

1 Kings 4-6

Good evening...

Let's turn in our Bibles to 1 Kings Chapter 4 tonight.

I am hoping to get through chapter 6 tonight as we continue our journey through the Bible here on Wednesday Nights.

Let's pray before we get started...

Remember now, the Kingdom of Israel has just been completely handed over to Solomon, David's son.

David and Solomon co-ruled for a time, until David finally passed away.

Remember David gave Solomon some parting words, he warned him of some troublemakers within the Kingdom that he would have to deal with.

Then we saw Solomon very wisely dealt with each one of them after David's death.

Adonijah his treacherous brother after receiving mercy from the king, plotted even more in trying to marry one from David's harem, and he was put to death.

Also, Solomon removed Abiathar from the High Priesthood, and put him on house arrest.

Joab was executed, and the troublemaker from the house of Saul, Shimei was also put to death, again after taking Solomon's meekness as weakness.

After these were dealt with, Solomon's kingdom was secure.

We read in chapter 3 that Solomon had an encounter with the Lord at Gibeon.

The Lord appeared to him, and really gave Solomon a blank check, and said, "Ask! What shall I give you?"

A test indeed, one that Solomon seemingly passed, as the young teenage king asks the Lord for wisdom to rule this vast Kingdom.

God assured him his request was done, and then the Lord added riches, and honor, and He assured Solomon that he would have a lasting legacy...

But He did this with a big if in **1 Kings 3:14 So if you walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days."**

As long as Solomon walked with God, blessing was promised.

We ended last time with a great display of Solomon's wisdom, as the two harlots came before the wise king with their case.

One murdered baby, and two mothers claiming the live child.

Solomon knew a mother's compassion would ultimately be the deciding factor, and he asked for a sword to divide the living child in two.

Of course the wicked woman said go ahead, but the real mother asked him to give the whole child to the other woman.

She rather her child be alive and belong to someone else, then for it to be dead.

And she did the loving thing here, and Solomon knew then who the real mother was, and he ordered the child to be given to her.

And we ended with **1 Kings 3:28 And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had rendered; and they feared the king, for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to administer justice.**

And this now leads us into chapter 4, and we will read now the first 6 verses... As Solomon's special officers are listed...

Solomon's Administration

4:1 So King Solomon was king over all Israel. 2 And these were his officials: Azariah the son of Zadok, the priest; 3 Elihoreph and Ahijah, the sons of Shisha, scribes; Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud, the recorder; 4 Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, over the army; Zadok and Abiathar, the priests; 5 Azariah the son of Nathan, over the officers; Zabud the son of Nathan, a priest and the king's friend; 6 Ahishar, over the household; and Adoniram the son of Abda, over the labor force.

So it seems Zadok has passed away at this point, his grandson Azariah has stepped into that role.

It is not clear what happen to Zadok's son Ahimaaz, but perhaps this list was concocted at the end of Solomon's reign, where even Zadok's son had passed away too.

1 Chron. 6:8-9 tells us... **1 Chron. 6:8-9 Ahitub begot Zadok, and Zadok begot Ahimaaz; 9 Ahimaaz begot Azariah, and Azariah begot Johanan;**

We see here too in these verses, that where David had one scribe Solomon had two, who were the sons of David's scribe, Shisha.

Understand, Solomon's Kingdom was larger, and he had a more complex kingdom, and there would be more record keeping needed.

Jehoshaphat will continue as recorder under Solomon as he served David in this capacity.

And we have already learned about Benaiah being appointed as the commander of the army.

We see too, Zadok and Abiather are listed as priests both being in that position earlier in Solomon's reign.

Abiather was removed, and the position of High Priest remained in Zadok's lineage.

We see another Azariah the son of Nathan over the officers, and another son of Nathan, Zabud as priest and the king's friend.

Friends are important in leadership, people you can trust.

David had close friends who were some of his greatest confidants.

Solomon had learned the value of friendship in his own leadership.

It is rare even within spiritual leadership that you can call upon friends.

I just lost one of my best friends in the ministry, Tom Deem, and now that he is not here, my, I realize how important it is to have people there for you, who don't exploit your weaknesses, and who you can just trust to confide in.

Friends that encourage you along in your faith, that hope the best for your life.

These are treasures indeed, they help you reason through all the critics and the naysayers.

