



SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

No 2 I Lay In Zion For A Foundation

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

Isaiah 28:16

INTRODUCTION

- we have established that construction of Solomon's Temple was by far the most expensive building ever undertaken in history

likewise, the Temple bore more attention to detail than any other architectural design...coming from the mind of God, this should surprise us

- first and foremost, the Temple was designed to be a house...this would stand in general contrast to the places of worship built for the purpose of extolling the virtues of various deities.

in his dedication prayer, Solomon declared "I have surely built thee an house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to abide in for ever." **1 Kings 8:13**

the Lord responded, "I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me. I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there for ever..." **1 Kings 9:3**

in other words, the Temple was not just to be a place for displaying the beliefs of the people...it was the place where God's Spirit dwelt among His people

1 Corinthians 3:16-17

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

NOTE: search the phrase 'my name' in *Kings* and *Chronicles* and consider that the name of God would be manifested by the Temple to other nations and people...what would that mean?

1. THE START OF CONSTRUCTION

Solomon continued the preparations for construction during the first three years of his reign

much of his time was spent in closing out the affairs of his father...personal issues concerning *Adonijah, Joab, Abiathar, and Shimei*

1 Kings 2:13-46

one of his greatest concerns was the preparation of the threshing floor David had purchased from Ornan

to prepare the site, Solomon "filled up great valleys with earth...to be on a level with the top of the mountain, on which the Temple was built"

~ *Antiquities of the Jews, Josephus*

construction began in the spring of 967 BC, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel...the Temple was completed some seven and a half years later, in the fall of 960 BC

1 Kings 6:1 (37-38); 2 Chronicles 3:2

2. THE SOURCE OF CONSTRUCTION

the Temple was constructed with assistance from the Phoenicians...Solomon turned to the old friend of his father, King Hiram of Phoenicia (KJV *Tyre* and *Sidon*...modern-day Lebanon), who supplied labor and fine cedar, fir, and algum wood

1 Kings 5:1-12; 2 Chronicles 2:3, 8-10

Solomon contracted with expert Phoenician craftsmen to carve the timbers (1 Kings 5:6), quarry the stone (verse 18), and fashion the intricate bronze items such as the two pillars, the lavers, and the bronze sea

all of this was bartered in trade to Solomon for Israeli copper, wheat, barley, oil, olives, wine, and figs...and some land **9:12-13**

NOTE: Solomon, the Israelite king, specialized in the vessels of gold. Hiram, a Gentile king, specialized in the vessels of brass. This foreshadows the coming in of the Gentiles with Israel to the New Testament church... the Temple of the Lord...the Body of Christ (Ephesians 2:11-22). In the church, the Gentiles are no longer strangers but fellow-citizens in the household of faith.

the Phoenicians were expert sailors and ship builders, so rather than hauling the wood a hundred miles over land, the logs were made into rafts and floated down the coast of the Mediterranean Sea from Lebanon (1 Kings 5:8-9; 2 Chronicles 2:16)

the wood was received at the Israeli seaport of Joppa and then transported approximately thirty miles east up to the city of Jerusalem

NOTE: Later in his reign, Solomon built a navy for Israel and trusted King Hiram's sailors to operate it (1 Kings 9:26-28). For the most part, the two kings enjoyed a good friendship throughout their reigns.

assisting the Phoenician tradesmen was a large Israeli workforce, since the labor requirements were enormous **1 Kings 5:13-16**

Solomon created a workforce of 183,300 laborers broken down as such:

30,000 laborers working in Lebanon with a rotating schedule of 10,000 per month

70,000 bearers of burdens

80,000 stone masons

3,300 supervisors to oversee the transportation of lumber and quarry work

3. THE SKILL OF CONSTRUCTION

one of the most unique considerations of the construction project was the reverence for the work as the workmen guarded the sanctity of the house

construction sites are almost always noisy, but no sound of hammer, axe, or other tool was heard on the job site

1 Kings 6:7

And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building.

stones were cut and fully dressed at the quarry and when they were received onsite, the builders rejected any stone which did not fit perfectly

Psalm 118:22

The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.

in order to create the furnishings and design the intricate relief work done on the inside walls of the Temple, a master artisan was needed

