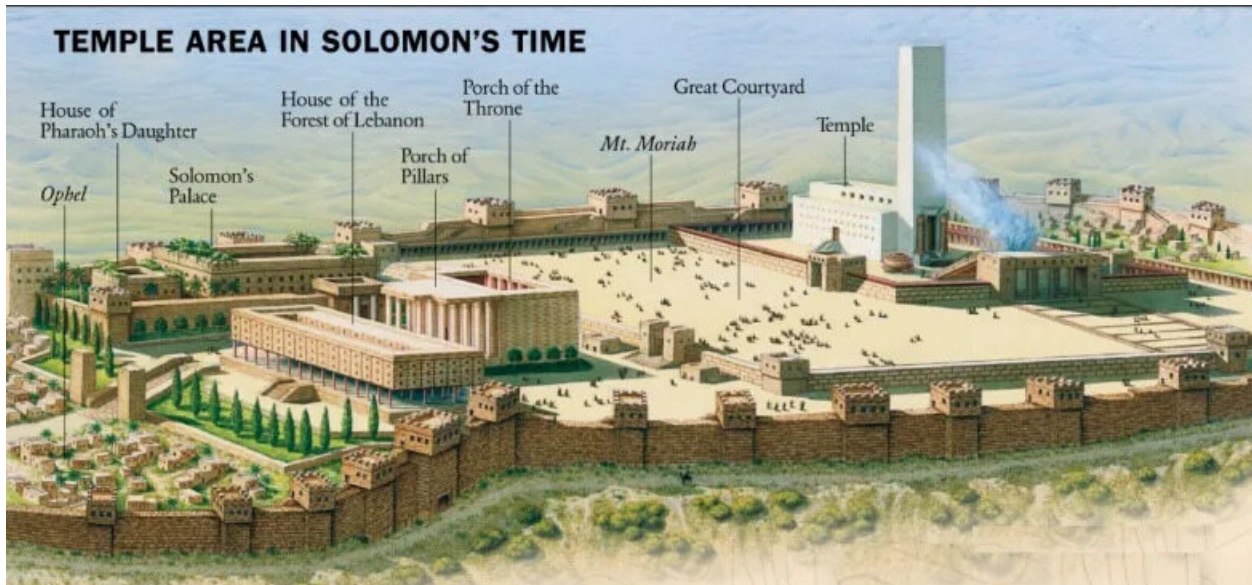
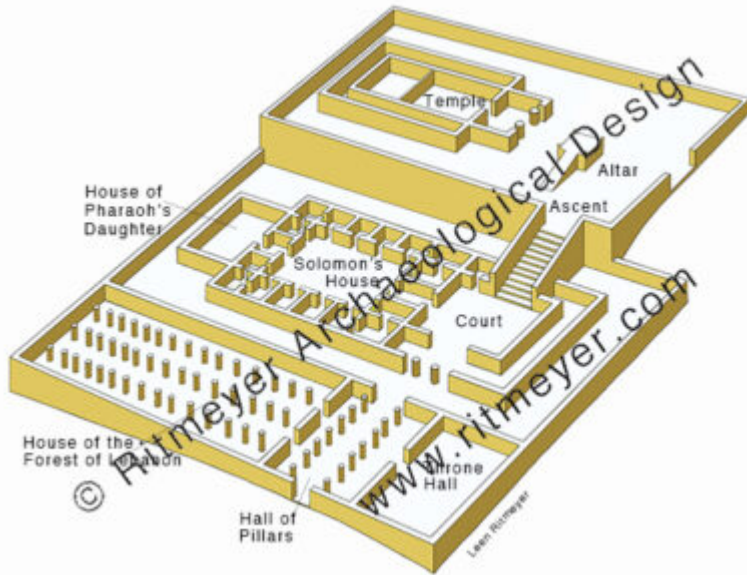


# Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

We do not know the precise layout of the Temple and palace of Solomon. We know general ideas. The following images are artists' portrayals of likely designs. I have pulled these from the internet. My purpose in showing them to you is to give you a basic feel for the integration of the Temple with the other government buildings. In both images the Temple is clearly the most important structure as it is situated at the highest point. In the second image I believe the vestibule of the Temple is set too high. There is a conflict between the height given in I Kings and the height given in 2 Chronicles 3:4. Kings has 30 cubits and Chronicles has 120 cubits.



## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

The world in which we live rudely intrudes upon our spiritual life. Beeps, lights, and voices all invade our attempt to sit quietly before our God. It is a lifelong struggle to enjoy rich fellowship with God.

But equally challenging is the struggle to integrate God into the rest of our lives. It is right to distinguish the sacred from the secular. But the Bible calls us to weave them together into one unified life. All of life is not religion, but religion should impact all of life.

How does God teach His people this principle?  
One way is through architecture and buildings.

The first question that confronts us in chapter 7 is, “Why are we given a brief description of government buildings, including the king’s palace, in the middle of a description of the Temple?”

Another way to ask this question is, “What is the relationship between the Temple and the rest of the government buildings?”

Maybe the easiest way to answer these questions is by contrasting what we find here with the buildings of our own government.

When we think of our own government two buildings come to mind: The White House and the Capital Building. There

## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

is no Temple or Church at the center of Washington, DC. This is purposeful.

In our country we value the separation of Church and State. We do not believe that the Government should establish any one religious denomination. The government's duty is to protect the rights of individuals to worship according to their own preferences, as long as they do not infringe upon the rights of others.

Our constitution limits the scope of government. They are not to intrude into the affairs of the Church.

But neither is any one Church or denomination to make their form of religion government law. Of course, churches and individuals were expected to influence the government leaders. And Christians are encouraged to hold political office.

If you go to Washington, DC, you will find plenty of Churches. They will be near but not attached to the government buildings.

The arrangement in ancient Israel is vastly different. The reign of the king in Israel was "established" by God. The king ruled at the pleasure of the LORD. In truth, the LORD ruled over His people through His appointed king.

## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

This is reflected in the architectural layout of the government buildings in relationship with the Temple.

There are not multiple Temples where individuals could choose for their private worship. There is one Temple situated above the government buildings indicating that the LORD continued to rule over His people.

The king was called to execute the will of the LORD on earth.

Once you understand this, it becomes clear why a brief description of Solomon's government buildings is inserted into a larger description of the Temple.

They are distinct, but not separate from the Temple. They are woven together as we will see today.

Vv. 1-12 give us a summary of all the government buildings. Look at your images.

1. The Hall of the Forest of Lebanon (The Great Assembly Hall).
2. The Hall of Pillars – served as an entrance to the Great Assembly Hall.
3. The Hall of the Throne - served as the Hall of Judgment.
4. The Palace of Solomon

## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

### 5. The Palace of Pharaoh's Daughter

All of these buildings are included in the statement of verse 1.

Read I Kings 7:1.

Solomon was building his own house  
thirteen years,  
and  
he finished his entire house.

The statement that Solomon's house took 13 years to build does not mean that he gave more attention to his own house than he did to the Temple. If that were the case, why did Solomon finish the Temple BEFORE working on his own house?

We have no mention as to the numbers of workers given to the task.

It is also true that the Temple was only one building while there were several government buildings.

I am convinced that the Temple was Solomon's first priority.

We are not given the starting date or finishing date like we were with the Temple.

## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

**Rather than the government buildings rivaling the Temple, they derive their importance from the Temple.**

In our American system, it is easier to think that religion and the worship of God do not directly relate to politics or daily living. The danger is to conclude that your faith only makes up a small portion of your life in this world.

The truth is that religion begins in the heart, but it does not end there.

All of life is not religious.

But your relationship with God should impact every area of your life.

And one day, when King Jesus returns to the earth, all of life will be seamlessly centered around the worship of God.

The point of this is that God demands to rule every area of your life. You may have a private life, but not when it comes to God.

There may be areas that you do not want him to rule.

There may be areas that you struggle to submit to His rule.

There may be areas that you still wonder what it means for Him to rule.

## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

But Christianity is a religion in which God rules over His people through His King.  
Jesus is Savior and LORD.

Beginning in v. 13, we are introduced to a craftsman named Hiram.

