

November 30

Scriptures: Read 1 Kings 7

Key Verse: “Thus all the work that King Solomon had done for the house of the Lord was finished... “. (1 Kings 7:51)

Overview

It appears that Solomon’s own house and the house of the Lord were being built simultaneously; however, the completion of Solomon’s palace took almost twice as long. Perhaps, in his enthusiasm and zeal for the Lord, Solomon may have pushed to get the Temple finished and let the work on his own house be delayed. Unlike the Temple, Solomon’s house was not pre-planned and did not have the same extensive preparations nor readied materials. Solomon’s palace may have been bigger and likely involved more sophisticated architecture. It was probably not just a single structure but rather made up of several separated buildings for various purposes other than his own private residence.

Solomon also used the craftsmanship and finest materials of the Phoenicians to build a house for his Egyptian wife (7:8), as well as several government buildings such as the House of the Forest of Lebanon. This building received its unique name because of having four rows of cedar pillars. It was very large and probably served as the armoury (cf. 10:17; Isaiah 22:8). Solomon also constructed a beautiful throne room which was called the Hall of Judgment (7:7). From there he would publicly judge, demonstrating the great wisdom God had given him.

Since the native Israelites were not skilled craftsmen and builders (e.g. 5:6b), Solomon hired professionals from Tyre to do the important work and to instruct them in the construction. One such expert in bronze work was named Hiram (not to be confused with king Hiram). He was half Israelite but had resided in Tyre, the land of his father. There he had learned the necessary skills to do the important work required on the Temple. God had prepared this man and gifted him with these talents in order to do this work for His glory, just as He had with Bezaleel in the construction of the Tabernacle many years earlier (Exodus 31:1-5).

The beautiful furnishings of the Temple which Hiram made from bronze are all described and enumerated. Especially noteworthy are the two large and ornate pillars, each about 16 meters in height. The crown of each pillar was just over two meters high (7:15-16). Each pillar had significant inscriptions upon them: “Jachin”, meaning “He shall establish” and “Boaz”, meaning “in Him is strength”. They were witnesses to the power and glory of the God of Israel.

The weight of the bronze was too much to even attempt to calculate (7:47). Hiram was certainly commissioned with a huge job. Much to his credit, we read that he accomplished all the work that Solomon desired him to do (7:40). Also, to the credit of Solomon, we read that he too successfully and diligently completed the great task his father David had prepared for him (7:51). Although it took several years, Solomon persevered. He did not lose heart in building the Lord’s house, for he knew that whatever it took, it was worth it to bring glory to the Lord and see the people worshipping Him.

Prayer

Lord we praise You for persevering in Your work in our lives. Help us to not lose heart but persevere in such things as reading Your Word and praying every day so that we as Your temples will be completed to Your glory.