NOTE: when Moses built the Tabernacle, the Lord assembled the needed workers and empowered them to do their work

Aholiab & Bezaleel
Exodus 31:1-11 (35:30-35)

Solomon requested just such a person from King Hiram...who sent the craftsman, Hiram (or Hiram-Abi, 2 Chronicles 2:13-14).

he was the son of a mixed marriage, for his father was Phoenician and his mother was from the tribe of Naphtali...he was gifted as a metal worker and his crowning achievement would be the two brass pillars that stood at the entrance of the Temple

NOTE: 2 Chronicles 2:14 identifies Hiram, the metal-worker, mother with the tribe of Dan, not Naphtali (1 Kings 7:13-14); but there is no discrepancy. When Solomon became king of Israel, he established new districts and borders. Thus, the tribes of Dan and Naphtali were united into the eighth district of Naphtali, supervised by Ahimaaz (1 Kings 4:15).

4. THE SILHOUETTE OF CONSTRUCTION

there is a tremendous picture for us in the details of this work force...just as God used Jews and Gentiles to build His Temple, the church of the early New Testament was built in the same manner (with the Samaritans...half-Jew, half-Gentile...thrown in for good measure)

in **Ephesians 4:11**, Paul listed the outworking of this building program in the church:
apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers...there is a similarity to the craftsmen and construction workers of the Temple

Ephesians 2:19-22

the **apostles** and **prophets** together laid the foundation for the house, building according to the pattern shown to them

the **evangelists** serve as quarry-men, bringing in the materials to be beautified and fit into the house of the Lord

the **pastors** and **teachers**, as stone masons, fulfill the ministry of shaping and polishing the stones for the Temple of God

1 Peter 2:5

Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

1 Kings 5:17-18 (6:37) 7:11

1 Chronicles 22:2 (14-15)

The stones for the Lord's Temple were:

costly stones

great stones

hewn stones

white stones

prepared stones

wrought stones

sawed within and without

measured stones

foundation stones

covered stones...covered with cedar

1 Kings 6:18

garnished stones...with precious gems

2 Chronicles 3:6

5. THE STANDARD OF CONSTRUCTION

once the valleys were filled in and the foundation of bedrock was established, the first stone laid as part of the construction would have been the **CORNERSTONE**

the Temple was constructed from huge limestone blocks rather than modern materials such as concrete, brick and mortar

these stones were very costly because of their immense size and precision tooling

1 Kings 5:17

And the king commanded, and they brought great stones, costly stones, and hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house.

Note: comparing the stones used in the construction of Solomon's palace (1 Kings 7:10), it is estimated the stones used to build the Temple were fifteen feet or more in length (approximately 8-10 cubits)...these would easily have weighed far more than the largest stones used in the construction of the pyramids of Egypt

A. CRITICAL SIGNIFICANCE

among these stones, the cornerstone stood apart, being the most critical stone in the Temple

the Hebrew word literally means "head of the corner" and is often translated as *chief*

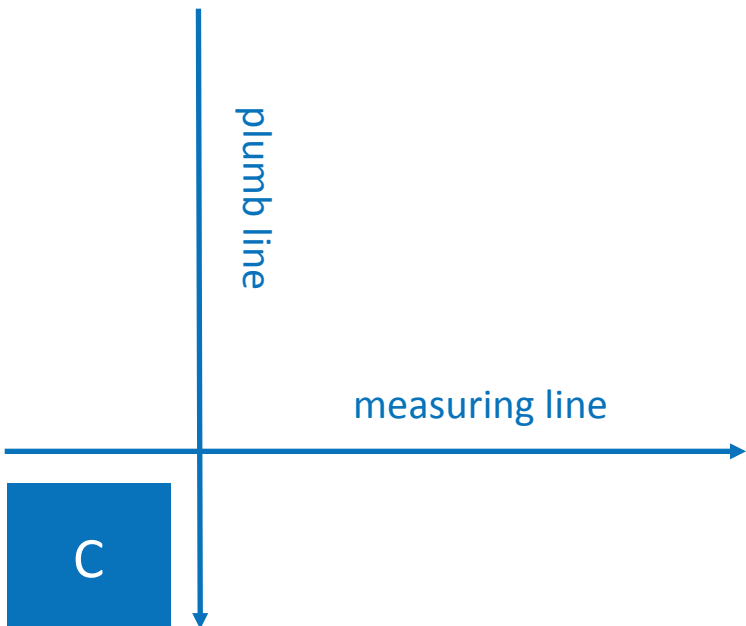
this cornerstone, as its name implies, would have been set first, at the corner of the building...all other stones were built upon and aligned with the cornerstone

a **measuring line** (for horizontal alignment) assured the stone courses did not slope uphill compared to the cornerstone.

