

**January 25**

**Scriptures:** Read 2 Chronicles 3, 4 & 5

**Key Verse:** “.... the glory of the Lord filled the house of God.” (2 Chronicles 5:14)

### **Overview**

After four years of reigning, King Solomon began the construction of the Temple on the site God had shown his father David — the threshing floor of Oman. This was the location on which God had told David to build an altar to Him. There He had demonstrated His presence by sending fire to consume David’s burnt offering, and there the angel of the Lord put away his sword so that the plague was stopped (1 Chronicles 21:18, 26-30; 22:1). Here we also learn that Oman’s threshing floor was on Mount Moriah, where Abraham had built his altar intending to sacrifice Isaac (Genesis 22:2).

The architecture of the Temple was based on that of the Mosaic Tabernacle, but it was much more ornate and twice the size. There were also two additional features: firstly, the large cherubim, similar to the ones upon the Ark, but these two figures, made of olive wood and overlaid with gold, overshadowed the Holy of Holies and the Ark; secondly, there were two large, free-standing pillars that stood in front of the Temple, having extremely ornate capitals. The names of these pillars were a witness to the greatness of the God of Israel: Jachin, meaning “He shall establish”; and Boaz, meaning “in Him is strength”.

The holy furnishings of the Tabernacle, with the exception of the Ark and the altar of incense, were replaced with articles much more elaborate. There was a new, larger bronze altar to accommodate the increased number of offerings. The most notable change was the increase from having only one laver (the wash basin for the priests’ ceremonial washing) to having ten portable lavers, five on each side of the court. There was also one huge laver called the “Sea”, which was made of cast bronze and could hold about 75,000 litres of water. Instead of one seven-branched lampstand (candelabra) and one table for the showbread, as in the Tabernacle, there were now ten of each.

The master craftsman, Hiram, was accredited with making the articles for the Temple. The work site was in the plains of Jordan, east of the river, about halfway between the Galilee and the Dead Sea. There the clay in the soil was suitable to dig and form moulds in the ground into which they would pour the melted bronze.

After seven years of labour, the Temple was finally completed and Solomon organized a dedication service which was to occur on the occasion of the Feast of Tabernacles. As a preliminary ceremony, Solomon brought all the remaining treasures his father David had dedicated and placed them in the new storage rooms of the Temple. It is surprising that there was any gold and silver left after the extravagant use of these precious metals in the Temple. Solomon also had the Levites bring all the holy furnishings from the Tabernacle at Gibeon to the new sanctuary. The Ark of the Covenant was brought from the temporary tent David had set up on Mount Zion to its new home a short distance away, in the Holy of Holies of the Temple (5:5). Solomon was careful not to make the same mistake his father had when trying to transport the

Ark the first time (1 Chronicles 13:6-10). Note that only the stone tablets of the testimony of Moses were in the Ark. At some point, the jar of manna (Exodus 16:32-34) and Aaron's rod that budded (Numbers 17:10-11; Hebrews 9:4) must have been removed.

In the dedication ceremony, all the priests and Levites were involved. Their regular division for monthly service was ignored for this special occasion (5:11). All the Levitical musicians were also included. While they were ministering in music and lifting up praise and thanksgiving, the glory of the Lord filled the Temple. Thus God honoured the new sanctuary with His presence and confirmed it as His Holy House, just as He had done with the Tabernacle of Moses (Exodus 40:34-35). This was a beautiful example of God inhabiting the praises of His people (Psalm 22:3). He still does this today by His Spirit.

### **Prayer**

O Lord God, according to Your servant Paul (1 Cor. 6:19) our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit. Grant that we may truly glorify You in our bodies and our spirits which are Yours.