

King Solomon

The books of 1 and 2 Kings, like the books of Samuel, were originally written as a single document. The translators of the Greek Septuagint divided both Kings and Samuel into two books each, this resulted in the four books containing a complete history of the kings of Israel.

The author or group of authors of the books of 1 and 2 Kings cannot be identified with certainty, Ezra or one of prophets of that period as possible writers of the final record. The books appear to have been written sometime after the release of Jehoiachin in Babylon (561 B.C.) as it contains the event in the text. This means that the book of Kings must be dated either during the time that the Jews were in exile in Babylonian, or soon after, during the period that the nation's restoration back in their land. Note that most of the information recorded covers the period before the nation was taken to exile in Babylon. The author seems to have used earlier documents to create the book of Kings, using Israel's earlier history to show the theological and prophetic points of the very long period of time covered.

The reign of Solomon is very much affected by the reign of David and the relationship between God and David, this includes a covenant made between God and David and which involves and is part of the plan of God for the future earth and Mankind. The life of Solomon is a study into the effect of pride, David was not an arrogant man, full of pride of what he had done, he knew that this was the hand of God at work. Solomon was born and raised in the palace of the king, royalty, wealth and power were very present in his life, a breeding ground for pride.

David may have noticed that his son was full of pride as he grew up, he warned Solomon to walk in the ways of the Lord, [1 Chronicles 28:9](#); [1 Kings 2:1-3](#). In addition Solomon was warned by God twice, [1 Kings 3:14](#); [1 Kings 9:4,5](#).

One of the instruction for each king of Israel was to make a personal copy of Deuteronomy, [Deuteronomy 17:18-20](#), *"And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites:"* He was also to keep it with him and read it daily. Why? The Lord explained, "so as to learn to fear the Lord." Solomon did not obey these instruction from God, he was in control of his life, he actually broke every command for the king as given, look at [Deuteronomy 17:16,17](#). *"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."* [James 1:22](#).

The Davidic covenant.

God had made a number of promises to king David. In this last Psalm of David we find a prophecy is included, a prophecy of the Messiah's kingdom and conquests. The key thought of the passage is in verses 3 to 5, David speaks of the "everlasting covenant with me" made by God, [2 Samuel 7:12-16](#). Two points to note, that David anticipated that God will use divine judgement upon any who dare to attack the descendants of Abraham, see [Genesis 12:3](#); [Zechariah 2:8,9](#), David had faith that God would keep all His promises, God holds the future in all aspects.

The Davidic covenant consists of five promises:-

[2 Samuel 7:11-16](#).

1. v12. David will have a son and through him God will establish the kingdom.
2. v13. David's son (Solomon) will build the temple instead of David.
3. v13. The throne of Solomon's kingdom will be established as a permanent throne for all time.
4. v14,15. Though Solomon sin, commit iniquity, the right to the throne of David will never be taken away.
5. v16. The house / line and throne of David will be forever, a royal line with the right to the kingdom.

Please note that the promise did not say that the rule by the line of David would not be interrupted, as happened when Judah was taken by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, [2 Kings 25:1ff](#). This was eventually fulfilled in the birth of Jesus Christ who is promised an eternal kingdom, [Luke 1:32,33](#). The final installation of this kingdom will not occur until the second coming of Christ.

Solomon also had a personal special status, God sent a message through the prophet Nathan at the birth of Solomon that he was "loved by God." [2 Samuel 12:24,25](#).

David had received a message from God concerning the next king, which he passed on to Solomon with the numerous additional instruction for the building of the temple, [1 Chronicle 22:1-16](#).

Solomon has become one of the famous kings in history, he became very wealthy and had a very wise response to world problems. Solomon was also credited with writing three Biblical books, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs, about life, love and their meaning in life. Many of the thoughts and expressions from these books are still in common use today.

The record of his life starts in [1 Kings chapter 1](#), we see the rise and reign of a man who was placed in the position by God as part of His plan for the future of Mankind.

David's declining age.

[1 Kings 1:1-4.](#)

King David is now old and declining in health, it is thought that he was about seventy years old, having reigned for seven years at Hebron over Judah only, then a further thirty-three years over both Judah and Israel. It appears that David may have become senile, so was now no longer physically able to act as the king and rule the nation. He was possibly feeling the effects of his life of hardships and was possibly still being punished by God for his sins.