In verse 14, we are told that this Hiram was a son of mixed blood.

His mother was of the tribe of Naphtali. Chronicles says that she was of the Tribe of Dan.

His father was a man of Tyre.

We are not told anything regarding his own faith. His personal faith is not considered important to the story. That is not to say that his own personal faith is not important. Just not to the story at hand.

What does matter is that Hiram has learned from his father how to skillfully craft bronze.

Even though he has learned his skill from his dad, the writer wants us to see that it is the sovereign hand of God that has given him his skill.

In the life of Hiram's grandparents, they may have been terribly distraught that their daughter would marry with an unbeliever. And they may have thought that the LORD had lost control. How amazing that in the providence of God,

## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

their grandson has now been chosen by God to be the lead craftsman in building the Temple!

Look at the middle of verse 14.

And  
he was full of  
wisdom,  
understanding,  
and  
skill  
for making any work in bronze.

This wording is an allusion back to the great craftsman of the Tabernacle, Bezalel. And along with Bezalel was Oholiab, also of the tribe of Dan. Listen to the description of Bezalel and Oholiab in Exodus 31.

**Exodus 31:1-6** The LORD said to Moses, <sup>2</sup> "See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, <sup>3</sup> and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with ability and intelligence, with knowledge and all craftsmanship, <sup>4</sup> to devise artistic designs, to work in gold, silver, and bronze, <sup>5</sup> in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, to work in every craft. <sup>6</sup> And behold, I have appointed with him Oholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. And I have given to all able men ability, that they may make all that I have commanded you:



## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

The craftsman Hiram is an example of God sovereignly giving skill and ability to an individual for a specific purpose. The LORD has made use of materials from outside of Israel. Now, He is appropriating a master craftsman for His purposes.

The Apostle Paul may have been thinking of Hiram when he wrote Ephesians 2:8-10.

**Ephesians 2:8-10** <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not a result of works, so that no one may boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Your skills may be limited. You may not be the best of the best of the best. That is not a problem for God. He has given you the skills that He wants you to have. He has prepared in advance works for you to walk in. Use what God has given you. Work with all your heart. But do not fear that your best is not good enough. God is the One who controls your skills and the limits of your skills.

Do not find confidence or significance in your own greatness, especially not in comparison with others. Trust rather that God is sovereign in your life. Walk with Him,

## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

and He will enable you to accomplish the purposes He has for you.

In vv. 15-22, we are given a description of the **two pillars** that stood at the front of the Vestibule of the Temple.

This is the first mention of these pillars. The Tabernacle did not have such pillars. That is important. It is only with the promise of the establishment of the eternal kingship that these pillars become necessary.

**These pillars provide the intersection between God's rule and the rule of the king.**

They make clear that religion and politics go hand in hand in God's Kingdom.

Many of the details given are designed to impress us with their massive strength and beauty.

In fact, looking at the Temple from the outside, it would be these two pillars that would most impress you.

Look at the picture that has been handed out to you. I looked at a good number of images of these pillars. And there is a wide variety of ideas as to what these pillars really looked like.

## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

The most difficulty comes in understanding the “capitals”. A “capital” is basically a decorative cap on the top of the pillar.

The fact that the caps contain pomegranates and lilies point us to the fruitfulness of the kingdom.

The chainwork and wreaths point to the victory and glory of the kingdom.

The bronze is not as valuable a metal as the gold inside the Temple, but it is consistent with the bronze altar and the bronze laver and everything else connected with the Inner Court outside the Temple.

These pillars were 18 feet in circumference. That is almost 6 feet in diameter.

They were at least 40 feet tall.

It is significant that these pillars stand at the vestibule of the Temple.

Yahweh dwells within the Temple.

He rules from the Temple.

And by His sovereign hand, He establishes the kingdom promised to David.

The names of the pillars connect the Sovereign Strength of the LORD with the fulfillment of the LORD’s promise to David to establish the kingdom of his son forever.

21 He set up the pillars at the vestibule of the temple.

## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

He set up the pillar on the south  
and called its name Jachin,  
and  
he set up the pillar on the north  
and called its name Boaz.

