**The House of Yahweh**

**I Kings 5:13 – 6:38 (Lesson #5)**

\*\*\* Again, as in our other lessons, as we work through these verses,

we will see many points of application as well as pictures of Jesus and the gospel! \*\*\*

***5:13 King Solomon drafted forced labor out of all Israel, and the draft numbered 30,000 men. 14 And he sent them to Lebanon, 10,000 a month in shifts. They would be a month in Lebanon and two months at home. Adoniram was in charge of the draft. 15 Solomon also had 70,000 burden-bearers and 80,000 stonecutters in the hill country, 16 besides Solomon’s 3,300 chief officers who were over the work, who had charge of the people who carried on the work. 17 At the king’s command they quarried out great, costly stones in order to lay the foundation of the house with dressed stones. 18 So Solomon’s builders and Hiram’s builders and the men of Gebal did the cutting and prepared the timber and the stone to build the house.***

**Vs 13-14 –** We see the labor force that Solomon sent to Lebanon, and their rotation.

**Vs 15-16 –** Solomon also hires, conscripts, or whatever **70,000** burden-bearers and **80,000** stonecutters who are sent into the hill country to quarry stones. So, there are an additional **150,000** men are in the hill country.

He also had **3,300** chief officers (foreman) who are overseeing the work, and who had charge over the people who did the work.

**I hope you sense this is a massive undertaking! That is only possible because God has given Solomon wisdom**

**Vs 17 –** The quarried out great and costly stones to lay the foundation of the temple.

**Vs 18 –** Thus Solomon’s workforce and Hiram’s workforce as well as men of Gebal, these are additional workers that it appears Hiram hired engage in all the off-site manual labor of building the temple.

These were men who were the inhabitants of Gebal or the Greek name **Byblos**. So Hiram hired out men from the city of Gebal (Byblos) to help with the work.

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***1 In the four hundred and eightieth year after the people of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon’s reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, he began to build the house of the LORD. 2 The house that King Solomon built for the LORD was sixty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high. 3 The vestibule in front of the nave of the house was twenty cubits long, equal to the width of the house, and ten cubits deep in front of the house. 4 And he made for the house windows with recessed frames. 5 He also built a structure against the wall of the house, running around the walls of the house, both the nave and the inner sanctuary. And he made side chambers all around. 6 The lowest story was five cubits broad, the middle one was six cubits broad, and the third was seven cubits broad. For around the outside of the house he made offsets on the wall in order that the supporting beams should not be inserted into the walls of the house.***

**Vs 1 –** The first **landmarks** involve time. We are given a couple of exact dates. It is the 480th year since the exodus from Egypt.

This first marker shows just how long Israel lived in the Promised Land without a temple. The tabernacle has served the nation, while in the Promised land for roughly 440 years.

**But these last 40+ years, the ark of the covenant has been in Jerusalem, while the tabernacle was in Gibeon.**

It is the 4th year of Solomon’s reign, it is the second month, the month of Ziv, and they started building the temple of Yahweh! So, it is approximately **966BC**, the fourth year of the reign of Solomon.

**Taken literally, this would put the Exodus at 1446-1447 BC.**

**Vs 1b -** Notice, how the temple is described. It is the **“House of Yahweh.”** For the Jew, this house was to serve as the dwelling place of God. The New Testament points us to the greater truth:

*“****19*** *So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,* ***20*** *built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,* ***21*** *in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.* ***22*** *In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.” (Eph 2:19-22 ESV)*

Notice it was the fourth year when **“He began to build…”** This was when the actual construction began, the fourth year of his reign. Solomon could have started organizing the work much sooner. We do know for sure what David did in advance:

*“11 ¶ Then David gave Solomon his son the plan of the vestibule of the temple, and of its houses, its treasuries, its upper rooms, and its inner chambers, and of the room for the mercy seat; 12 and the plan of all that he had in mind for the courts of the house of the LORD, all the surrounding chambers, the treasuries of the house of God, and the treasuries for dedicated gifts; 13 for the divisions of the priests and of the Levites, and all the work of the service in the house of the LORD; for all the vessels for the service in the house of the LORD, 14 the weight of gold for all golden vessels for each service, the weight of silver vessels for each service, 15 the weight of the golden lampstands and their lamps, the weight of gold for each lampstand and its lamps, the weight of silver for a lampstand and its lamps, according to the use of each lampstand in the service, 16 the weight of gold for each table for the showbread, the silver for the silver tables, 17 and pure gold for the forks, the basins and the cups; for the golden bowls and the weight of each; for the silver bowls and the weight of each; 18 for the altar of incense made of refined gold, and its weight; also his plan for the golden chariot of the cherubim that spread their wings and covered the ark of the covenant of the LORD. 19 "All this he made clear to me in writing from the hand of the LORD, all the work to be done according to the plan." 20 Then David said to Solomon his son, "Be strong and courageous and do it. Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed, for the LORD God, even my God, is with you. He will not leave you or forsake you, until all the work for the service of the house of the LORD is finished.” (1Ch 28:11-20 ESV)*