Abishag chosen to care for David.

We are told that the leadership decided to *"Let there be sought for my lord the king a young virgin-"* It is thought that David was possibly suffering from arteriosclerosis (hardening of the arteries so restricting the flow of blood to the organs, it can be very serious if it affects the blood supply to the heart, the victim has a heart attack.) So the purpose of bringing Abishag was so that by lying with him he might be kept warm. However, there also could be an alternative reason, the kings of this time needed to demonstrate their ability to maintain their virility as part of their proof of power to remain in a position of king, therefore the appearance of the young virgin could also be for sexual purposes, for David to demonstrate his potency. However, the record states that David did not have any sexual contact with her, this could therefore be considered a sign that it was time for David to stand aside from the position of king. Whatever the purpose of the introduction of Abishag into the bed of David, it is clear that both Adonijah and Solomon, sons of David, now thought that David must now give up the position as the king. So both son's now make plans and develop actions to be the legal successor of David, though God has already told David who was to be the next king of Israel.

Adonijah plans to reach for the throne.

[1 Kings 1:5-10.](#)

Adonijah was the fourth son of David (2 Sam. 3:4). After the death of his elder brothers, Amnon and Absalom, he became heir-apparent to the throne. He was Absalom's younger brother and appears to be handsome, as Absalom had been. David's failures as a parent are given to us for our instruction, if we as parents could only learn that correction of a child is a kindness and that discipline will hopefully spare children and parents many problems later in life.

The words, "his father had not displeased him at any time," possibly indicates that Adonijah was spoiled by his father, just like Absalom. David has a large and complex family, he has many dozens of children. Polygamy, having more than eight wives from various nations, was practiced by David and this would have caused jealousy and fighting between the different wives and their children. His oldest surviving child is Adonijah, brother of Absalom, who tried to be king a few years before, against the will of God, [2 Samuel 15 to 18](#). Adonijah is now about to take advantage of his father and try to take the throne of Israel. *"Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, I will be king."* He was about thirty-three years old and Solomon about twenty so theoretically Adonijah should be the next king, as the oldest son.

Adonijah probably thought David was too ill and out of touch to interfere with his purpose. He starts by putting on a show of power. He gets support from *"Joab the son of Zeruiah, and with Abiathar the priest: and they following Adonijah helped him,"* it is strange that Joab and Abiathar were prepared to do this. However, *"Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the prophet, and Shimei, and Rei, and the mighty men which belonged to David, were not with Adonijah."*

David makes Solomon king.

[1 Kings 1:11-53.](#)

God does not appear to be involved in any way with the following incidents and actions, but note that it was initiated by His prophet Nathan who would have been open to His leading and would have known of the promise by God on who would be the next king. God is always in complete control of all situations but He

may not act in a way which we might expect.

Nathan the prophet now approaches Bathsheba the mother of Solomon. As the queen mother, Bathsheba has a position of much greater honor and influence than of any queen married to a king. Nathan goes on, *"Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith doth reign, and David our lord knoweth it not?"* If Adonijah became king he would probably want to remove any possible objections, so Bathsheba and Solomon were in danger. Nathan recommends that Bathsheba tell David what was happening, which she does, *"Didst not thou, my lord, O king, swear unto thine handmaid, saying, 'assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? why then doth Adonijah reign?, ...O king, the eyes of all Israel are upon thee, that thou shouldest tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him.'"* David knew what was the will of God and as a result David gives orders that Solomon should at once be proclaimed king and take his place on the throne. The people expressed great joy and satisfaction in Solomon becoming king.

Adonijah had as much right as Solomon to expect to succeed his father, and being the elder a more stronger right. Adonijah had the support of Abiathar and Joab, neither of whom would have supported him if David had told them that Solomon was to succeed. So Adonijah has made his own decisions and assumed the position of king. Adonijah was having a celebration feast when he hears the people celebrating that Solomon has been made king. Everyone at the celebration was scared and rapidly fled, Adonijah, realized the danger he was in, took refuge at the altar in the temple, there he pleaded for his life before Solomon. He received pardon for his action from Solomon on the condition that *"he will show himself a worthy man,"* [1 Kings 1:52](#). He afterwards made a second very crafty attempt to seize the throne, but Solomon realized and put him to death, [1 Kings 2:12-25](#).