Jakin means “He will establish” referring to the promise of 2 Samuel 7:12-13.

**2 Samuel 7:12-13** <sup>12</sup> When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and **I will establish his kingdom.** <sup>13</sup> He shall build a house for my name, and **I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.**

The pillar Jachin reminded the people that the LORD had made this promise to David. The presence of Yahweh on earth was very much joined with the promise of the eternal kingdom.

We already have seen in chapter 2 that Solomon’s reign as king is the fruit of God’s faithfulness to David.

<sup>ESV</sup> **1 Kings 2:45** But King Solomon shall be blessed, and the throne of David shall be established before the LORD forever."

## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

The only question is whether Solomon will fulfill the condition of this promise.

**1 Kings 6:11-12** <sup>11</sup> Now the word of the LORD came to Solomon, <sup>12</sup> "Concerning this house that you are building, if you will walk in my statutes and obey my rules and keep all my commandments and walk in them, **then I will establish my word with you, which I spoke to David your father.**

So far, it looks like Solomon will be "The Promised son of David". At this point in the story, we are hoping that he will be the "one".

But even if he is not, the pillar continues to stand. It continues to proclaim that God will indeed provide for David a son who will fulfill the condition of obedience to the will of God. And therefore, God will establish an eternal kingdom for His obedient King.

The second pillar is named Boaz.

The meaning of Boaz is a bit more difficult to determine.

The name is made famous from the book of Ruth. But there is no statement directly connecting the pillar with the man.

It is more likely that the name should be connected with the Hebrew word "Beoz" which means "in strength".

## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

Psalm 21, a psalm of David, very much connects the kingship with the strength of the LORD.

**Psalm 21:1** O LORD, in your strength the king rejoices, and in your salvation how greatly he exults! <sup>2</sup> You have given him his heart's desire and have not withheld the request of his lips. Selah <sup>3</sup> For you meet him with rich blessings; **you set a crown of fine gold upon his head.** <sup>4</sup> **He asked life of you; you gave it to him, length of days forever and ever.** <sup>5</sup> His glory is great through your salvation; splendor and majesty you bestow on him. <sup>6</sup> For you make him most blessed forever; you make him glad with the joy of your presence. <sup>7</sup> **For the king trusts in the LORD, and through the steadfast love of the Most High he shall not be moved.** <sup>8</sup> Your hand will find out all your enemies; your right hand will find out those who hate you. <sup>9</sup> You will make them as a blazing oven when you appear. The LORD will swallow them up in his wrath, and fire will consume them. <sup>10</sup> You will destroy their descendants from the earth, and their offspring from among the children of man. <sup>11</sup> Though they plan evil against you, though they devise mischief, they will not succeed. <sup>12</sup> For you will put them to flight; you will aim at their faces with your bows. <sup>13</sup> **Be exalted, O LORD, in your strength! We will sing and praise your power.**

## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

It is most likely that this psalm expresses the theology behind the Pillar Boaz.

The pillar reminded the king that his strength was not in himself, but in the LORD.

The people and the king were to trust in the power of the LORD and His faithfulness to keep His covenant promise to David.

God designs these pillars to be visible reminders of His faithfulness and strength.