Although the writer does not tell us, we also know where Solomon constructed the temple:

*“Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to David his father, at the place that David had appointed, on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.” (2Ch 3:1 ESV)*

Equally we read in Genesis 22:

*“****9*** *When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.* ***10*** *Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son.* ***11*** *¶ But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am."* ***12*** *He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me."* ***13*** *And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son.* ***14*** *So Abraham called the name of that place, "The LORD will provide"; as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided."” (Ge 22:9-14 ESV)*

What a fitting place for the **“House of Yahweh.”** For it was likely on this very spot where God gave us a beautiful picture that He would provide the sacrifice necessary for our salvation and it is definitely on the spot, where David turned away the wrath of God, by a sacrifice.

It is an easy step to see that David’s sacrifice in turning away the wrath of God, was a picture of our David, the Lord Jesus Christ, who would offer himself as a sacrifice to turn away the wrath of God on our behalf. This is a beautiful picture of Jesus and the gospel.

For the Jew, the temple would stand on **a landmark site**.

This reminds us that as the temple was visible to all men, you and I are called to be like that temple on a high hill showing off the glory of God. Jesus said it this way:

*“****14*** *"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.* ***15*** *Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house.” (Mt 5:14-15 ESV)*

**Vs 2 –** Here we are given the basic dimensions of the temple, it was **sixty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high.**

As we will see as we unpack the construction, there are **four main structures:**

* The **temple proper** (the house which King Solomon built), divided into two rooms (the holy place and the most holy place).
* The **vestibule** or entrance hall on the east side of the temple proper (the vestibule in front of the sanctuary).
* The **three-storied side chambers** **(chambers all around)** which surrounded the temple proper on the north, south, and west sides. The temple faced east, and this side chamber did not run across the face of the temple.
* A **large courtyard (inner court)** surrounding the whole structure that was three courses of cut stone (I Kings 6:36).

The temple is the same basic design as the tabernacle, but twice as twice as long, twice as wide, and three times as high. The interior floor space would have been quadrupled.

Now let’s convert to feet. Solomon’s temple (the temple proper) was **90 feet long,** **30 feet wide**, and **45 feet tall**.

**As the tabernacle served as a landmark for nearly 500 years, now the temple will serve as a similar landmark.**

**Spoiler ALERT –** The temple, as we will see was completed around **959 BC** - 7 ½ years after construction starter. It lasted until **586 BC**, when Nebuchadnezzar’s armies destroyed it.

**It lasted less than 400 years.** The best estimate is **373 years**. Because of Israel’s sin, because of Solomon’s sin.

**Vs 3 –** We are then told that the vestibule, in the front of the nave of the house was 20 cubits wide, 30 cubits high, and 10 cubits deep (long).

**Vs 5–6 –** What we are about to read next is the ***“structure against the wall of the house.”***

He built a structure against the outer wall of the house, that ran around three sides of the temple and he made side chambers within it.

This structure provided nearly **twice the square footage** of the temple proper and likely served as a storage space for various grain offerings, a place to store scrolls and sacred items that were used in worship and perhaps even temporary accommodations.

So imagine this outer structure, around the temple is three stories and the width grows as you move from first floor to third floor. This provides the greatest amount of support at the bottom.

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***7 When the house was built, it was with stone prepared at the quarry, so that neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron was heard in the house while it was being built. 8 The entrance for the lowest story was on the south side of the house, and one went up by stairs to the middle story, and from the middle story to the third. 9 So he built the house and finished it, and he made the ceiling of the house of beams and planks of cedar. 10 He built the structure against the whole house, five cubits high, and it was joined to the house with timbers of cedar.***

**Vs 7** - Here we find an amazing detail, they did all the sizing of the stones at the quarry site, so that there was no chiseling, hammering, or banging at the actual temple construction site.

The traditional construction noises did not happen at the temple site. Imagine the skill needed to quarry these stones to the exact dimensions, so that no sanding, chiseling, or hammering was require on site.

What a beautiful picture of the way God works in his church. Often, the greatest work in the Kingdom of God happens silently outside the obvious perception of many.

Clarke brought up an interesting parallel in his commentary. Like the stones were cut, chiseled, and sanded prior to being transported to Jerusalem to become part of the temple, the same is true for you and I. It is on this side of eternity that God is cutting, chiseling, and sanding to prepare us for inclusion in the New Jerusalem.

