sent to Hiram, Solomon emphasized that he was going to build a "great house", a house "great and wonderful", one that would require the finest building materials Hiram could provide. The kinds of religious exercises to be conducted at the Temple involved the burning of incense, the presentation of showbread, the morning and evening sacrifices, the special offerings for sabbath days and feast days. The Phoenician king would not be familiar with all of these services; but their mention would help him understand the importance of this "house". Even though Solomon was requesting goods from Gentiles, he boldly affirmed the supremacy of the God of Israel over all other gods. This did not imply that Solomon accepted the belief in other gods. Solomon's God was so great that no house would ever be sufficient to contain Him; yet the king of Israel would build a house worthy of Jehovah's name. He requested Hiram to send him materials and workmen for this project. The algum trees mentioned in verse 8 were usually imported from India or Ophir. In other places they are called "almug" trees. Phoenicia imported every kind of merchandise. She could have supplied some of this expensive wood. Solomon agreed to provide Hiram with twenty thousand measures (co-equal to about eleven bushels) of wheat and the same amount of barley. Twenty thousand baths (bath—equals about ten gallons) of wine and oil were also a part of Solomon's obligation to Hiram. The king of Tyre was well pleased with these arrangements. He pronounced blessings in Jehovah's name. He advised Solomon that he had procured the services of a skilled artisan (Hiram, I Kings 7:13, 14) whose mother was a Danite (perhaps at one time living in Naphtali) and whose father was from Tyre. This man combined the respective skills of Bezalel and Oholiab, the

master craftsmen of the Tabernacle. He could work in precious metals or in brass. He was a skilled carpenter. He was expert in the craft of textile fabrics. He was a master engraver. Hiram advised Solomon of his complete satisfaction with the proposed contract and of his willingness to do as Solomon had requested.

There was a considerable native population in Palestine that had not been removed by Israel. These were called "sojourners". In an enumeration, one hundred fifty three thousand six hundred such persons were counted. These were they who were subjected to taskwork by Solomon (verse 2).

3. BUILDING THE TEMPLE (3-5:1)

TEXT

Chapter 3:1. Then Solomon began to build the house of Jehovah at Jerusalem on mount Moriah, where Jehovah, appeared unto David his father, which he made ready in the place that David had appointed, in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite. 2. And he began to build in the second day of the second month, in the fourth year of his reign. 3. Now these are the foundations which Solomon laid for the building of the house of God. The length by cubits after the first measure was three-score cubits, and the breadth twenty cubits. 4. And the porch that was before the house, the length of it, according to the breadth of the house, was twenty cubits, and the height a hundred and twenty; and he overlaid it within with pure gold. 5. And the greater house he ceiled with fir-wood, which he overlaid with fine gold, and wrought thereon palm-trees and chains. 6. And he garnished the house with precious stones for beauty: and the gold was gold of Parvaim. 7. He overlaid also the house, the beams, the thresholds, and the walls thereof, and the doors thereof, with gold; and graved cherubim on the walls.

8. And he made the most holy house: the length thereof, according to the breadth of the house, was twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty cubits; and he overlaid it with fine gold, amounting to six hundred talents. 9. And the weight of the nails was fifty shekels of gold. And he overlaid the upper chambers with gold.

10. And in the most holy house he made two cherubim of image work; and they overlaid them with gold. 11. And the wings of the cherubim were twenty cubits long: the wing of the one cherub was five cubits, reaching to the wall of the house; and the other wing was likewise five cubits, reaching to the wing of the other cherub. 12. And the wing of the other cherub was five cubits, reaching to the wall of the house; and the other wing was five cubits also, joining to the wing of the other cherub. 13. The wings of these cherubim spread themselves forth twenty cubits: and they stood on their feet, and their faces were toward the house. 14. And he made the veil of blue, and purple, and crimson, and fine linen, and wrought cherubim thereon.

15. Also he made before the house two pillars of thirty and five cubits high, and the capital that was on the top of each of them was five cubits. 16. And he made chains in the oracle, and put them on the tops of the pillars; and he made a hundred pomegranates, and put them on the chains. 17. And he set up the pillars before the temple, one on the right hand, and the other on the left; and called the name of that on the right hand Jachin, and the name of that on the left Boaz.