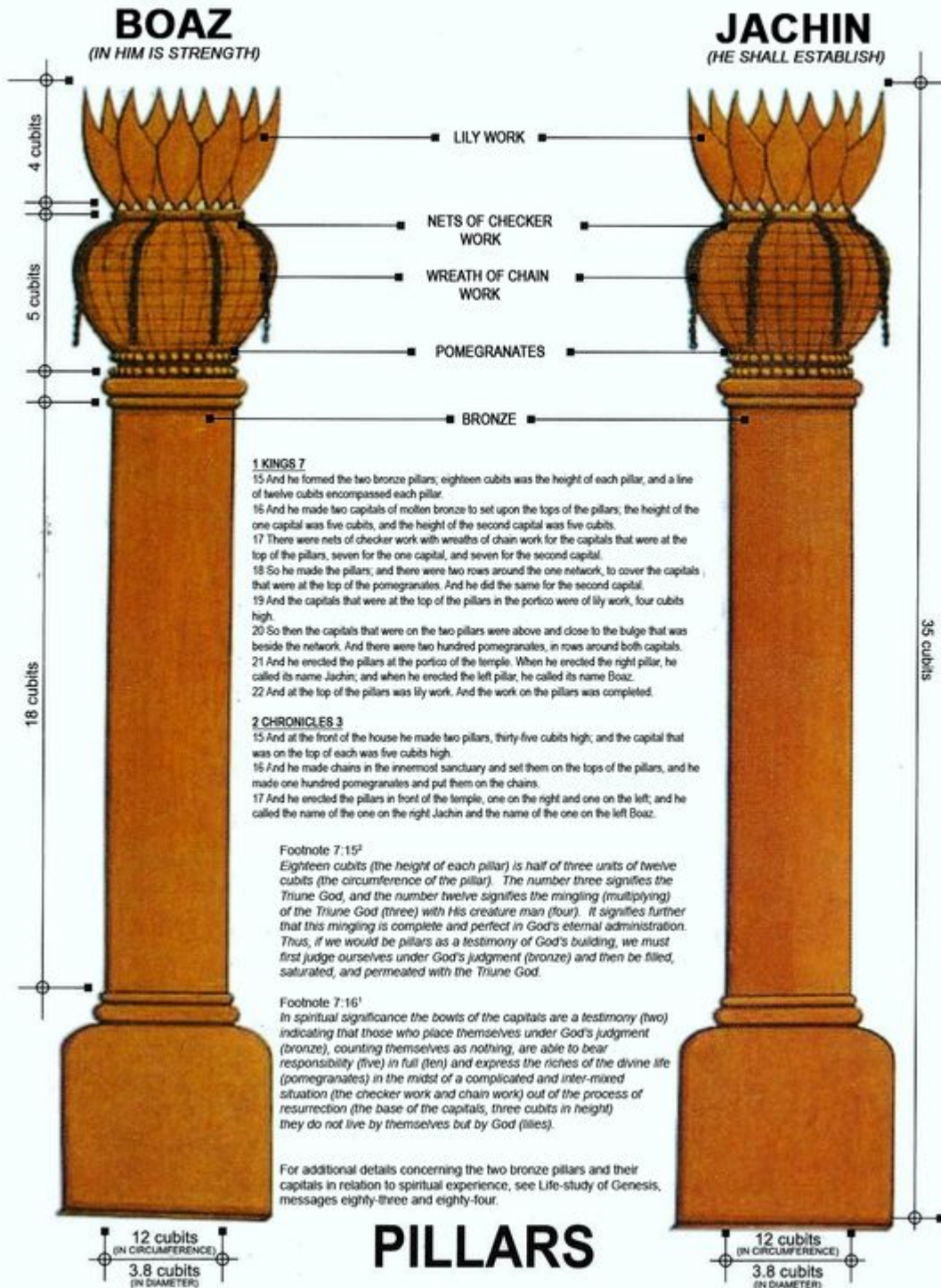
You can imagine then how disturbing it would have been to the faith of the Israelites when these pillars were destroyed.

Jeremiah tells us that these pillars were broken down and the bronze was carried off to Babylon.

But neither the destruction of the pillars, nor the failure of David's human sons, would prevent Yahweh from fulfilling His promise to David and bringing His Messiah into the world, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

# Temple Lessons

## I Kings 7:1-51





## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

We do not have physical pillars before our eyes today. But we do have Jesus.

He is the Chief Cornerstone, who is sitting at the right hand of the Father in heaven. And we have His promise that He will never leave us nor forsake us. And that all authority in heaven and on earth belong to Him.

We are called to fix our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, and our Perfect King.

Our hope is in the faithfulness of God to establish the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

And as citizens in His kingdom, we are to trust entirely in His strength and not our own to bring about the Kingdom.

In verses 23 to 26 we come to a description of the **Laver**, sometimes called the Bronze Sea.

The Laver was larger than you might expect.

It was 15 feet in diameter and 7 ½ feet in height.

It could hold approximately 11,000 gallons of water.

It was stationary, but it was situated atop 12 oxen, giving the appearance of it being movable.