**Vs 8** - The entrance to the lowest story the storage structure was on the south side of the house. From there one went up by stairs to the middle story and then by stairs from the middle story to the third story.

**Vs 9 -** The house (this outer house) is finished, notice the ceilings were beams and planks of wood.

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***11 Now the word of the LORD came to Solomon, 12 "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. 13 And I will dwell among the children of Israel and will not forsake my people Israel."***

Suddenly, in the midst of building the **House of Yahweh,** God interrupts Solomon’s building project to make an important announcement to the king.

Here the writer of Kings tells us that the **word of the LORD** came to Solomon. Amidst the work, God speaks to the King. Here a divine interruption!

God is like this in our lives as well! He routinely intrudes into our agendas, with the goal of speaking truth into our lives. Look for interruptions in your day and realize they could be interruptions from God meant to be moments with the Master and look for His leading.

One other point, this interruption was not to discuss the building, but something even more important. The King’s heart. God is much more interested in our hearts and motivations than in the activities we are performing.

**We see this set up as three “if” commands, followed by three “then” promises!**

1. If you will walk in my statutes.
2. If you will obey my rules
3. If you will keep my commandments and walk in them.

Each of these terms has its own unique nuanced meaning, but in this context, they are virtually interchangeable.

**Then… If Solomon will obey, the promises that I (Yahweh) will perform are:**

1. I will fulfill the promise that I spoke to David. This is the promise of an everlasting dynasty for Solomon.

*“12 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. 13 He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.” (2Sa 7:12-13 ESV)*

1. I will dwell among the children of Israel
2. I will not forsake my people, Israel

For these promises to be fulfilled required the King to obey God’s word. The commands in verse 12 are given in the second-person singular. When God said “you” he is not speaking of Israel generally, but to Solomon specifically!

**Spoiler Alert: Solomon failed, completely and miserably, failed!**

*“1 Now King Solomon loved many foreign women, along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, 2 from the nations concerning which the LORD had said to the people of Israel, "You shall not enter into marriage with them, neither shall they with you, for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods." Solomon clung to these in love. 3 He had 700 wives, who were princesses, and 300 concubines. And his wives turned away his heart. 4 For when Solomon was old his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not wholly true to the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father.” (1Ki 11:1-4 ESV)*

**Near the end of II Kings we read:**

*“And the LORD said, "I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and I will cast off this city that I have chosen, Jerusalem, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there."” (2Ki 23:27 ESV)*

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***14 So Solomon built the house and finished it. 15 ¶ He lined the walls of the house on the inside with boards of cedar. From the floor of the house to the walls of the ceiling, he covered them on the inside with wood, and he covered the floor of the house with boards of cypress. 16 He built twenty cubits of the rear of the house with boards of cedar from the floor to the walls, and he built this within as an inner sanctuary, as the Most Holy Place. 17 The house, that is, the nave in front of the inner sanctuary, was forty cubits long. 18 The cedar within the house was carved in the form of gourds and open flowers. All was cedar; no stone was seen. 19 The inner sanctuary he prepared in the innermost part of the house, to set there the ark of the covenant of the LORD. 20 The inner sanctuary was twenty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and twenty cubits high, and he overlaid it with pure gold. He also overlaid an altar of cedar. 21 And Solomon overlaid the inside of the house with pure gold, and he drew chains of gold across, in front of the inner sanctuary, and overlaid it with gold. 22 And he overlaid the whole house with gold, until all the house was finished. Also the whole altar that belonged to the inner sanctuary he overlaid with gold. 23 In the inner sanctuary he made two cherubim of olivewood, each ten cubits high. 24 Five cubits was the length of one wing of the cherub, and five cubits the length of the other wing of the cherub; it was ten cubits from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other. 25 The other cherub also measured ten cubits; both cherubim had the same measure and the same form. 26 The height of one cherub was ten cubits, and so was that of the other cherub. 27 He put the cherubim in the innermost part of the house. And the wings of the cherubim were spread out so that a wing of one touched the one wall, and a wing of the other cherub touched the other wall; their other wings touched each other in the middle of the house. 28 And he overlaid the cherubim with gold.***

**Vs 14-15 -** Here the writer shifts to talk about the tabernacle proper.

**Vs 16 -** Here the writer mentions the Most Holy Place of the Holy of Holies. The Holy of Holies, was a 30 foot cube.

**Vs 17-18** - Here we are told about the Holy place, the “nave” in front of the inner sanctuary (Holy of Holies) was 40 cubits longs of 60 feet. The cedar had various carvings, of gourds and open flowers.

The writer reminds us that the wood covered all the stone.

