

Message #13

I Kings 6:1-14

What is in this chapter is a detailed description of a building. But this is not just any building; this is a building where people from the nation Israel will worship God.

This is a building in which God promises His presence if certain prerequisites are met. In this chapter we get a very systematic look at the specific dimensions, specific materials, the specific design and the specific decorations.

This is the story of the building of the first Temple in Jerusalem. This building is not like any other building in the world. This building has eternal ramifications. This building was built here and it will be rebuilt again.

In fact, I want to give a Biblical and prophetic overview to the Temple in Jerusalem because this is a very important place and property in the program of God.

1) The First Temple was first started to be built in Jerusalem by Solomon in 966 BC.

The Temple took seven years to build and was completed in 959 BC (I Kings 6:38).

So the First Temple was completed in 959 BC.

2) The Temple was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar and burned to the ground in 586 BC (II Kings 25:8-9).

3) The Temple was rebuilt a second time in Jerusalem beginning in 536-535 BC.

A. The Temple began to be rebuilt under a decree of Cyrus for Jews to rebuild (538 BC)

II Chron. 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-4. Many Jews returned to Jerusalem and began to build 2 years later. **So the second Temple work began in 536 BC (Ezra 3:8).**

B. The Temple work was halted by adversaries who didn't want it rebuilt (530 BC) (Ezra 4:1-5:17).

C. Darius confirms the decree of Cyrus and the Temple rebuild continued and was completed in the sixth year of Darius' reign (Ezra 6:1-15). Darius came to power around 522 BC so **the Second Temple was completed 515 BC.**

4) The second Temple suffered deterioration over the next years and was in need of repair. Herod the Great came to power in 37 BC. He authorized a 46 years refurbishing and rebuilding of the second Temple (John 2:20). **Construction work began around the year 20 BC and the second Temple was rebuilt by AD 27.**

5) The second Temple was completely destroyed by Titus and his Roman army in AD 70 and has never been rebuilt to this day.

6) A third Temple will be rebuilt during the early part of the Great Tribulation (Rev. 11:1; II Thess. 2:4).

Obviously this Temple is critical in the program of God and what we see here is that Solomon is the King who oversees the building of the first Temple.

What we see here is this:

GOD GAVE SOLOMON GREAT WISDOM IN CONSTRUCTING THE TEMPLE IN JERUSALEM WHERE HIS PRESENCE WOULD EXIST AND WHERE HIS WORSHIP WOULD BE ACCEPTED.

What we learn from this is that Solomon was very systematic in his approach to everything and anything. He was meticulous about everything in this project. We may assume that he is getting this as a result of wisdom God has given him.

What we may learn from this is that God wants His people systematic and meticulous about everything in life. The more we operate this way, the wiser we are. Now what Solomon does here is done out of a “fear of the LORD” and a reverence for God. His concept of God was affecting decisions concerning this Temple.

Now what Solomon is building is specifically named in verse 1, “the house of the LORD” or “the house of YHWH.”

We can call this section Phase #1 of the Temple Building project which is to build the exterior of the Temple. This is a very detailed account and we want to carefully see all the facts. In this section there are nine of them:

FACT #1 – The specific date is stated when this Temple building work began. **6:1**

The specific date when Solomon started to build this temple is given here. **The date was 480 years after Israel had come out of Egypt and it was the 4th year of the reign of Solomon.**

We know from I Kings 5:17-18 that there was much preparatory work in preparing the stones and the timbers. So since it is the 4th year of Solomon’s reign we may assume that it took three years or so just to do that preliminary work.

What we immediately see here is that doing a work for God and building a work for God does not happen overnight. It takes focus and it takes time.

We certainly learn from this that not everything happens immediately in the plan of God and God uses specific individuals at different times according to His time to accomplish His will.

Now we want to make a point about this. This could have happened sooner, had God’s people not rebelled against God. Why did it take 480 years to start this project? The answer is because God’s people were not serious about worshipping Him. They, actually at one time, drifted so far from God in their thinking that they were worshipping a golden calf.

Now Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt in 1446 BC. **Since Solomon began this construction project 480 years after Israel came out of Egypt, the Temple construction began in 966 BC (1446 minus 480 equals 966 BC).**

The actual month when the building project began was month two of the Jewish calendar which for us would be February, but for Israel was Ziv. This is our April-May month. So to connect this to us we can say Solomon started building the Temple 2,990 years ago plus two months.

One question would be why bring up this date being connected to Israel being delivered from Egypt? The answer is that God has a national plan for Israel and He will fulfill it even though there may be gaps to time before He does fulfill it.

FACT #2 – The specific dimensions and structure of the Temple complex is given. **6:2-6.**

This building was not just slopped together. This was well-planned and well-designed. Everything was measured in cubits. There are two different kinds of cubits. There was the old standard cubit measurement of 18 inches. There was a newer and longer cubit measurement of 21 inches.

We learn from II Chronicles 3:3 that the Temple was constructed using the old standard measurement of 18 inches: “Now these are the foundations which Solomon laid for the building of the house of God. The length in cubits according to the old standard...”.