Just below the brim were etched a row of gourds all around, continuing the theme of blessing and fruitfulness. And the brim itself was sculpted with lilies.

## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

We do not know how the tank was filled.  
And there is no explanation of how the water was dispensed.

We are told in Exodus 30 that the purpose of the Laver was for the cleansing of the priests.

The fact that the Laver was placed on oxen facing outward symbolizes that the cleansing was not meant only for the priests but for all Israel. Ultimately, it anticipates the taking of the Gospel to the four corners of the earth.

The washing of the priests points to the necessity of our hearts being washed clean from our sin. It is not only that we commit sin, but we are also, by nature, sinful. And we need cleansing before we can approach our Holy God.

What is pictured in the Laver is also promised by God in the New Covenant.

**Ezekiel 36:25-27** <sup>25</sup> I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. <sup>26</sup> And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup> And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

The symbolism of washing and being made clean adds an element to forgiveness that is easily forgotten. The blood of the sacrifice of Christ pays in full the penalty for your sin. But this blood does more than cancel a debt. This blood also washes the sinner and makes him clean. As sinners, we are called to receive this cleansing by faith. We are casting ourselves upon Christ and trusting that He does wash us clean.

This truth was impressed home to me as I was reading a book on the symbolism of the Temple by a guy I am not really familiar with named Soltau.

He directed my thoughts to one verse in Ezekiel 38.

**Exodus 38:8** <sup>8</sup> He made the basin of bronze and its stand of bronze, from the mirrors of the ministering women who ministered in the entrance of the tent of meeting.

I do not think this was accidental. I do not think I realized that there were “ministering women who ministered at the entrance of the tent of meeting” for one. But then to think that the Laver of the Tabernacle was made from melted down mirrors.

A mirror is used for looking at oneself.

## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

Before you will bring your sins to the altar to have the blood of the sacrifices to atone for them, you must see yourself as a sinner, and one who commits sins that are punishable by God.

James tells us that that Law of God can function like a mirror, showing us how we have fallen short of God's perfection.

The fact is that in order to follow Christ we must often look at ourselves in our corruption and sin. You probably get this well enough.

But do you get the rest of the story?

Have you come to the point where you have melted down your mirror and stopped looking at the reflection of yourself?

And have you begun to look at yourself through the lens of God? He looks at you as being clean, having been made clean by His Son, and by the Holy Spirit.

It is not only your sins that have been washed. It is your very nature that has been washed clean.

Soltau writes, "Having once for all thoroughly learnt what we are by nature (ugly sinners), we shall cease to look at ourselves, either with the vain hope of discovering some features of beauty in which we might rest with satisfaction

## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

(pride and boasting), or to be disgusted afresh with the evil and loathsomeness which a true picture of self cannot fail to exhibit.” (Soltau 112)

In other words, the Gospel calls us to no longer look at ourselves or others who are in Christ according to our old nature. If we are in Christ, we are new creations, washed entirely clean.

Is this the way you view yourself?

Or are you hanging on to your mirror?

The mirror can only be useful to lead you to Christ.

But once you are standing before Him, you must choose to take your eyes off the mirror and fix them upon Him and His righteousness freely given to you.

Soltau says it very powerfully:

“It is not only necessary that a man should know himself, but that he should also know the way in which he may escape from himself.” Soltau 114.

“The mirror must lead to the laver...”

In vv. 27-39 we have a description of **10 more basins**.

These basins are not for the cleansing of the priests. They are for the washing of the sacrificial animals.

## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

They were smaller, but still impressive.

They were 6 feet in diameter and could hold more than 200 gallons of water each.

The stands of the basins were set on wheels. Each wheel was over two feet in diameter.

But do not think that these basins were easily carted around. They would have been extremely heavy.

The bowls were placed on stands, elegantly decorated with cherubim and lions and oxen and palm trees.

This would continue the theme of the temple of God's restoration of creation and his leading man back into His presence in the Garden.

The basins anticipate a day when it will no longer be necessary to slaughter oxen and sheep to cover the sins of men.

The basins anticipate a day when the curse on the earth will be lifted entirely. The lion and the ox will dwell together in harmony.