Chapter 4:1. Moreover he made an altar of brass, twenty cubits the length thereof, and twenty cubits the breadth thereof, and ten cubits the height thereof. 2. Also he made the molten sea of ten cubits from brim to brim, round in compass; and the height thereof was five cubits; and a line of thirty cubits compassed it round about. 3. And under it was the likeness of oxen, which did compass it round about, for ten cubits, compassing the sea round about. The oxen were in two rows, cast when it was cast. 4. It stood upon twelve oxen, three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the west, and three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east: and the sea was set upon them above, and all their hinder parts were inward. 5. And it was a handbreadth thick; and the brim thereof was wrought like the brim of a cup, like the flower of a lily: it received and held three thousand baths. 6. He made also ten lavers, and put five on the right hand, and

five on the left, to wash in them; such things as belonged to the burnt-offering they washed in them; but the sea was for the priests to wash in.

7. And he made the ten candlesticks of gold according to the ordinance concerning them; and he set them in the temple, five on the right hand, and five on the left. 8. He made also ten tables, and placed them in the temple, five on the right side, and five on the left. And he made a hundred basins of gold. 9. Furthermore he made the court of the priests, and the great court, and doors for the court, and overlaid the doors of them with brass. 10. And he set the sea on the right side of the house eastward, toward the south.

11. And Hiram made the pots, and the shovels, and the basins. So Hiram made an end of doing the work that he wrought for king Solomon in the house of God: 12. the two pillars, and the bowls, and the two capitals which were on the top of the pillars, and the two networks to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were on the top of the pillars, 13. and the four hundred pomegranates for the two networks; two rows of pomegranates for each network, to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were upon the pillars. 14. He made also the bases, and the lavers made he upon the bases; 15. one sea, and the twelve oxen under it. 16. The pots also, and the shovels, and the flesh-hooks, and all the vessels thereof, did Hiram his father make for king Solomon, for the house of Jehovah, of bright brass. 17. In the plain of the Jordan did the king cast them, in the clay ground between Succoth and Zeredah. 18. Thus Solomon made all these vessels in great abundance: for the weight of the brass could not be found out.

19. And Solomon made all the vessels that were in the house of God, the golden altar also, and the tables whereon was the showbread; 20. and the candlesticks with their lamps, to burn according to the ordinance before the oracle, of pure gold; 21. and the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs of gold, and that perfect gold; 22. and the snuffers, and the basins, and the spoons, and the firepans, of pure gold. And as for the entry of the house, the inner doors thereof for the most holy place, and

the doors of the house, to wit, of the temple, were of gold.

Chapter 5:1. Thus all the work that Solomon wrought for the house of Jehovah was finished. And Solomon brought in the things that David his father had dedicated, even the silver, and the gold, and all the vessels, and put them in the treasuries of the house of God.

PARAPHRASE

Chapter 3:1. Finally the actual construction of the Temple began. Its location was in Jerusalem at the top of Mount Moriah, where the Lord had appeared to Solomon's father, King David, and where the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite had been. David had selected it as the site for the Temple. 2. The actual construction began on the seventeenth day of April in the fourth year of King Solomon's reign. 3. The foundation was ninety feet long and thirty feet wide. 4. A covered porch ran along the entire thirty-foot width of the house, with the inner walls and ceiling overlaid with pure gold! The roof was 180 feet high. 5. The main part of the Temple was paneled with cypress wood, plated with pure gold, and engraved with palm trees and chains. 6. Beautiful jewels were inlaid into the walls to add to the beauty; the gold, by the way, was of the best, from Parvaim. 7. All the walls, beams, doors, and thresholds throughout the Temple were plated with gold, with angels engraved on the walls.

8. Within the Temple, at one end, was the most sacred room—the Holy of Holies—thirty feet square. This too was overlaid with the finest gold, valued at \$18,000,000. 9. Twenty-six-ounce gold nails were used. The upper rooms were also plated with gold.

10. Within the innermost room, the Holy of Holies, Solomon placed two sculptured statues of angels, and plated them with gold. 11, 12, 13. They stood on the floor facing the outer room, with wings stretched wingtip to wingtip across the room, from wall to wall. 14. Across the entrance to this room he placed a veil of blue and crimson finespun linen, decorated with angels.

15. At the front of the Temple were two pillars $52\frac{1}{2}$ feet high, topped by a $7\frac{1}{2}$ foot capital flaring out to the roof. 16. He made chains and placed them on top of the pillars, with 100 pomegranates attached to the chains. 17. Then he set up the pillars at the front of the Temple, one on the right and the other on the left. And he gave them names: Jachin (the one on the right), and Boaz (the one on the left).