Solomon and Abiathar the priest.

Abiathar the priest supported Adonijah's attempt to be king, this action was contrary to the will of God and it is surprising that as Abiathar was a priest he does not realize the will of God, he does not support Solomon for king. Judgement now shows us that Solomon was very merciful and preferred to see justice, instead of being killed Abiathar is stripped of his office, position and power and sent home. This act is a fulfilment of the word of God concerning the family of Eli, [1 Samuel 3:10-14](#). Solomon appointed Zadok, of the family of Eleazar, in his place, [1 Kings 2:35](#).

Solomon and Joab.

[1 Kings 2:28-35](#).

Joab, supported Adonijah and now runs for his protection, he runs to the tabernacle and claims refuge at the altar in the tabernacle. Solomon hears of this and sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada to bring Joab to Solomon, Joab refused, *"he said, Nay; but I will die here."* Solomon, on hearing this sends Benaiah to carry out the wish of Joab for the murder, *"innocent blood, which Joab shed, - Abner the son of Ner, captain of the host of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, captain of the host of Judah."* [2 Samuel 20:4-12](#), and we read the awful tragedy of his being slain by the altar and buried in his home.

Solomon, King of Israel.

Jehovah Appears to Solomon

[1 Kings 3:1-28](#).

The reign of Solomon began well, we find that *"Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father"* we are also told that he *"sacrificed and burnt incense in high places,"* The "high places" were where the nations around Israel went to worship their idol gods, because it made the people feel closer to their gods. The people of Israel were also copying this method of worshipping God because they did not have any temple or place to worship, we have to question how much idol worship was also added to the worship of the True God?. Solomon was also using these places for worship, this may have been a weakness of the reign of Solomon but it is interesting to note that God was willing to meet Solomon in the high place of Gibeon, v5, though in later generations these places would become an abomination to God. The Lord seems to be willing to deal with His people in the situation as it was at the time.

Solomon had a great desire to build the house of the Lord, as David his father. At the beginning of the chapter we are told that Solomon had gone to Gibeon to offer sacrifices for himself and his people. Gibeon was the present site of the tabernacle tent, the ark had been taken to Jerusalem by David, after its return following its capture by the Philistines.

This festival lasted for seven days and compare [2 Chronicles 1:1-13](#), it appears to be part of a religious ceremony in place of the coronation.

As the festival was coming to the end, the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream, the Lord said to him, *"Ask what I shall give thee."* What a choice laid before the young king at the beginning of his reign. Solomon remembered the blessings given to his father he replied, *"Thou hast showed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in. Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?"* Solomon's request was very pleasing to God. Solomon had realized his responsibilities and so his prayer was for intelligence, understanding and be aware of problems and solutions. Because he had not selfishly asked for riches or power, God granted him wealth and power, in addition to the wisdom. This spread his fame around the known world at the time, [1 Kings 4:29-34](#). Note that Solomon was promised great wisdom and wealth with no conditions, but the promise for long life had conditions, he was to continue in the ways of his father David. Unfortunately he was to fail soon after the beginning of his reign.

Wisdom, what is it?

Some thoughts from Proverbs, written by Solomon.

[Proverbs 1:7](#), *"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise **wisdom** and instruction."*

[Proverbs 2:6-9](#), *"For the LORD giveth **wisdom**: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints. Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path."*

[Proverbs 2:10-12](#), *"When **wisdom** entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee: To deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things;"*

[Proverbs 3:3](#), *"Happy is the man that findeth **wisdom**, and the man that getteth understanding."*

[Proverbs 3:19,20](#), *"The LORD by **wisdom** hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens. By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew."*

[Proverbs 4:7](#), *"**Wisdom** is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding."*

[Proverbs 8:11](#), *"For **wisdom** is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it."*

The early years of his reign.