**Vs 19 -** The inner sanctuary (Holy of Holies) was 30 feet long, 30 feet wide and 30 feet tall and lined with pure gold. This was the place where they would put the **Ark of the Covenant.**

We are also told that they overlaid an altar of Cedar, with pure gold. This altar (alter of incense) was immediately outside the Holy of Holies.

**Vs 21-22** The wooden walls and wooden floor are overlaid with pure gold. You have stone, overlaid with wood, overlaid with gold, throughout the entire house.

On the outside it looked quite normal. On the inside it was gorgeous (reflecting the majesty of God). Also, the temple was constructed of three different materials.

Notice he drew **“chains of gold”** in front of the inner sanctuary (the Holy of Holies):

1. This could be multiple gold chains (although not likely)
2. This could refer to golden hooks that held the veil that separated the Holy place from the Holy of Holies.

The writer of Chronicles in describing the same event writes this:

*“****10*** *¶ In the Most Holy Place he made two cherubim of wood and overlaid them with gold.* ***11*** *The wings of the cherubim together extended twenty cubits: one wing of the one, of five cubits, touched the wall of the house, and its other wing, of five cubits, touched the wing of the other cherub;* ***12*** *and of this cherub, one wing, of five cubits, touched the wall of the house, and the other wing, also of five cubits, was joined to the wing of the first cherub.* ***13*** *The wings of these cherubim extended twenty cubits. The cherubim stood on their feet, facing the nave.* ***14*** *And he* ***made the veil of blue and purple and crimson fabrics and fine linen, and he worked cherubim on it****.” (2Ch 3:10-14 ESV)*

The Hebrew word translated chains is only used here. It seems the idea is this golden **רתיקה** (rat-tee-kaw’) were the “chains” that held the veil that blocked entry, like the curtain described in II Chr 3:14.

This veil (or chains) spoke one message: **Stay out,** you are not authorized to come here, sacred place, stay away.

No one could come into the temple except the priests.

No one could come into the Holy of Holies, except the High Priest, and only once a year on the Day of Atonement, and only after special preparation.

It is this veil in Herod’s temple, that roughly 1000 years from this date would be torn from top to bottom, as recorded in (Mat 27:51 and Mar 15:38).

He overlaid the altar (this would be the altar of incense) with pure gold. This was located directly outside the Holy of Holies.

**Vs 23 -** In the inner sanctuary, Holy of Holies, Solomon placed two Cherubs, made of a third wood (olivewood). Each Cherub was 10 cubits (15 feet tall) the Holy of Holies was 30 feet tall.

Thus, twenty cubits or 30 feet (the entire width of the Holy of Holies is covered in wings) (15 feet + 15 feet).

**Vs 28 –** The cherubs were then overlaid with pure gold. As you think about the Holy of Holies, you have two large Cherubim, who stood inside the Most Holy Place and faced the entrance to this inner room, so as soon as the High Priest entered, he saw these giant guardians of the presence of God facing him.

Everything overlaid with gold and hammered into the wood carvings. It was no doubt beautiful!

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***29 Around all the walls of the house he carved engraved figures of cherubim and palm trees and open flowers, in the inner and outer rooms. 30 The floor of the house he overlaid with gold in the inner and outer rooms. 31 For the entrance to the inner sanctuary he made doors of olivewood; the lintel and the doorposts were five-sided. 32 He covered the two doors of olivewood with carvings of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers. He overlaid them with gold and spread gold on the cherubim and on the palm trees. 33 So also he made for the entrance to the nave doorposts of olivewood, in the form of a square, 34 and two doors of cypress wood. The two leaves of the one door were folding, and the two leaves of the other door were folding. 35 On them he carved cherubim and palm trees and open flowers, and he overlaid them with gold evenly applied on the carved work. 36 He built the inner court with three courses of cut stone and one course of cedar beams.***

**Vs 31 -** Here we see the inner sanctuary, had doors made of olivewood.

**Vs 32 -**  He covered the two doors of olivewood with carvings of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers. He overlaid everything with gold.

Even the doors and doorposts overlaid with hammered gold to take the shape of all the carvings.

**Vs 33-35 -** As you think about stone, overlaid with hand-carved wood, and then overlaid with gold, this would have been a significant upgrade to the “curtain walls” and the “dirt floor” of the tent tabernacle.

**The tabernacle was glorious, the temple was even more glorious!**

**Vs 37 -** Here it is recorded that the foundation was laid for the **House of Yahweh** in the second month, this was of the fourth year of the reign of Solomon.

The **House of Yahweh** was completed in the 11th year, and eight month of the reign of Solomon.

**So, it took seven years and six months to complete.**

What a project, what an amazing beauty!

But it too, was at the end of the day, just a landmark. Pointing the Jews and you and I to things much greater. What are some of those things that the temple was pointing you and I too?

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