

**1Kings 6:1 ¶ And 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, in the month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD.**

This whole chapter provides a description of the building of the temple. It is noted in this verse that building of the temple commenced in the 480<sup>th</sup> year after the people of Israel came out of Egypt, in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Solomon's reign, in the month of Zif (April/May), the 2<sup>nd</sup> month.

The NIV Commentary gives a bit more information: "...this verse is one of the major pieces of internal evidence for the dating of the Exodus. The end of Solomon's reign is 931/930 B.C. This puts the beginning of his forty-year reign at 971/970 and the fourth year at 967/966 and the date of the Exodus at 1447/1446. This date accords well with other biblical evidence (Jdg 11:26 and the length of the time of the Judges) as with external historical evidence."

The Chronicler informs us that Mount Moriah was the site of construction.

*2 Chronicles 3:1 "Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the LORD appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite."*

The Chronicler also informs us that Solomon was working from plans that were given to him by his father David.

*1 Chronicles 28:11–13 & 19 "Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the mercy seat, And the pattern of all that he had by the spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things: Also for the courses of the priests and the Levites, and for all the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and for all the vessels of service in the house of the LORD....All this, said David, the LORD made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern."*

The plans that David gave Solomon were not of David's own making; he had received them from the Holy Spirit who had inspired him in the writing of God's pattern. I believe this pattern was based on the heavenly temple. We know from scripture that there is a temple in heaven.

*Revelation 11:19 "And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail."*

Although the temple and the tabernacle were different, their basic design and function were essentially the same. The writer of the Hebrews tells us that the tabernacle (and therefore the temple) was a shadow or representation of the heavenly temple.

*Hebrews 8:4–5 “... seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.”*

The Chronicler also tells us that David collected a lot of the materials that would be needed for the temple.

*1 Chronicles 29:2 “Now I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God the gold for things to be made of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and the brass for things of brass, the iron for things of iron, and wood for things of wood; onyx stones, and stones to be set, glistering stones, and of divers colours, and all manner of precious stones, and marble stones in abundance.”*

**1Kings 6:2 And the house which king Solomon built for the LORD, the length thereof was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits.**

**1Kings 6:3 And the porch before the temple of the house, twenty cubits was the length thereof, according to the breadth of the house; and ten cubits was the breadth thereof before the house.**

These verses tell us the size of the temple. It was 60 cubits long x 20 cubits wide and 30 cubits high. Based on a cubit of 18” (some compute with 21”) that would be 90’ long, 30’ wide and 45’ high. The porch in front of the temple was 20 cubits wide and 10 cubits deep or 30’ wide by 15.8’ deep. Commentators note that these measurements indicate that the temple was twice as big as the tabernacle.

**1Kings 6:4 And for the house he made windows of narrow lights.**

The temple had narrow windows of light. The Hebrew indicates that these windows could be open and shut as needed. There was no type of outside light for the tabernacle.

**1Kings 6:5 And against the wall of the house he built chambers round about, against the walls of the house round about, both of the temple and of the oracle: and he made chambers round about:**

**1Kings 6:6 The nethermost chamber was five cubits broad, and the middle was six cubits broad, and the third was seven cubits broad: for without in the wall of the house he made narrowed rests round about, that the beams should not be fastened in the walls of the house.**

I think these verses are saying that there were chambers built adjacent to the surrounding outside walls of the temple excluding the porch area. These chambers were built three stories high, and each succeeding story got wider. The lowest chambers were 5 cubits wide, the middle was 6 cubits and the third 7 cubits, or 7.5’ to 9’ to 10.5’.

The NLT is better worded on the last part of verse 6: “The rooms were connected

to the walls of the Temple by beams resting on ledges built out from the wall. So the beams were not inserted into the walls themselves.”

The “oracle” is a reference to “the innermost part of the sanctuary,” or the holy of holies.

**1Kings 6:7** And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building.

The stones that were used in building the temple were cut, smoothed out and made ready before being brought to the construction site. There were no sounds of hammer or axe or any tool of iron heard on the site during construction.