Chapter 4:1. He also made a bronze altar thirty feet long, thirty feet wide, and fifteen feet high. 2. Then he forged a huge round tank fifteen feet across from rim to rim. The rim stood $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet above the floor, and was forty-five feet around. 3. This tank was set on the backs of two rows of metal oxen. The tank and oxen were cast as one piece. 4. There were twelve of these oxen standing tail to tail, three facing north, three west, three south, and three east. 5. The walls of the tank were five inches thick, flaring out like the cup of a lily. It held 3,000 barrels of water. 6. He also constructed ten vats for water to wash the offerings, five to the right of the huge tank and five to the left. The priests used the tank, and not the vats, for their own washing.

7. Carefully following God's instructions, he then cast ten gold lampstands and placed them in the Temple, five against each wall; 8. he also built ten tables and placed five against each wall on the right and left. And he molded 100 solid gold bowls. 9. Then he constructed a court for the priests, also the public court, and overlaid the doors of these courts with bronze. 10. The huge tank was in the southeast corner of the outer room of the Temple.

11. Huramabi also made the necessary pots, shovels, and basins for use in connection with the sacrifices. So at last he completed the work assigned to him by King Solomon: 12-16. The construction of the two pillars, The two flared capitals on the tops of the pillars, The two sets of chains on the capitals, The 400 pomegranates hanging from the two sets of chains on the capitals, The bases for the vats, and the vats themselves, The huge tank and the twelve oxen under it, The pots, shovels, and fleshhooks. This skillful craftsman, Huramabi, made all of the

above-mentioned items for King Solomon, using polished bronze. 17, 18. The king did the casting at the claybanks of the Jordan valley between Succoth and Zeredah. Great quantities of bronze were used, too heavy to weigh.

19. But in the Temple only gold was used. For Solomon commanded that all of the utensils, the altar, and the table for the Bread of the Presence must be made of gold; 20. also the lambs and lampstands, 21. the floral decorations, tongs, 22. lamp snuffers, basins, spoons, and firepans—all were made of pure gold. Even the doorway of the Temple, the main door, and the inner doors to the Holy of Holies were of gold.

Chapter 5:1. So the Temple was finally finished. Then Solomon brought in the gifts dedicated to the Lord by his father, King David. They were stored in the Temple treasuries.

COMMENTARY

Moriah was located on the Eastern side of the city of Jerusalem. It may well have been the place where Abraham went to offer Isaac (Genesis 22:2), although some stoutly dispute this. It is identified as the location of Ornan's threshing floor where David offered the sacrifice that stopped the plague (I Chronicles 21:18). The place was already hallowed by sacrifice.¹ It was on an elevation commanding attention from all sections of Jerusalem. There seemed to be no doubt that this was Jehovah's choice for the building site for the Temple. Why Solomon waited until the fourth year of his reign is not clear. He might have wanted the beginning to coincide exactly with the four hundred eightieth anniversary of the release from Egypt (I Kings 6:1). He could have been so busy setting up his kingdom, entering into contracts with other countries, that he could not begin the work any earlier. We suggest that the date when the Temple was begun was about 967 B.C. This historian was careful to mark the second day of the second month for this important event. The rest of chapters three and four describe the Temple as it was built.

¹Clarke, Adam, *A Commentary and Critical Notes*, Vol. II, p. 638. Spence, H. D. M. *The Pulpit Commentary*, II Chronicles, p. 31.

The dimensions of the Temple proper (the Holy Place and the Oracle) were sixty cubits by twenty cubits. The Tabernacle had measured thirty cubits by ten cubits. The exact length of the cubit cannot now be determined. It is estimated to have varied between sixteen and twenty-one inches. The usually accepted standard for the cubit is eighteen inches. The porch served as an introduction to the Holy Place and is said to have measured twenty cubits in length and one hundred and twenty cubits in height. There was nothing like this in connection with the Tabernacle. I Kings 6:3 describes the porch as twenty cubits long and ten cubits broad, no reference being made to its height. Since the Temple measured thirty cubits in height, the porch would appear to be considerably out of proportion if it was one hundred cubits high. There is no satisfactory way to settle this matter. The interior of the porch was overlaid with pure gold. The skilled artisans who constructed the Tabernacle were experts in gold overlay. In this later day, Hiram and his fellow craftsmen brought their finest skills to these tasks.