a **plumb line** (for vertical alignment) assured that the walls did not lean in or out from the cornerstone

see diagram

since there was no bracing in the walls, the cornerstone was the key to the stability and symmetry of the building



years later, God led the prophet Isaiah to use this construction principle as an illustration of the promised Messiah (**Isaiah 28:7-10, 15-16**)

Isaiah 28:16

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

additionally, this comparison is not surprising when we consider that the future temple will be built by the Messiah and will be the seat of His government in the Millennial Kingdom

Zechariah 6:12-13

And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.

B. SPIRITUAL CRITERION

NOTE: Christ as the cornerstone is the most often repeated Old Testament theme in the New Testament

Likewise, the New Testament recognized the messianic nature of Isaiah's prophecy

Jesus, in speaking with the chief priests, applied the prophecy to Himself

Matthew 21:42

Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?

cf **Mark 12:10-11, Luke 20:17-18**

this rejection of Jesus was obvious in His lifetime:

they did not approve of His origin

John 7:52

they did not approve of His lack of formal education

John 7:15

they did not approve His disregard for religious traditions

Luke 6:2

they did not approve of His choice of friends

Matthew 9:11

Still do the builders refuse Him: even to this day the professional teachers of the gospel are far too apt to fly to any and every new philosophy sooner than maintain the simple gospel, which is the essence of Christ: nevertheless, He holds His true position amongst His people, and the foolish builders shall see to their utter confusion that His truth shall be exalted over all.

~ Charles Spurgeon

The Apostle Paul taught that the household of God is built as a spiritual temple upon the Messiah as the Chief Cornerstone

Ephesians 2:20-21

he alluded to this Cornerstone prophecy in **1 Corinthians 3:11**

consider Paul's prayer that we might know the *breadth, length, height,* and *depth* of Christ's love

Ephesians 3:17-18

the Apostle Peter taught concerning Christ as the Chief Cornerstone, as well

1 Peter 2:6-8

in Isaiah's prophecy, we find crucial truth for our understanding, not only of Solomon's construction, but also in understanding our place in the church of God:

the messianic Cornerstone would be brought by the Lord, not man...this parallels the prophet Daniel who called Messiah the "stone...cut out of the mountain without hands" (Daniel 2:45)

the Cornerstone will one day rule from Zion, where the Temple was constructed and the Millennial Temple is to be built (Psalm 48:2)

the Lord's Cornerstone is the only basis for true security:

He is a *stone*: strong and everlasting

He is a *tried stone*: tested and fit to be the foundation

He is a *precious cornerstone*, a very costly stone that is able to support the entire structure

He is a *sure foundation*: solid and immovable

the Lord's Cornerstone is the true standard of measurement...those who trust in Him will go into the messianic Kingdom and will never be taken away by God's judgment

JUSTICE (the horizontal measuring line) and **RIGHTEOUSNESS** (the vertical plumb line) are the central attributes of Messiah's Kingdom

Jeremiah 33:15

In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.

NOTE: according to **Romans 2**, Christ has brought both the Jews and the Gentiles together in the plan of salvation (see diagram)

Romans 2:14-15 (17-18)

to those who trust Him, the Cornerstone “shall be for a sanctuary” (Isaiah 8:14) from God’s judgment

but to those who reject Him, the Cornerstone will be “for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence”

the wicked will “stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken” in God’s judgment (Isaiah 8:15)

the Apostle Peter testified before the Temple Sanhedrin concerning Jesus:

Acts 4:11-12

This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved

In summary:

Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of Psalm 118

the stumbling stone of Isaiah 8:14

the foundation stone of Isaiah 28:16

the supernatural stone of Daniel 2:35

the rock from which Israel drank in 1 Corinthians 10:4