If you have one good friend, you are doing well, two are rare, but treasure those deep friendships, and thank the Lord for them often.

Solomon had a friend in his administration, and that is important.

We see too Ahishar managed all the complexities of the king's enormous household.

Lastly, within the special officers we see Adoniram over the labor.

And next we will see Solomon had immense administrative gifts.

He further entrusted many men for the great work before them.

7 And Solomon had twelve governors over all Israel, who provided food for the king and his household; each one made provision for one month of the year. 8 These are their names: Ben-Hur, in the mountains of Ephraim; 9 Ben-Deker, in Makaz, Shaalbim, Beth Shemesh, and Elon Beth Hanan; 10 Ben-Hesed, in Arubboth; to him belonged Sochoh and all the land of Hepher; 11 Ben-Abinadab, in all the regions of Dor; he had Taphath the daughter of Solomon as wife; 12 Baana the son of Ahilud, in Taanach, Megiddo, and all Beth Shean, which is beside Zaretan below Jezreel, from Beth Shean to Abel Meholah, as far as the other side of Jokneam; 13 Ben-Geber, in Ramoth Gilead; to him belonged the towns of Jair the son of Manasseh, in Gilead; to him also belonged the region of Argob in Bashan — sixty large cities with walls and bronze gate-bars; 14 Ahinadab the son of Iddo, in Mahanaim; 15 Ahimaaz, in Naphtali; he also took Basemath the daughter of Solomon as wife; 16 Baanah the son of Hushai, in Asher and Aloth; 17 Jehoshaphat the son of Paruah, in Issachar; 18 Shimei the son of Elah, in Benjamin; 19 Geber the son of Uri, in the land of Gilead, in the country of Sihon king of the Amorites, and of Og king of Bashan. He was the only governor who was in the land.

Solomon marked out twelve districts of all different sizes.

He put one governor over each of the districts.

Solomon seemingly ignored the boundaries of the tribes of Israel, and he also incorporated the new land that David had conquered.

It seems Solomon is trying to diminish tribal loyalties, and hoping to alleviate past tensions between the tribes.

Each district would provide one months of food for the king's household.

The governors more than likely also collected the taxes for the king.

It is interesting however, that in trying to maintain a new order, Solomon left the tribe of Judah out of the redistricting as it was the royal tribe.

He seemingly favored his tribe...

These things will actually further build tension, and we will see this more clearly when Solomon's son comes to the throne.

Although these administrative feats seemed impressive early on in Solomon's reign, it seems at the end of his life, he saw these twelve men with great power, that they became part of what would be seen as a corrupt bureaucracy.

Eccl 5:8-10

8 If you see the oppression of the poor, and the violent perversion of justice and righteousness in a province, do not marvel at the matter; for high official watches over high official, and higher officials are over them.

9 Moreover the profit of the land is for all; even the king is served from the field.

10 He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver; Nor he who loves abundance, with increase.

This also is vanity.

The bigger the government the more corrupt it grew, bigger government requires more taxes to feed the mouths of the officials, and the power causes the government to change its focus from helping their citizenry to keeping the government afloat.

Anyone who thinks big government is the answer to all the problems knows nothing of history.

Even Solomon saw his own errors in the end.

Notice what it took just to keep the monstrous government afloat that Solomon had created.

Starting now in verse 20...

Prosperity and Wisdom of Solomon's Reign

20 Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking and rejoicing.

21 So Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the River to the land of the Philistines, as far as the border

of Egypt. They brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life.

22 Now Solomon's provision for one day was thirty kors of fine flour, sixty kors of meal, 23 ten fatted oxen, twenty oxen from the pastures, and one hundred sheep, besides deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fatted fowl.

24 For he had dominion over all the region on this side of the River from Tiphseh even to Gaza, namely over all the kings on this side of the River; and he had peace on every side all around him. 25 And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, each man under his vine and his fig tree, from Dan as far as Beersheba, all the days of Solomon.

26 Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen. 27 And these governors, each man in his month, provided food for King Solomon and for all who came to King Solomon's table. There was no lack in their supply. 28 They also brought barley and straw to the proper place, for the horses and steeds, each man according to his charge.

Israel became known for its large population.

Also, they experienced a peace and security not known before.

Solomon's wisdom allowed for an environment that allowed each man to live under their vine and tree, but please do not think for a moment the people did not pay their government out of their provisions.