“The greater house” (verse 5) was the Holy Place. The imported fir or cypress wood from Lebanon was used to cover the interior of the Holy Place. Artists carved palm trees and chains of wreathen work in this beautiful wood all of which was then overlaid with gold. This gold overlay would most likely be in the form of a transparency highlighting the grain of wood and the beauty of the carvings in the wood. The use of precious stones was not mentioned in the records in I Kings. I Chronicles 29:2 describes David’s collection of onyx stones, all kinds of precious stones, and marble stones. These were used in beautifying the interior of the Holy Place. The gold of Parvaim (verse 6) is difficult to identify because the location of Parvaim is unknown. It may describe a kind of gold of rare quality. The complete interior of the Holy Place was carved with cherubim (winged figures) and overlaid with gold. The priest would enter through the golden porch. In the Holy Place the priest walked on a golden floor, looked on walls and ceiling of gold.

“The most holy house” (the Oracle) measured twenty cubits in all three dimensions. It was a perfect cube (I Kings

6:20). The most holy place in the Tabernacle was ten cubits in all three dimensions. Since the height of the holy place was thirty cubits, there was another room ten cubits high above the Oracle. This room most likely contained "the upper chambers" which also were overlaid with gold. A very lavish proportion of gold (600 talents) was applied to the Most Holy Place as an overlay. This Oracle must have been a place of exquisite beauty defying description.

The cherubim in the tabernacle were fashioned out of the gold that formed the mercy seat, the cover for the ark. These were winged figures beneath whose wings the glory of Jehovah rested. These cherubim were in the Temple when the ark was moved into the Oracle. In addition to these cherubim, two cherubim of olivewood (I Kings 6:23) were made to hover over the ark. Each cherub was overlaid with gold and had a wingspan of ten cubits. The ark rested between these cherubim and the tip of a wing of each cherub touched a wall of the Oracle. The cherubim looked toward the Holy Place. These sacred creatures always represented the presence and the unapproachableness of Jehovah. A wall divided the Oracle from the Holy Place (I Kings 6:31, 32). Two doors of olive-wood provided entrance to the Oracle. This wall was draped with a beautiful multi-colored fine linen veil. Chains of gold were a part of this divider between the Oracle and the Holy Place (I Kings 6:21).

Two pillars of brass were made to be set at the entrance to the Holy Place. Each of these was thirty-five cubits high with a capital five cubits high crowning the column. The account in I Kings 7:15 gives the height of each pillar as eighteen cubits plus the five cubit capital. These dimensions are proportionate with those of the porch. The thirty five cubits in our present reference (verse 15) may be explained as an error by a scribe. These pillars were ornately decorated and were situated so as to command the entrance to the Holy Place. The one on the right was named Jachin (shall establish). Boaz (in it is strength) was the name for the left pillar. Those who worshipped Jehovah and went in and out of His Temple would be strengthened and established by God.

The great altar of brass was placed in the court of priests and measured twenty cubits by twenty cubits by ten cubits. The altar in the Tabernacle was five cubits by five cubits by three cubits. It has been estimated that as many as forty priests could serve at this altar at one time. The molten sea measured ten cubits in diameter. It was five cubits high and thirty cubits in circumference. The walls of the great vessel were four inches thick (a handbreadth). The reference in I Kings 7:26 indicates that the sea held two thousand baths. This may refer to the amount of water usually maintained in the vessel. The present reference (verse 5) states the capacity as three thousand baths. This may be the absolute capacity of the great sea. The estimated content of the "bath" as a liquid measure varies from about five to twelve gallons. The brim of this great vessel was ornamented "like the flower of a lily". It set upon a curiously wrought base consisting of the figures of twelve oxen. The number "twelve" was typical in its representation of the twelve tribes of Israel. The brazen sea was apparently reserved for the ceremonial washings of the priests.

Whereas there had been but one laver of brass in the Tabernacle, in addition to the great sea in the Temple there were ten lavers of brass. Each of these contained forty baths (I Kings 7:38) and was mounted on wheels so as to be mobile. These were used for the washing of the offerings and related services. Five of them were placed on either side of the court of priests.

The Temple was lighted by ten golden candlesticks. Five of these were located on either side of the Holy Place. I Kings 7:48 mentions "the table whereupon the showbread was". Here in verse 8 we read about ten tables and verse 19 refers to "tables whereon was the showbread". In the cleansing of the Temple in II Chronicles 29:18 only one table of showbread is mentioned. These ten tables may have been auxiliary to the other services in the Holy Place. The basins of gold would be used in the ministries in the Holy Place. The setting up of the court of priests in which the great altar, the sea, and the lavers were located was accomplished by laying a marble pavement and

enclosing the court with three courses of hewn stone and a course of cedar beams (I Kings 7:12). The "great court", or court of Israel enclosed the court of priests and like the other court, it too, was paved and protected by the rock wall.