We find that Solomon married the daughter of Pharaoh, probably a diplomatic gesture to gain Pharaoh as an ally, [1 King 3:1](#). However, she, like so many of his future wives, worshiped idols and this was to lead him into idol worship later in his life.

To improve relationships with the nations surrounding the Nation of Israel, Solomon was to arrange many marriages with the daughters of the heathen nations kings. He was to have many wives and many concubines during his reign. Read [Deuteronomy 7:1-4](#), God warns of the danger of marrying other nations, Egypt was not mentioned in the list of nations.

As a result of these marriages Solomon also became involved in many commercial agreements with the other nations, this was to produce considerable wealth for him and the Nation of Israel .

These arrangements and actions by Solomon may have given a period of peace for the Nation of Israel but it was to cause Solomon many problems later.

His greatest achievement was to construct the Temple in Jerusalem, it took seven years to build and was very glorious and richly decorated, [1 Kings 5 to 6](#).

The kingdom of Israel is Prosperous.

[1 Kings 4:1-34](#).

"King Solomon was king over all Israel." His kingdom now reached from the River Euphrates to the border

of Egypt, just as God had promised Abraham, that his seed would control and possess this area of land. This was a great time for Israel, they lived in safety and became very wealthy *"and Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and fig tree."* Solomon became well known for his wisdom. It is thought that he was the author of 3,000 proverbs and 1,005 songs, though, not all of these are available to us today, not being preserved. Solomon also produced other material and these are included in the canon of Scripture, some of the Psalms, the books "the Song of Solomon" and the "Book of Proverbs."

The two harlots and the response of Solomon.

[1 Kings 3:16-28.](#)

Solomon's wisdom is now about to be tested, the two harlots claim to be the mother of the child. As prostitutes some may consider them unreliable witnesses, v16, in addition there are no other witnesses, v18. Without the modern facilities of testing Solomon has to appeal to the sympathies of the real mother by recommending that the child be cut in half, and the baby be divided between the two women. The woman whose claim was false would not care about the life of the child and fell into the trap, she agreed with the action while the real mother was prepared to save the child by surrendering it to the other woman. Solomon now knew who was the true mother and gave her the custody of the baby.

The Building of the Temple.

[1 Kings 5:1-7, 51; 2 Chronicles 2:5-12.](#)

Solomon has a great aim to build the temple for God, as promised. We see his diplomatic skills and the God given wisdom at work. This construction was a major project and it was going to be very expensive, it would require many builders and human effort. It appears to be a sort of tax on time, the people were required to work for 4 months of each year, presumably designed to avoid the sowing and harvest times, [1 Kings 4:20](#) seems to indicate that they were happy with these arrangements. Note that [1 Kings 12:4](#) suggests that they may not have been that happy about the situation.

The building work starts with Hiram king of Tyre making contact, Hiram had been an admirer and friend of king David. Solomon explains to him that he has been told to build a temple to the True God by the Lord, he needs material and experts to cut trees, Hiram is very pleased to be of help. For a Phoenician, idol worshipping, king of Tyre, his responses was unexpected, *"Because the LORD hath loved his people, he hath made thee king over them. Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, that made heaven and earth, who hath given to David the king a wise son, endued with prudence and understanding, that might build an house for the LORD, and an house for his kingdom."* [2 Chronicles 2:11,12](#). The fact that this king was very willing to help has great value for the temple construction as the required timber, cedar, is only available from the forests of Lebanon.

Solomon enters into an agreement with the Phoenicians not only to supply the wood but also craftsmen in wood-carvers and stone-masons, these were provided in exchange for large quantities of food, [1 Kings 15:11](#). Solomon used the people of Israel, 10,000 went to work in Lebanon for a month while 20,000 would remain at home to cultivate the land. Adoniram was put in charge of this organization, he later became hated, [1 Kings 5:14](#). In addition Solomon had 70,000 people involved in transporting the material and 80,000 stone cutters who were working to the north in the mountains, finally there were an additional 3,300 in charge of the various work units.

The source of labour for the construction was a type of taxation, this was common during this period and had been used by David, [2 Samuel 20:24](#). It appears that Solomon used any Canaanites still living in the area as permanent slave-labour while the Israelites had to give four months out of each year to the work, [1 Kings 5:13ff](#); [2 Samuel 24:9](#). See also [1 Kings 9:15](#); [1 Kings 9:20ff](#); [2 Chronicles 2:2, 17,18](#).

