

A Reflection of **JESUS**

Lesson 7

The Temple

1 Chronicles 28:10-29;

2 Chronicles 2:1-7

As the children of Israel traveled through the wilderness, the Tabernacle was the place for them to worship God. When they settled in the promised land, a permanent structure for worship was needed. King David wanted to build a temple for the Living God, but God did not allow David to build the Temple because of the blood David had shed through many wars (1 Chronicles 22:7,8).

The Temple was patterned after the Tabernacle, but was much more complex and ornate. The Temple was noted for its lavish beauty of detail rather than for great size. It was accessible only to the priests; the lay Israelites came to it, but never entered it.

Building a place of worship to the Living God was an important job. Many craftsmen and artisans used their skill in the constructing of this building to the glory and worship of God. We read of the diversity of gifts that make up the whole of the body of Christ. These can be likened to the craftsmen and workmen that built this beautiful temple. "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who work all in all" (1 Corinthians 12:12, NKJV). We are to do our very best at any job He gives us (Colossians 3:23).

Sometimes we are given a job or situa-

tion that threatens to overwhelm us—we may think it is too big for us. No matter what the job, never get discouraged or be afraid. God will give you the strength to do it; just ask for His help.

When King David told his son Solomon that he would have the job of building the Temple for God, he said, "Be strong and of good courage, and do it; do not fear nor be dismayed, for the LORD God—my God—will be with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you, until you have finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD" (1 Chronicles 28:20, NKJV).

These are words we should keep close to our heart today. God promised that He would be with Solomon each step of the way as the Temple was built. God will be with us as well as we live to serve Him.

The March of Events

For as long as Israel followed God, He protected and guided them.

King David lived in a beautiful house built of cedar (2 Samuel 7:2). In gratitude David wanted to build a house for God to dwell in. He wanted God's house to no longer be a tent, but a solid structure that would be permanent. He wanted to glorify the God of Israel.

But David was not allowed to build the Temple. Instead, God told him that his offspring would build the Temple. David

understood and wanted to help, so he gathered the finest of material for use. With God's help, David planned the Temple at Jerusalem down to the smallest detail. Gold and other materials were gathered to help in the building of the Temple (1 Chronicles 28:11–19; 29:1,2).

Solomon Receives a Gift

When the reign of Solomon began, he showed his devotion and commitment to God by offering a thousand burnt offerings (1 Samuel 6).

Because of Solomons' act of worship, God came to him in a dream and told him to ask for anything he wanted. Instead of asking for things to make him more powerful or for self-gratification, Solomon asked for the wisdom and knowledge to guide his people.

Solomon's unselfish character so impressed God that He gave him wealth, riches, and honor, unlike any other king.

Solomon wanted to show his gratitude to God. Knowing that God is the Creator and giver of all good gifts, no gift he gave would be too much. He knew that there was nothing he could ever build for God that would compare to the real glory of God. But he was determined to do the best he could.

Therefore, Solomon was resolved to honor God (2 Chronicles 1:1,7–12; 2:1).

Solomon showed his wisdom. He knew he could not do the job alone. He knew he would need to gather a force of workmen. He wrote to the king of Tyre and recruited his help (2 Chronicles 2:3–10). Again, like the days of building the Tabernacle, the

Israelites selflessly contributed in the effort as well (1 Chronicles 28:21; 29:7–9).

It took seven years for this magnificent temple to be completed (1 Kings 6:38).

When the Temple was complete, the Ark of the Covenant was placed in the Most Holy Place (2 Chronicles 5:1–10).

The priests, singers, musicians, Solomon and all of Israel thanked and praised God for His goodness and mercy. They were so happy to have completed such an important job.

The Temple was accepted by God. It was filled with the glory of God. Read 2 Chronicles 5:13, 14.

The Matchless Gift

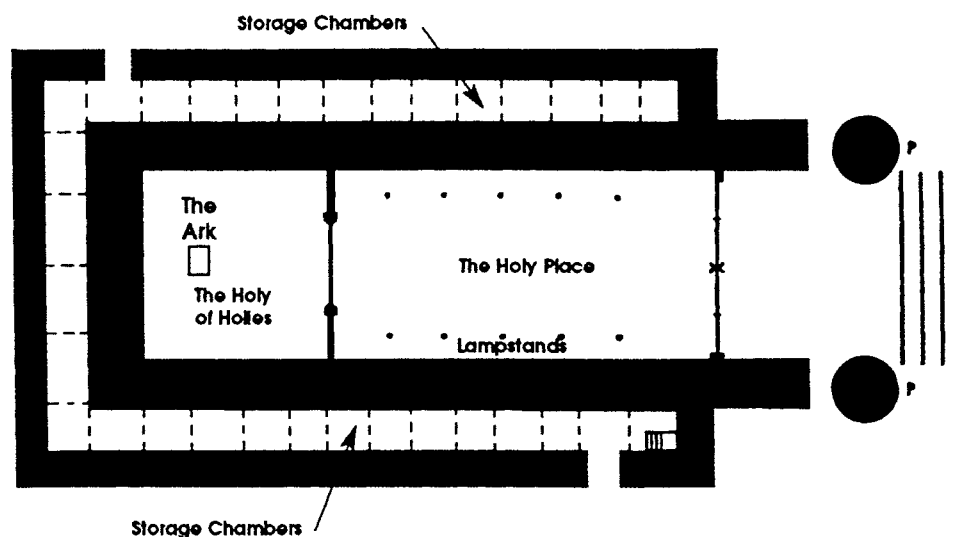
Solomon dedicated the Temple to God. He asked that God forgive the sins of Israel (2 Chronicles 5:12–6:31). After the Temple was dedicated, worship began (2 Chronicles 7:5). Solomon sent the people back to their homes and as they went they were happy and joyful (2 Chronicles 7:10).

God was pleased to accept the Temple. The people had showed they wanted God to live among them. This huge endeavor had shown a spirit of obedience, love, trust, and respect for God by *His people*.

Just as Solomon believed that God would give him the strength to do this incredible job, so we must believe that Jesus Christ our Savior is there to help us with whatever task we are given.

When we give to God the best we have to offer and ask Him to lead us, we will never be alone. □

Temple Layout



Solomon's Temple

- Each room was paneled with cedar wood and the floor planked with cypress.
 - No stonework was visible, and the elaborate doors were made of cypress.
- The walls and doors were carved with flowers, palm trees, and cherubim; all were overlaid with gold.
 - Within the inner court stood the bronze altar for burnt offerings. Between this and the porch was the bronze laver. This great basin rested upon four groups of four bronze oxen oriented to the four compass points (these were later removed by the wicked king Ahaz).
 - Latticed windows near the ceiling lighted the Holy Place. Here stood the golden incense altar, the table for showbread, and the five pairs of lampstands, together with the instruments of sacrifice.
 - Within the Holy of Holies stood the Ark of the Covenant and the Mercy Seat.
 - In this most holy place the presence of God was shown by a cloud.