We see the conquered nations here too bringing tribute in abundance as the Israelites were most likely under this great taxation.

Now Solomon lived in relatively peaceful times, yet he still built up his war horses, this was all in excess, it was unneeded and really more of a display of power.

Remember David was remarkably successful against powerful armies with only an infantry.

He wrote **Ps 20:7 Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; But we will remember the name of the Lord our God.**

David's might came from the Lord, in fact we saw him hamstringing horses and disabling chariots, because he had no one to use them.

Solomon however is exhibiting the unfortunate reality that the prophet Samuel warned Israel about when they demanded a king back in...

1 Sam 8:10-20 So Samuel told all the words of the Lord to the people who asked him for a king. 11 And he said, "This will be the behavior of the king who will reign over you: He will take your sons and appoint them for his own chariots and to be his horsemen, and some will run before his chariots. 12 He will appoint captains over his thousands and captains over his fifties, will set some to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and some to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. 13 He will take your

daughters to be perfumers, cooks, and bakers. 14 And he will take the best of your fields, your vineyards, and your olive groves, and give them to his servants. 15 He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage, and give it to his officers and servants. 16 And he will take your male servants, your female servants, your finest young men, and your donkeys, and put them to his work. 17 He will take a tenth of your sheep. And you will be his servants. 18 And you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, and the Lord will not hear you in that day." 19 Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, "No, but we will have a king over us, 20 that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles."

Solomon is a worldly king; now David disregarded God's Law to a lesser degree.

The Law for a King Stating Deut. 17:16-17

16 But he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for the Lord has said to you, 'You shall not return that way again.' 17 Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself.

David closed his eyes to these things to a lesser degree, but understand when our children see us

compromise in our faith, they will take it to the next level.

If they see you having a beer socially with your friends, or having wine at dinner, don't be shocked when you have an alcoholic in your life when they get older.

Solomon took his dad's compromises and went to the extreme.

And at the end of it all he said...

**Eccl 12:8 "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher,
"All is vanity."**

He concluded with this understanding, and I imagine a huge regret for him...

Eccl 12:13-14

**13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:
Fear God and keep His commandments,
For this is man's all.**

**14 For God will bring every work into judgment,
Including every secret thing,
Whether good or evil.**

Solomon had everything this world says you need to be happy, and in the end, he came back to the fear of God as being the final matter.

This world is empty, and our only fulfillment in this life will be a life surrendered to God alone.

So next, the extent of Solomon's scholastics is recorded.

29 And God gave Solomon wisdom and exceedingly great understanding, and largeness of heart like the sand on the seashore. 30 Thus Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the men of the East and all the wisdom of Egypt. 31 For he was wiser than all men — than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol; and his fame was in all the surrounding nations. 32 He spoke three thousand proverbs, and his songs were one thousand and five. 33 Also he spoke of trees, from the cedar tree of Lebanon even to the hyssop that springs out of the wall; he spoke also of animals, of birds, of creeping things, and of fish. 34 And men of all nations, from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom, came to hear the wisdom of Solomon.

Now we see the difference here between David and his son Solomon, David looked at God's created world and it caused him to worship.

David wrote hymns and praises and enjoyed God's creation.

Solomon looked upon creation and studied it.

God had given Solomon the depth of understanding that he needed to look at things, and have a deeper understanding than all the wisest men of the earth.

He spoke three thousand proverbs... we only have a few hundred in our Bibles.

He wrote just over a thousand songs, we have one in our Bibles, The Song of Solomon.

We see Solomon was a dendrologist as he spoke of trees...

In Eccl. Chapter 2 Solomon declared **Eccl 2:4-6 I made my works great, I built myself houses, and planted myself vineyards. 5 I made myself gardens and orchards, and I planted all kinds of fruit trees in them. 6 I made myself water pools from which to water the growing trees of the grove.**

This was perhaps how he studied and observed plants and trees and their development.

He too was a zoologist as he spoke of animals.

He was an ornithologist as he knew about birds.

Also he was an entomologist dealing with creeping things or insects.

He was an ichthyologist dealing with fish.

He was a master lecturer as people from all over the world came to hear his wisdom.

And we see many worldly advances by the Great King Solomon, but the narrative fails to reveal any devotion to the Lord.