Work on the construction now starts, large and various types of stone being placed for the foundations and stonesquarers or Gebalites, men from Gebal, an area thirteen miles north of Beirut, made the material fit together. It is interesting to note that God used the abilities of non-Jews as well as Jews in the building and construction of His Temple.

Construction of the Temple.

[1 Kings 6:1-38.](#)

The temple was never designed to be used by a large number of people, it was only to provide a home for the ark and act as a sign of the presence of God. Many have studied the information and unfortunately there are small disagreements or uncertainties in the Septuagint(a pre-Christian Greek version of the Old Testament) and various alternative ancient copies.

Verse 1 presents a serious date problem for Old Testament chronology (order of events). *"it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel."* Solomon came to the throne about 963 B.C., the temple build starts 4 years later, about 959 B.C., the text states 480 years after the Exodus, this causes a disagreement amongst some Bible students as to when the Jews were in Egypt.

The Temple measurements.

[1 Kings 6:2-10.](#)

The cubit is normally 6 hand widths, or 18 inches, but there was a larger cubit of 7 hand widths in use, or 21 inches, this means that the Temple inside measurements were approximately 90 feet long, 30 feet wide and about 45 feet high. In addition, there was a porch which added an additional thirty feet to the length, it was not a very large building.

The wall of the building had windows of narrow lights and what appears to be a structure against the walls, side rooms or cells, these were reserved for the priests. they appeared to be three levels high, each room wider than the one below, it suggests some kind of buttress on the outer wall, winding stairs give access. To the front of the building there appears to be some sort of porch, no other details given.

The concerns of God.

[1 Kings 6:11-14.](#)

We see in these few verses that God has greater concern for the way Solomon lived than the construction of the temple. As these verses are not found in Chronicles some students feel they may have been added later.

The interior of the Temple.

[1 Kings 6:14-36.](#)

The description is difficult to understand, often repeating, there is some disagreements of the meaning by Bible students. The walls appeared to be covered in wood *"And the whole house he overlaid with gold, until he had finished all the house: also the whole altar that was by the oracle he overlaid with gold,"* v22 note that it does also record, *"and the floor of the house he overlaid with gold, within and without."*

The Cherubim's. These are not those associated with the Ark but appear to be on the rear wall facing the curtain into the Holy of Holies, these were about 15 ft high, about half the height of the inside of the building and their wings stretched from wall to wall and touched at the centre. See also [2 Chronicles 3:10-13.](#)

"And in the eleventh year, in the month Bul, which is the eighth month, was the house finished throughout all the parts thereof, and according to all the fashion of it. So was he seven years in building it."

The Temple area and fittings.

[1 Kings 6:14 to 7:51.](#)

While the Temple is being built Solomon is also building his own house and a complex of houses close to the Temple for his personal use. It took 13 years to complete, compared with the temple which took seven years. The temple is much smaller but has much costly gold in the construction while the palace was made of cedar wood.

The house of the forest of Lebanon; the royal palace, was built to the south of the Temple, it was much bigger, 150ft long 75ft wide 45ft high, there was also an area refereed to as the House for Pharaoh's daughter. The whole area appears to have been surrounded by a wall of stones and wood.

Solomon brings in expert craftsmen from Tyre, the Israelites obviously were not able to work in copper or bronze, (a copper and tin mixture). We now get a description of the construction and use of copper / bronze by this craftsman. (Brass, a mixture of copper and zinc, had not been invented at this time.

The bronze pillars, [1 Kings 7:15-22,](#) each column was hollow and about 27 ft high and 18ft in circumference, (6 ft in diameter). These columns were decorated with various features but what decorations are actually present has caused disagreements amongst Bible students.

The bronze sea, [1 Kings 7:23-26,](#) a cast in bronze or copper, approximately 15 ft in diameter and 7.5 ft high, we are not told what this structure looks like but v24 refers to "knops," some kind of open bud.