Adam Clarke made an interesting application: “But why is this so particularly marked? Is it not because the temple was a type of the kingdom of God; and the souls of men are to be prepared here for that place of blessedness? There, there is no preaching, exhortations, repentance, ears, cries, nor prayers; the stones must be all squared and fitted here for their place in the New Jerusalem, and, being living stones, must be built up a holy temple for a habitation of God through the Spirit.”

**1Kings 6:8** The door for the middle chamber *was* in the right side of the house: and they went up with winding stairs into the middle *chamber*, and out of the middle into the third.

Though the wording is confusing, the context is clear in describing a winding staircase on the south side of the temple that accessed the three levels of chambers.

**1Kings 6:9** So he built the house, and finished it; and covered the house with beams and boards of cedar.

**1Kings 6:10** And *then* he built chambers against all the house, five cubits high: and they rested on the house *with* timber of cedar.

These verses are a summary statement that Solomon built the temple and covered it with a roof of cedar. The chambers surrounding the temple were 5 cubits or 7.5' high and were supported by cedar beams.

**1Kings 6:11** ¶ And the word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying,  
**1Kings 6:12** Concerning this house which thou art in building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments to walk in them; then will I perform my word with thee, which I spake unto David thy father:

**1Kings 6:13** And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people Israel.

The LORD spoke to Solomon again regarding the purpose of the temple. He told him that if he would live in faith and obedience before him, He would perform

His word with Solomon that He spoke to his father David. That promise—That He would dwell among the children of Israel and not forsake them. This was a conditional promise that was separate from the unconditional promise to establish a descendant of David on the throne of Israel forever. This conditional promise finds its root in Deuteronomy. Sadly, Moses prophesied of a future time when God would hide His face from the children of Israel because they chose to forsake Him.

*Deuteronomy 28:58–63 “If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD....it shall come to pass, that as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it.”*

*Deuteronomy 32:15–20 “But Jeshurun [Israel] waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation. They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger. They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not. Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee. And when the LORD saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons, and of his daughters. And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith.”*

**1Kings 6:14 So Solomon built the house, and finished it.**

**1Kings 6:15 ¶ And he built the walls of the house within with boards of cedar, both the floor of the house, and the walls of the ceiling: and he covered them on the inside with wood, and covered the floor of the house with planks of fir.**

**1Kings 6:16 And he built twenty cubits on the sides of the house, both the floor and the walls with boards of cedar: he even built them for it within, even for the oracle, even for the most holy place.**

**1Kings 6:17 And the house, that is, the temple before it, was forty cubits long.**

After telling us that Solomon finished building the temple, the writer goes on to provide further description. The walls and ceiling of the house were lined or paneled with boards of cedar. The floor was covered with boards of fir or cypress.

The inner sanctuary, or the most holy place that would house the ark, was also made with boards of cedar—from floor to ceiling. This area was 20 cubits or 30' deep at the rear of the sanctuary.

The area in front of the most holy place was 40 cubits deep.

**1Kings 6:18 And the cedar of the house within was carved with knops and open flowers: all was cedar; there was no stone seen.**

All of the cedar paneling was decorated with carvings of knops/gourds and

open flowers. No stone could be seen inside the temple.

Gill has this note concerning the knops: "...the Targum says, they had the appearance of eggs...."

**1Kings 6:19** And the oracle he prepared in the house within, to set there the ark of the covenant of the LORD.

**1Kings 6:20** And the oracle in the forepart *was* twenty cubits in length, and twenty cubits in breadth, and twenty cubits in the height thereof: and he overlaid it with pure gold; and so covered the altar *which was of cedar*.

**1Kings 6:21** So Solomon overlaid the house within with pure gold: and he made a partition by the chains of gold before the oracle; and he overlaid it with gold.

**1Kings 6:22** 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.

The most holy place was prepared to house the ark of the covenant of the LORD. It was a cube of 20 cubits or 30'. It is because this part of the temple is a cube and is from a heavenly pattern that I think the heavenly Jerusalem is a cube, though many believe it to be a pyramid. I think John supports the thought of a cube in the Revelation.