This will soon be Solomon's Achilles heel, because his success was dependent solely upon his devotion to the Lord, and he will fail at that.

Understand the more he amassed to himself, the more wives that he gained, the further his heart went from God.

His pagan wives were slowly planting seeds in his heart that would bring about bad and bitter fruit.

Solomon, however will do one thing historic for the Lord, and that is he will build a Temple for Him.

Understand, however, much of the Temple's Glory can be accredited to David, who prepared and secured the material for the construction of the Temple.

Even the land for which it will be built was purchased by David.

God had given David the plans as well.

Remember David was a man of war, and God would not let him build the Temple, so Solomon a king of peace will be entrusted to it.

But it was in David's heart to do so, his son only finishing what he started.

David wrote **Ps 27:4 One thing I have desired of the Lord, That will I seek:**

That I may dwell in the house of the Lord

All the days of my life,

To behold the beauty of the Lord,
And to inquire in His temple.

David's heart longed for what Solomon was privileged to build.

And as we will see it can be perceived that Solomon really built this Temple for his own fame and glory, for his own legacy.

So first he will prepare for its construction next...

Solomon Prepares to Build the Temple(2 Chron. 2)

5:1 Now Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon, because he heard that they had anointed him king in place of his father, for Hiram had always loved David. 2 Then Solomon sent to Hiram, saying: 3 You know how my father David could not build a house for the name of the Lord his God because of the wars which were fought against him on every side, until the Lord put his foes under the soles of his feet. 4 But now the Lord my God has given me rest on every side; there is neither adversary nor evil occurrence. 5 And behold, I propose to build a house for the name of the Lord my God, as the Lord spoke to my father David, saying, "Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, he shall build the house for My name." 6 Now therefore, command that they cut down cedars for me from Lebanon; and my servants will be with your servants, and I will pay you wages for your servants according to whatever you say. For you know

there is none among us who has skill to cut timber like the Sidonians.

7 So it was, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he rejoiced greatly and said,

Blessed be the Lord this day, for He has given David a wise son over this great people!

8 Then Hiram sent to Solomon, saying:

I have considered the message which you sent me, and I will do all you desire concerning the cedar and cypress logs. 9 My servants shall bring them down from Lebanon to the sea; I will float them in rafts by sea to the place you indicate to me, and will have them broken apart there; then you can take them away. And you shall fulfill my desire by giving food for my household.

10 Then Hiram gave Solomon cedar and cypress logs according to all his desire. 11 And Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand kors of wheat as food for his household, and twenty kors of pressed oil. Thus Solomon gave to Hiram year by year.

12 So the Lord gave Solomon wisdom, as He had promised him; and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them made a treaty together.

It seems David left Solomon with some architectural plans as the Lord gave David the template.

1 Chron. 28:11-13 Then David gave his son Solomon the plans for the vestibule, its houses, its treasuries, its upper chambers, its inner chambers, and the place of the mercy seat; 12 and the plans for all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the Lord, of all the chambers all around, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries for the dedicated things; 13 also for the division of the priests and the Levites, for all the work of the service of the house of the Lord, and for all the articles of service in the house of the Lord.

David also prepared the skilled workers and prepared the materials.

Hiram was one of David's friends, and he had previously helped David build his own palace.

David also enlisted them to help with the Temple's preparations.

1 Chron. 22:1-4

Then David said, "This is the house of the Lord God, and this is the altar of burnt offering for Israel." 2 So David commanded to gather the aliens who were in the land of Israel; and he appointed masons to cut hewn stones to build the house of God. 3 And David prepared iron in abundance for the nails of the doors of the gates and for the joints, and bronze in abundance beyond measure, 4 and cedar trees in

abundance; for the Sidonians and those from Tyre brought much cedar wood to David.

We see Solomon very wisely keeping this alliance going and he too strikes up a deal with Hiram.

Solomon requests artisans to be sent, the Sidonians were renowned for their skills.

Solomon offered to pay the wages and for the wood.

Hiram was excited to maintain the alliance between the two kingdoms, and he agrees to send the material down the Mediterranean from Lebanon to what would be Joppa, today it is called Jaffa.

The logs would float down the coast and would be wrangled into the port city and broken apart.

And this work would be incredibly laborious, so we read now of the great labor force of Solomon.