The ten stands. [1 Kings 7:27-37,](#) these appear to be ten bases of bronze, about 6 ft square and 4.5 ft high, each has wheels about 27 inches in diameter, v32. The rest of the passage is a very detailed but difficult to describe. These were for water to be used in purification, [2 Chronicles 4:6.](#)

The ten laver's. [1 Kings 7:38,39](#), each holds about 192 gallons and so very heavy and unlikely to be moveable.

The pots, and the shovels, and the basins. [1 Kings 7:40-44](#). Seems to be referring to cooking pots, [2 Chronicles 4:11](#).

Golden vessels. [1 Kings 7:48-50](#). This passage has much less detail and some objects are not mentioned as recorded in, [2 Kings 12:13](#), [2 Kings 25:14](#); [Jeremiah 52:18ff](#).

The contents and construction of the temple are very detail, we must remember that once the temple is dedicated for the use of worship large parts of it will only be open to the priests, and one section, the Holy of Holies where the Ark will be kept, is only accessed by the High Priest.

The Temple is dedicated

[1 Kings 8:1-66](#), [2 Chronicles 5:1-14](#).

It is the Feast of Tabernacles, there was now no need for the pot of manna or Aaron's staff, [Exodus 16:33](#); [Numbers 17:10](#), the journey and the rebellions were now over, God has a temple with His people.

"Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon in Jerusalem, that they might bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is Zion." The Ark of the Covenant and any objects that had been used in the worship before are now brought to the temple by the priests. Many animals are sacrificed as part of the ceremony. The priests now place the Ark under the wings of the cherubim's in the temple. As the priests left the temple "a cloud filled the house of the LORD, for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD." and now the priests could not return into the building, the mark that Israel was different to the other nations, the presence of God. There is no further mention of this cloud until Ezekiel saw the Lord leave the temple, [Ezekiel 9:3](#); [Ezekiel 10:4](#); [Ezekiel 11:23](#), we do not know if there was some indication of it being present up to this time.

The main thoughts in the prayer of Solomon was that God would hear all the prayers directed towards His temple and forgive those who have sinned, Solomon must have had a good knowledge of Deuteronomy, see [Deuteronomy 30:1-10](#), he is claiming a promise from God.

Solomon speaks to the people.

[1 Kings 8:12-21](#); [2 Chronicles 6:1,2](#).

The mystery of God, the people had just seen the visible glory of God yet Solomon starts *"The LORD said that he would dwell in the thick darkness."* see [Exodus 19:9](#); [Exodus 33:20](#). Though they could see some indication of the presence of God, it is His Word that we should obey, and approach Him the way He instructed. [Hab 2:20](#).

The House of Prayer.

[1 Kings 8:22-53](#); [2 Chronicles 6:12-42](#).

From [2 Chronicles 6:13](#) we find Solomon is kneeling near the altar, his hands lifted up to heaven, the normal position of prayer for the Jews, looking to God in faith, their hands showing that in their belief, the answer will come.

The prayer opens with praise and thanks to the Lord, His protection, and promises, v23, *"LORD God of Israel, there is no God like thee"*. Solomon then speaks of the covenant with David, his heir, the building of the temple and the royal line fulfilled in Jesus Christ, [Luke 1:26-33](#).

"But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?" Solomon realized the creator of the universe is living in a house made by man, compare [Acts 17:24](#).

Finally Solomon asks that God will be open to the prayers of the people, that their sins will be forgiven and the people will not turn away from God and be punished.

Solomon makes seven requests in detail:-

- 1) For there to be justice in the land. [1 Kings 8:31,32](#); [2 Chronicles 6:22,23](#)
- 2) If the people sin and receive punishment, then they will receive forgiveness when they repent, [1 Kings 8:33,34](#), [2 Chronicles 6:26,27](#).
- 3) Punishment by drought because of their sins, [1 Kings 8:35,36](#), [2 Chronicles 6:26,27](#).
- 4) Protection from disasters, illness, famine etc., [1 Kings 8:37-40](#), [2 Chronicles 6:28-31](#).