*Revelation 21:16 "And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal."*

All of the wood in the holy of holies was overlaid with pure gold, as was the altar of incense. The whole inside of the sanctuary was covered with pure gold. The entry to the most holy place was partitioned off by chains of gold. The whole interior of the temple was covered in pure gold, including the altar.

No mention is made of the vail before the Holy of holies, but the Chronicler does.

*2 Chronicles 3:14 "And he made the vail of blue, and purple, and crimson, and fine linen, and wrought cherubims thereon."*

**1Kings 6:23** And within the oracle he made two cherubims of olive tree, each ten cubits high.

**1Kings 6:24** And five cubits *was* the one wing of the cherub, and five cubits the other wing of the cherub: from the uttermost part of the one wing unto the uttermost part of the other *were* ten cubits.

**1Kings 6:25** And the other cherub *was* ten cubits: both the cherubims *were* of one measure and one size.

**1Kings 6:26** The height of the one cherub *was* ten cubits, and so *was it* of the other cherub.

**1Kings 6:27** And he set the cherubims within the inner house: and they stretched forth the wings of the cherubims, so that the wing of the one touched the *one* wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall; and their wings touched one another in the midst of the house.

**1Kings 6:28 And he overlaid the cherubims with gold.**

Two cherubim made of olive wood were made for the most holy place; each was 10 cubits or 15' tall. Each of the wings for the two cherubim was 5 cubits or 7.5' long; the total wingspan of each cherubim was 10 cubits or 15'. The two cherubim were identical. When the cherubim were placed in the most holy place, they stood side by side facing the entry so that their wings spanned the entire width, touching each other in the middle. The cherubim were also covered in gold.

**1Kings 6:29 And he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved figures of cherubims and palm trees and open flowers, within and without.**

**1Kings 6:30 And the floor of the house he overlaid with gold, within and without.**

All the walls of the temple inside and out were decorated with carvings of cherubim, palm trees and open flowers. The floor of the temple was also covered in gold both inside and out. I would assume that included the porch.

**1Kings 6:31 And for the entering of the oracle he made doors of olive tree: the lintel and side posts were a fifth part of the wall.**

**1Kings 6:32 The two doors also were of olive tree; and he carved upon them carvings of cherubims and palm trees and open flowers, and overlaid them with gold, and spread gold upon the cherubims, and upon the palm trees.**

The doors that provided entry to the most holy place were made of olive wood and took a fifth part of the wall or 6'. The two doors were also decorated with carvings of cherubim, palm trees and open flowers. The doors and its carvings were all covered in gold.

**1Kings 6:33 So also made he for the door of the temple posts of olive tree, a fourth part of the wall.**

**1Kings 6:34 And the two doors were of fir tree: the two leaves of the one door were folding, and the two leaves of the other door were folding.**

**1Kings 6:35 And he carved thereon cherubims and palm trees and open flowers: and covered them with gold fitted upon the carved work.**

The doors providing entry to the temple were also made of olive wood and took a fourth of the wall or 7.5'. These doors were folding doors made of fir/cypress wood. They were also decorated with carvings of cherubim, palm trees and open flowers and were completely covered in gold.

**1Kings 6:36 And he built the inner court with three rows of hewed stone, and a row of cedar beams.**

I wasn't sure how to understand this verse. Gill offers this explanation: "...the rows of stones were one upon another, topped with a row of cedar beams; or rather the cedar was a lining to the stones; and the whole is supposed to be about three cubits high, and was so low, that the people in the outward court might see

priests ministering for them, and could converse with them....”

**1Kings 6:37 In the fourth year was the foundation of the house of the LORD laid, in the month Zif:**

**1Kings 6:38 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 foundation to the temple was laid in the fourth year of Solomon’s reign in the second month, Zif (April/May). The temple was completed in the eleventh year in the eighth month, Bul (October/November). It took about 7.5 years to build the temple from start to finish.