13 Then King Solomon raised up a labor force out of all Israel; and the labor force was thirty thousand men. 14 And he sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month in shifts: they were one month in Lebanon and two months at home; Adoniram was in charge of the labor force. 15 Solomon had seventy thousand who carried burdens, and eighty thousand who quarried stone in the mountains, 16 besides three thousand three hundred from the chiefs of Solomon's deputies, who supervised the people who labored in the work. 17 And the king commanded them to quarry large stones, costly stones, and hewn stones, to lay the foundation

of the temple. 18 So Solomon's builders, Hiram's builders, and the Gebalites quarried them; and they prepared timber and stones to build the temple.

We began to understand the huge complexity of this type of work in antiquity.

It would require huge amounts of manpower to fell the trees, to cut the branches off of each tree, to transport them, and to build with them.

Solomon enlisted of the native Israelites thirty thousand laborers, with them they worked one month on and two off.

They were not treated like slaves, but it is not clear if they received wages.

Solomon took of the non-Jewish population 150,000 total and forced them to labor.

70,000 carried the burdens and 80,000 cut the limestone into large and precise pieces.

The stone had to be cut perfectly at the quarry, and they would be assembled at the Temple Mount.

This would require meticulous planning and masterful supervision.

Now the Jewish population would later resent Solomon for enlisting citizens into this work load.

Understand when it came to labor and taxes Solomon put a huge yoke upon the nation of Israel.

So much so that after his death, the people of Israel will plead with his son... Rehoboam...

1 Kings 12:4 "Your father made our yoke heavy; now therefore, lighten the burdensome service of your father, and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you."

Of course he refused and divided the Kingdom.

But understand, the greatness of the Temple will be fruit of this great labor from the Jewish and Gentile workforce.

Let's look now as Solomon begins to build...

Solomon Builds the Temple (2 Chron. 3:1-14)

6:1 And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord. 2 Now the house which King Solomon built for the Lord, its length was sixty cubits, its width twenty, and its height thirty cubits. 3 The vestibule in front of the sanctuary of the house was twenty cubits long across the width of the house, and the width of the vestibule extended ten cubits from the front of the house. 4 And he made for the house windows with beveled frames.

5 Against the wall of the temple he built chambers all around, against the walls of the temple, all around the

sanctuary and the inner sanctuary. Thus he made side chambers all around it. 6 The lowest chamber was five cubits wide, the middle was six cubits wide, and the third was seven cubits wide; for he made narrow ledges around the outside of the temple, so that the support beams would not be fastened into the walls of the temple. 7 And the temple, when it was being built, was built with stone finished at the quarry, so that no hammer or chisel or any iron tool was heard in the temple while it was being built. 8 The doorway for the middle story was on the right side of the temple. They went up by stairs to the middle story, and from the middle to the third.

9 So he built the temple and finished it, and he paneled the temple with beams and boards of cedar. 10 And he built side chambers against the entire temple, each five cubits high; they were attached to the temple with cedar beams.

In today's language, the structure that Solomon built was 90 feet long, 30 feet wide, and forty five feet high. In front of the Temple was a porch that was thirty feet wide and fifteen feet deep.

The courtyard for the priests surrounded the sanctuary.

This was separated from an outer courtyard.

The doors faced east, just like the Tabernacle.

However, this building far surpassed the Tabernacle in size and detail.

In fact it was twice as big, and had three levels instead of one.

We see here that no hammer or chisel or any iron tool was heard on the Temple while it was being built.

These people were tremendous stone masons.

They designed everything to be cut at the quarry and carried in.

They did it all with chisels and iron instruments, and they were cut so perfectly that they did not need any mortar when they were stacked one upon the other.

It was prefabbed perfectly... and this astounded many in the ancient world, in fact, **there is even a rabbinic tradition or legend that Solomon acquired something called a 'Shamir' which they claimed was a small worm with incredible powers, by mere touch, the stones could be cut in any desired shape without any noisy tools being used. Dilday p. 91 referring too Kiel p.71**

But the verses explain that the stones were masterfully prepared at the quarry by skilled artisans not by magic.

But they fit so tightly that you could not put a credit card between the stones.

Now it is interesting, when they were building the temple, according to the story, the history, a stone came from the quarry, and the builders who were

erecting the building, couldn't figure out where it went.