- 5) Israel was to be the light to the world, be open to foreigners who seek to worship the Lord, [1 Kings 8:41-43](#), [2 Chronicles 6:32,33](#).
- 6) That in battle, as instructed by God, they are protected, [1 Kings 8:44,45](#), [2 Chronicles 6:34,35](#).
- 7) *"If they sin against thee, (for there is no man that sinneth not)."* The Jews were to sin against the light of God and it resulted in them being taken to Babylon. Solomon asked God to forgive them when they repent, to glorify God. [1 Kings 8:46-53](#), [2 Chronicles 6:36-39](#).
- Solomon ends his prayers with the following requests,
- *"That thine eyes may be open unto the supplication of thy servant, and unto the supplication of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them in all that they call for unto thee. "* "Lord, keep your eyes upon the temple, the prayers of the people and guide your people."
- "O LORD God, turn not away the face of thine anointed: remember the mercies of David thy servant." 2 Chronicles 6:42.

A House for prayer.

[1 Kings 8:54-61](#); [2 Chronicles 7:1-3](#).

Solomon has been on his knees in prayer, now he stands before the people to give a blessing from the Lord. It was normally the priests who gave a blessing but occasionally the king could, as David did, [2 Samuel 6:18,20](#). Solomon blesses all the people, the nation and thanks God for all His mercies, that He has never failed them though the people had often failed God. *"The LORD our God be with us, as he was with our fathers: let him not leave us, nor forsake us: "* Finally Solomon asked God to remember the prayer, that his words will not just disappear. Each prayer of our prayers to our Lord are remembered by the Lord for a true Believer, *"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."* [Hebrews 13:5](#)
[2 Chronicles 7:1-12](#). God responded, *"Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the house,"* This was followed by a time of worship, sacrifice and glorifying the Lord by the people.

Responsibility comes with the House.

[1 Kings 9:1-9](#); [2 Chronicles 7:11-22](#).

God now speaks to Solomon, He has heard the prayers and He will watch the house of Solomon and the people, God was about to sanctify the house and make it His own, He promised to answer every request, for the people forgiveness for sin and to humble themselves in worship. God has never made a covenant with any other nations, only with True Believers through His Son Jesus, they are now the people of God. The Lord confirms the covenant He made with David, but it was the personal life of Solomon and his descendent's which would receive the blessings promised. Because David confessed all his sins and the murder of Uriah, God does not mention them, they are forgiven. The Word of God had been given to the Jewish nation, they were expected to obey it or suffer the consequences. Unfortunately, the reign of Solomon was not according to the Word of God and the people turned away from Him, turned to Idol worship. After the death of Solomon the nation split and had to be severely punished by God. Instead of being a blessing to the world they ended up with a ruined city and temple and the world laughed at them.

The later years of his reign.

[1 Kings 7:1-12](#); [1 Kings 9:10 to 10:29](#); [2 Chronicles 8:1 to 9:28](#).

King Solomon was involved in very many activities after the building of the temple, in these chapters we find a record of how he advanced the position of Israel in relationship to the other nations and he became very rich, but also we find the areas of weakness and the result and effect on the future, the position and wealth became the center of his interests, forgetting to give God the glory and help the people of the nation.

The Palace is built.

[1 Kings 7:1-12](#).

The Temple took seven years of construction but several more years were needed to construct the furniture and decorate the inside. Solomon was also building his palace for himself, this at first appears to be of several structures but we find that in [1 Kings 9:10](#) we are told of "two buildings," the temple and the palace.

The palace was at least twice as large as the Temple and appears to have two or three stories. 150ft long, 75 feet wide and 45ft in height. The record shows that there was Solomon's own residence, a residence for his Egyptian wife, a throne room and a spacial hall for people to wait in. The structure appears to have a walled courtyard which had a smaller porch as the main entry, [1 Kings 7:7](#), which then lead into an area using cedar pillars for support. This lead into "the hall of pillars" with sixty cedar pillars, some of which held up a second story. In the hall for assembly Solomon placed three hundred large shields and two hundred smaller shields, all made of gold covered wood, the total weight of gold was recorded as 2525 pounds, gold would be too soft to use in a battle so these were just for display, [1 Kings 10:16,17](#).

In the throne room we find a splendid throne, *"of ivory, and overlaid it with the best gold."*; as described in [1 Kings 10:18-20](#).

The palace and the decorations and furniture it contained must have been very impressive.