All of the utensils necessary to the work of the Temple were made by Hiram. He completed the pillars of brass with all of their intricate decorations (four hundred pomegranates). The place where the casts were prepared for the works of brass was beyond the Jordan river near the Jabbok. The clay in that region was very useful for this purpose. So much brass was used in the Temple that no attempt was made to keep a record of it. The golden altar of incense, the candlesticks properly ornamented, the snuffers for servicing the lights, the firepans (golden censers), the doors for the Holy Place and the Oracle were all made according to the pattern by the master craftsman, Hiram.

SUMMARY QUESTIONS

LESSON FOURTEEN 1-4

438. How does the chronicler account for Solomon's greatness?
439. Carefully locate Gibeon and explain why this place was so important to Solomon.
440. Where was the ark of the covenant at this time? Where was the brazen altar?
441. With regard to the brazen altar explain the phrase, "and Solomon and the assembly sought unto it."
442. What does 1:6 say about burnt offerings?
443. Did God really speak to Solomon? Explain.
444. To what promise did Solomon refer in 1:9?
445. Relate Solomon's reference to a "people like the dust of the earth" to Genesis 13:16.
446. What offer did God make to Solomon in 1:7?
447. What request did Solomon make of God in 1:10?

448. List the other things Solomon might have asked for.
449. Define the terms "knowledge" and "wisdom" and distinguish between them.
450. Concerning wealth and honor, what did Jehovah promise?
451. What was the number of Solomon's chariots and horse-men? Why would he need these?
452. Explain the figures of speech used in 1:15.
453. Name the country which provided horses for Israel and neighboring nations.
454. How did the cost of a chariot compare with the cost of a horse?
455. Is more than one house mentioned in 2:1? Explain.
456. How many men did Solomon have to work on the Temple?
457. Who is the Hiram of 2:3?
458. How will this "house" be used as Solomon explains his purpose in building it?
459. What is the continual showbread?
460. Why does Solomon intend that the house be great and wonderful?
461. What is the answer to Solomon's question, "Who is able to build him a house?"
462. What kind of man does Solomon describe in 2:7?
463. Describe the "algum-tree".
464. Where did these trees grow?
465. List the goods Solomon would give in exchange for time and services of workmen.
466. How much is the measure called a "bath"?
467. How did Hiram inform Solomon concerning what he would do?
468. What did Hiram say about Jehovah?
469. Identify the skilled workman provided by Hiram.

470. How would Hiram transport the building materials to Israelite country?
471. How far was Joppa from Jerusalem?
472. Who were the sojourners? How many did Solomon number?
473. How were the sojourners employed?
474. Just where in Jerusalem was the Temple built?
475. Locate a reference to Moriah in Genesis and tell what happened there?
476. What is the importance of Ornan's threshing floor?
477. Exactly when did Solomon start building the Temple? Why would he wait so long?
478. How long and how wide was the Temple?
479. What kind of structure provided entrance to the Temple?
480. What kind of wood was used for the Temple ceiling and what final application was made to this wood?
481. In what connection is Parvaim named?
482. What were cherubim?
483. What was the final application made with regard to the inner Temple walls?
484. Describe the measurements of the Holy of Holies. Compare this with the same room in the tabernacle.
485. How much gold was used in the Holy of Holies?
486. Where were the upper chambers located?
487. What was the wing spread of each cherub in the Holy of Holies?
488. According to the record in I Kings what material was used in making the cherubim?
489. Describe the veil separating the most holy place from the holy place.
490. Describe and name the pillars in the porch at the Temple entrance.
491. What is the "Oracle"?

492. What is the meaning of the names of the pillars?
493. What were the measurements of the great altar and where would it be located?
494. Describe the size of the molten sea or great laver.
495. Describe the base of the molten sea.
496. How much is a "handbreath"?
497. How much water in terms of gallons would this sea contain?
498. In addition to the great laver, how many other lavers were made?
499. What distinction was made in the usage of the molten sea and the other lavers?
500. How many candlesticks had been in use in the Tabernacle? How many are now prepared for the Temple?
501. How many tables of showbread are to be in the Temple?
502. Where would the court of the priests be located in relation to the Temple?
503. Where was the molten sea located?
504. Name the skilled artisans who made the vessels of brass.
505. Four hundred pomegranates are numbered. Where were these used?
506. Locate the foundry where the brass was molded.
507. How much brass was used in constructing the Temple?
508. Of what material were the tables of showbread and the candlesticks made?
509. What is a snuffer?
510. How would spoons be used in the Temple?
511. If one would have had the privilege of standing just inside the door of the Temple, describe what he would have seen.