So the cubit measurement was 18 inches and we get the specific dimensions of the Temple here based on those numbers:

(Dimension #1) - The length of the Temple area was 60 cubits long or 90 feet long. **6:2a**

The dimension here is the interior dimension of the Temple and does not include the exterior things such as the porch or side rooms.

(Dimension #2) - The width of the Temple area was 20 cubits wide or 30 feet wide. **6:2b**

(Dimension #3) - The height of the Temple area was 30 cubits high or 45 feet high. **6:2c**

(Dimension #4) - The actual Temple/house had a front porch that was 20 cubits wide or 30 feet wide. **6:3a**

There was a porch or portico or vestibule that was built to be on the front of the main Temple area. It was exactly the same width in length that the Temple was.

(Dimension #5) - The actual Temple/house had a front porch that was 10 cubits deep which is 15 feet deep. **6:3b**

There was no door or entrance gate to this porch. There were no sidewalls. This structure may not have had a roof either because there is no height mentioned. So if you walked out the end of the Temple there was a 15 foot porch that extended out toward the main entrance. So if you included the porch, this made the total length 105 feet (90 + 15 = 105).

(Dimension #6) - There were artistically designed framed windows that covered the side walls.
6:4

The purpose of these windows was to provide light in the main hall area of the Temple.

(Dimension #7) - There were three stories of side rooms that surrounded the nave and inner sanctuary. **6:5**

A nave is the central part of the building. Now these side rooms were for storage and also to conduct temple business. They were located on three sides of the building

(Dimension #8) - The lowest story of the side rooms was five cubits wide or 7.5 feet wide. **6:6a**

(Dimension #9) - The middle story of the side rooms was six cubits wide or 9 feet wide. **6:6b**

(Dimension #10) - The upper story of the side rooms was seven cubits wide or 10.5 feet wide.
6:6c

These side rooms surrounded the entire Temple with the exception of the door area and the porch. So the side rooms expanded in dimension from ground up.

It is specifically stated that none of these side rooms was actually attached to the Temple/house itself. So these were free standing side rooms alongside of the Temple area.

FACT #3 – The actual Temple/house was built of carefully prepared stone. **6:7**

The stone that was actually used was beautiful white limestone. This explains why the Temple could be burned down. When this specific kind of stone is burned, the stones become white, lime powder.

It is specifically stated that in the actual construction process of the building, there was silence. In other words, the stones were hammered and chiseled outside the Temple area and brought in and placed in their position. This area was considered to be very sacred even in the construction of it.

Solomon wanted to minimize the noise. The truth is God does His greatest work with people who are quietly faithful, not loud and obnoxious. People who quietly go about their work for the Lord make a powerful statement for God.

When this church was being built some of the builders were playing secular music and we went to them and asked them not do to it in this sanctuary. We did not want loud, blaring, secular music playing here. This is a sacred place where we worship God. That apparently was Solomon's view.

He did not want guys hammering out stone at the actual temple site so they did it elsewhere and then hauled in the stone.

FACT #4 – The doorway for the lowest chamber was on the right at ground level. **6:8a**

FACT #5 – There was a winding spiral staircase that led up to the second and third level. **6:8b**

FACT #6 – The roof was built with cedar beams and planks. **6:9**

Solomon is using this imported cedar wood from Lebanon to build the roof.

It is said here and repeated again in **verse 14** that “he built the house and finished it.” What we understand this to mean is that he finished and completed this part of the project and inspected it and it was good.

FACT #7 – The three stories were each five cubits high or 7.5 feet high. **6:10**

Each of the stories was fastened to the Temple/house by beams.

FACT #8 – The word of the LORD came to Solomon as he was building this. **6:11-13**

These are very important verses to see in the middle of a building project that was designed to build a Temple for God.

God came to Solomon and said don't lose sight of the importance of the relationship with Me. In other words, don't get lost in this building program and forget about Me and your relationship with Me.

When a building program is moving forward, people can get focused on the external building. They can be proud of what is happening. God says don't forget to keep your focus on Me.

As the construction was taking place, God came to Solomon and gave him specific messages:

Message #1 - God will fulfill all promises He made to David if you walk in the ways of God.
6:12

God says if you will live your life focused on My word and focused on obeying Me, I will fulfill everything I have promised. Well we know they didn't do this and the proof is look at Israel right now.

There are three specific things God admonished Solomon to do:

(Admonishment #1) - Walk in God's statutes. **6:12a**

(Admonishment #2) - Execute God's ordinances. **6:12b**

(Admonishment #3) - Keep God's commandments. **6:12c**

This of course would mean when you break a commandment, you resolve it by admitting it and offering the right sacrifice.

Message #2 - God will dwell in the midst of Israel. **6:13a**

If God's people would continue to walk according to His word and will, He would dwell in their midst.

Message #3 - God will not forsake His people Israel. **6:13b**

If God's people would not forsake Him, He would not forsake them.

FACT #9 – Solomon finished the exterior part of the Temple/house. **6:14**

This was phase one of the building project.