Beginning in v. 40, we are given a summary of all that has been accomplished.

In these verses we see that there were many other instruments that were necessary for the ministry of the priests – pots, shovels, smaller bowls to name a few.

There was so much bronze used that the weight of everything was more than could be calculated.

# Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

In verses 48-50, we see that Solomon also replaced the furniture used in the main room of the Tabernacle. And all the utensils used by the priests. And we are even given a brief statement of the sockets of the doors.

And finally, we get to verse 51.

51 Thus all the work that King Solomon did  
on the house of the LORD  
was finished.

## Bronze Basins and Stands

In the temple courtyard there were 10 bronze wheeled stands that held 10 basins filled with water—five on the south side of the temple, five on the north side. They were used to rinse off the animal parts that were used for the burnt offerings (1 Kings 7:27–38; 2 Chron. 4:6). Each stand was 6 feet (1.8 m) long, 6 feet (1.8 m) wide, and 4.5 feet (1.4 m) high. Each basin was 4.5 feet (1.4 m) in diameter and held 240 gallons (909 l) of water.



Summary:

## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

1. In the Kingdom that God is bringing in Christ, religion and life are to be woven together into one integrated whole.
  - a. The Sacred is not relegated to some private corner of our lives.
  - b. We must remember the already, and not yet.
2. In Hiram we learn that God gives to us the talents and skills necessary to accomplish the works He has created in advance for us to walk in.
  - a. You are neither to see yourself as more than you ought, nor somehow inadequate for the tasks to which God has called you.
  - b. When given a compliment, do not say with false piety, "It was the LORD." The truth is that it wasn't that good. But neither should you throw the compliment back in the face of the one who gave it. You do not have to point out all the ways that what you have done is imperfect. What should you say? "Thank you, I really appreciate the compliment."
  - c. The skill of Hiram was not perfect. I am quite certain that he was aware of the faults in his work. But he was faithful to use the skill that God had given him. That is all that God requires.
3. Remember the promise of Jachin and Boaz.
  - a. Jachin teaches us that it is God alone who establishes the Kingdom promised to David. No



## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

power in all the world can prevent this kingdom from being established.

- b. God's promises to David must be fulfilled because King Jesus has perfectly fulfilled all the conditions God placed upon His King.
- c. God will establish Jesus Christ as King over all the kingdoms of this world.
- d. Boaz teaches us that it is in the strength of Yahweh that the King rules. And it is in the strength of Yahweh that we should trust.

Dale Ralph Davis 74.

“None of us likely sees bronze pillars outside our place of public worship. We may dispense with the pillars but must retain their testimony. Don't Christian believers still need to be freshly gripped with kingdom assurance (Jachin) and newly impressed with their own implicit helplessness (Boaz)?”

4. The mirror must lead to the laver.

- a. We must see ourselves as clean “in Christ”.

**1 Corinthians 6:9-11** <sup>9</sup> Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, <sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>11</sup> And such

## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

**Galatians 2:19-20** I have been crucified with Christ. <sup>20</sup> It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.

5. And lastly, we must remember that the ministry of the Temple was temporary.

- a. It points us to Christ and His finished work, and the work of the Holy Spirit.
- b. But it even points us further ahead to the day when the entire creation will be restored, to the day when the lion and the ox will dwell in harmony.

**Romans 8:18-25** <sup>18</sup> For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. <sup>19</sup> For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. <sup>20</sup> For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup> that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. <sup>22</sup> For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. <sup>23</sup> And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption

## Temple Lessons

I Kings 7:1-51

as sons, the redemption of our bodies. <sup>24</sup> For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? <sup>25</sup> But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

The establishment of the eternal kingdom does not depend upon you.

The establishment of this kingdom depends upon the perfection of your King.

And it is His strength that will accomplish all that He promised.

You are made a citizen in this kingdom through repentance and faith.

Your obedience matters. The goal of salvation is to bring you into conformity to King Jesus.

But never forget that the blessing of the kingdom does not depend upon your obedience.

The blessing of the Kingdom depends upon the righteousness of your king alone. And you must keep your eyes fixed upon Him as you walk through this life.