It wasn't marked, and so they just figured the quarries made a mistake, because it just didn't fit in that part of the building. So they just sort of tossed the thing aside.

Now the temple was seven years in building, so in time the shrubbery grew over the misplaced stone. And they came to the completion of the temple, and the chief cornerstone was missing.

According to the quarry, they sent the message, "We're ready to finish the thing. We need the chief cornerstone". And the message came back, "It's already been sent". They gave the dates and everything else. They said, "Well we don't have it". They said, "Well, it's there".

So, finally someone discovered it over in the bush, this stone that the builders had set aside, not realizing that it was the chief cornerstone.

So, in the prophecy, **Ps 118:22-23** Deals with Jesus Christ.

**22 The stone which the builders rejected
Has become the chief cornerstone.**

This verse deals with that particular incident. It said, **23 This is the Lord's work. It is marvelous in our eyes".**

And, in the New Testament, Peter picks that up and says, "That was a reference to Jesus Christ". He is the Chief Cornerstone that was set of not by the Jews but

by the builders.

They didn't recognize Him. They cast Him aside. But God has ordained that He should be the Chief Cornerstone.
Chuck Smith

And it is through Jesus Christ alone, that our whole faith is built around.

And understanding how Solomon brought the quarry stones in, brings the imagery to life for Christ being the Chief Cornerstone that the builders rejected.

Let's look now at another encounter Solomon has with God starting in verse 11...

11 Then the word of the Lord came to Solomon, saying:
12 "Concerning this temple which you are building, if you walk in My statutes, execute My judgments, keep all My commandments, and walk in them, then I will perform My word with you, which I spoke to your father David. 13 And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake My people Israel."

And perhaps through the voice of a prophet, Solomon hears from God once again a reminder that his success was dependent upon his obedience to God's Word.

Perhaps as Solomon began to see the Great Temple being constructed his heart started lifting up in pride.

God sends him this sober reminder.

God is not impressed with our work, if we are not obeying His Word.

We are to work unto God as it says in Eph. 6:6
not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as
bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the
heart

God's Promises would come about, not because Solomon built the Temple but because he obeyed God's Word.

That was the higher priority, God had no need for the Temple, in fact, He will no problem doing away with the Temple when the people forget this truth.

This was the second encounter Solomon had with God.

Let's finish out this chapter now...

14 So Solomon built the temple and finished it. 15 And he built the inside walls of the temple with cedar boards; from the floor of the temple to the ceiling he paneled the inside with wood; and he covered the floor of the temple with planks of cypress. 16 Then he built the twenty-cubit room at the rear of the temple, from floor to ceiling, with cedar boards; he built it inside as the inner sanctuary, as the Most Holy Place. 17 And in front of it the temple sanctuary was forty cubits long. 18 The inside of the temple was cedar,

carved with ornamental buds and open flowers. All was cedar; there was no stone to be seen.

19 And he prepared the inner sanctuary inside the temple, to set the ark of the covenant of the Lord there. 20 The inner sanctuary was twenty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and twenty cubits high. He overlaid it with pure gold, and overlaid the altar of cedar. 21 So Solomon overlaid the inside of the temple with pure gold. He stretched gold chains across the front of the inner sanctuary, and overlaid it with gold. 22 The whole temple he overlaid with gold, until he had finished all the temple; also he overlaid with gold the entire altar that was by the inner sanctuary.

23 Inside the inner sanctuary he made two cherubim of olive wood, each ten cubits high. 24 One wing of the cherub was five cubits, and the other wing of the cherub five cubits: ten cubits from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other. 25 And the other cherub was ten cubits; both cherubim were of the same size and shape. 26 The height of one cherub was ten cubits, and so was the other cherub. 27 Then he set the cherubim inside the inner room; and they stretched out the wings of the cherubim so that the wing of the one touched one wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall. And their wings touched each other in the middle of the room. 28 Also he overlaid the cherubim with gold.

29 Then he carved all the walls of the temple all around, both the inner and outer sanctuaries, with carved figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers. 30 And the floor of the temple he overlaid with gold, both the inner and outer sanctuaries.