Solomon's debt.

[1 Kings 9:10-14](#); [2 Chronicles 8:1,2](#).

Hiram, king of Tyre, has been supplying timber and workers for the construction of the two buildings, Solomon had to pay the wages of the men and send food in return for the timber.

We are also told that Hiram supplied about four and half tons of gold, 1 Chronicles 22:14-16 records that Solomon had 3750 tons of gold before the construction started, so why get more gold from Hiram as the materials for the temple were already dedicated to the Lord, [1 Chronicles 22:1](#) and chapters 28-29, so could not be used in any other building? This gold must therefore be for the palace and was borrowed, giving Hiram twenty cities in exchange, Solomon should not have done this for his own personal pride as all the land of Israel belonged to the Lord, "The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me." [Leviticus 25:23](#). (Compare [Leviticus 25:8ff](#)).

Unfortunately Hiram was not satisfied with the cities, v13, he called them "good for nothing, - "Cabul." It appears that some how Solomon must have paid off the loan as the cities are returned, [2 Chronicles 8:1,2](#). Without the help of Hiram the temple and the palace would not have been constructed, Solomon showed great pride over his palace, over spent, took out a loan, and then gave a poor payment for the loan, not a good way to respond to such friendship and generosity by Hiram.

God speaks to Solomon again.

[1 Kings 9:1-11](#).

God promised him honour and riches initially at Gibeon, [1 Kings 3:13](#), He has kept that promise, now He tells Solomon that He has heard prayers of Solomon and will honour His promise and dwell in the temple that has been built as long as Solomon and the people *"will walk before me," "if you fail to do this I will cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people."*

Solomon the diplomat.

[1 Kings 9:15-24](#); [2 Chronicles 8:1-11](#).

David, had been able to conquer the enemy and take their territory but never attempted to build up the relationship with the surrounding nations, but Solomon was a very clever diplomat and leader who never missed an opportunity to improve his wealth and power. In these chapters we find a list of the achievements of Solomon at home and with the other nations.

"Solomon went to Hamathzobah" We do not hear of Solomon as a soldier but this was a city north of Damascus, on the border of Israel. This city was on an important trading route so would be a good place to collect taxes and be a good guard against other nations.

Solomon Worships the Lord.

[1 Kings 9:25](#); [2 Chronicles 8:12-16](#).

Solomon leads the people in celebrating the Passover, Pentecost and the Tabernacles, [Exodus 23:14-19](#); [Deuteronomy 16:1-17](#) as instructed by the Lord, for the priests to make the offerings and sacrifices.

The Queen of Sheba visits.

[1 Kings 10:1-13](#).

Sheba was a wealthy nation located in southwest of Arabia, the gifts she brought show how rich this nation was. *"She had heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to prove him with hard questions."* She had obviously heard reports of Solomon but did not believe them.

The queen of Sheba observed the temple worship, but there is no record of her turning to the true God, compare the words of Jesus when he referred to her visit in [Matt 12:39-42](#).

Solomon, his later life.

[1 Kings 10:14-29](#); [2 Chronicles 9:13-28](#).

As the years passed he became more and more richer, unfortunately this caused him to live a luxurious and expensive life which was more than the nation could support. This eventually caused social discontent to appear, this was to later lead to serious problems in the kingdom. [1 Kings 12:4-19](#).

Later in the reign Solomon was greatly influenced by his many wives who introduced the worship of false gods, idols worship became common in Jerusalem. [1 Kings 11:1-8](#).

God gave Solomon a warning and reprimand for allowing this to happen. God also warned him that there will be severe problems during his son's reign. [1 Kings 11:9-13](#).

We have very little knowledge and record of his life after turning away from worshipping God. We do not know if the warning from God had any effect, did he repent and return to God?

It is believed that Solomon wrote Ecclesiastes but today many feel that the author is unknown though the text seems to be referring to Solomon as it shows that earthly wealth and goals only offer dissatisfaction and emptiness.

A Great warning.

Solomon was known as a very wise man, but this did not make him able to self-control his life. He may have been able to teach and give advice to others but apparently did not practice his own teaching. His problem was that the things of the world were more attractive than worshipping and obeying God.