31 For the entrance of the inner sanctuary he made doors of olive wood; the lintel and doorposts were one-fifth of the wall. 32 The two doors were of olive wood; and he carved on them figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, and overlaid them with gold; and he spread gold on the cherubim and on the palm trees. 33 So for the door of the sanctuary he also made doorposts of olive wood, one-fourth of the wall. 34 And the two doors were of cypress wood; two panels comprised one folding door, and two panels comprised the other folding door. 35 Then he carved cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers on them, and overlaid them with gold applied evenly on the carved work.

36 And he built the inner court with three rows of hewn stone and a row of cedar beams.

37 In the fourth year the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid, in the month of Ziv. 38 And in the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, which is the eighth month, the house was finished in all its details and according to all its plans. So he was seven years in building it.

We see it took seven years and six months to compete. Its detail was impressive, dwarfing the tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting.

There will be ten lampstands instead of one, there will be ten tables of showbread instead of one.

Imagine something that took 30,000 Israelis and 150,000 foreigners to build, supervised by 3,300 superintendents.

The cost of this building would be translated into to multiple millions today, some guesses say 5 million dollars but probably much more.

But I have to say, the Temple was inferior to the Tabernacle in many ways.

Maybe not from man's point of view, but definitely from God's view.

Man sees greatness in huge articulate buildings, but God enjoys the more simple things.

Even today success in the church is measures by great buildings and other worldly metrics.

But God's deals with other metrics. The matters of the heart are what He is concerned with.

You see the Temple was complicated as the Tabernacle was simple in its meaning.

In fact, the New Testament pretty much by-passes the Temple's picture in favor of the Tabernacle.

The Tabernacle pointed to Christ, where the Temple really pointed to a man's legacy.

This Temple will be known as Solomon's Temple, the later great Temple will be known as Herod's Temple.

The Tabernacle was known as the Tent of Meeting.

The simplicity of the Tabernacle illuminated God's Greatness.

The Temple's beauty and greatness often overshadowed the God it was built for.

I think sometimes the modern church's adornments overshadow the God we are to worship.

I know personally, some of my most memorable times in ministry were in bare rooms, and simple places.

God has a way of using the simple things, sometimes lowly things in this world to make His Name Great.

I have seen churches lose an emphasis on God's Word, for the sake of methods and new programs.

They trade the Bible for concert settings and entertaining services.

They struggled in the early years, but stayed faithful to God's Word, and as the Lord began to bring an increase, and budgets were not so tight, the emphasis became more on looking better, having a better presentation, and spending on programs and frills.

And it is easy to then become a religious establishment, that attracts religious pretty people.

Instead of being a hospital for the sick, a refuge for the lost it becomes a hangout for the outwardly well.

There is no doubt the Jews fell into this, and the Temple almost became idolatrous as they took pride in the structure.

God was never impressed, Jesus surely was not, as we have seen on Sundays.

The Temple grew more ornate and gaudy than the Tent ever could, and with it came more ceremony and ritual.

The Temple is never called a house for God, in 1 Chron. 28:2 David refers to it as a footstool.

Jesus called it a house of prayer.

It was to be a place that people could have access to God through sacrifice, a place for people to come and commune with their God.

But overtime it will be overcome with ritual and religion, and the simplicity of it all will be drowned out in a whitewashed show of piety.

At Jesus, the temple was no longer needed, in fact Jesus boldly said...

John 2:19 ~~Jesus answered and said to them,~~ "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

Speaking of His Body being killed and raised up.

We now come through Jesus to commune with God.

The Temple became too complex, Jesus simplified it again for us, in Himself.

There is a spiritual union now between the Body of Christ and the Father through Jesus.

In fact, this union also declares that we now are a Temple.

1 Cor. 6:19-20 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

God meets with us now through His Son Jesus Christ, He is the only Way.

We are too be mindful of this Temple where He meets with us, we are to live spiritually not carnally and selfishly.

So next week, we will get to Solomon's own house, this man will take 13 years in building his own house, almost twice as many than he took building the Lord's Temple.

Solomon is no different than the modern individual, who is far more concerned about building his own home and prospering his own life, above the things of God.

Jesus said **Matt 16:26 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?**

That is the question before us as we are studying Solomon's life.

A man who had everything in this world, and yet in the end he will be empty spiritually.

If your life is empty tonight, there is only one solution, come to Jesus, fully surrender your life to Him, hand over the reins of your heart, and let God began to steer you.

The blessings found in this life come from obedience toward God's Word.

Let's pray...