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June memory verse Romans 6:14&15 (NKJV)

¹⁴ For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

¹⁵ What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!

Commentary on 1 Kings chapter 5 and 6, by Chuck Smith 6.15.22

Chapter 5

So Hiram the king of Tyre when he heard that Solomon was upon the throne in place of his David: for Hiram was always a great admirer of David. And Solomon sent to Hiram, and he said, You know how that David my father could not build a house unto the name of the LORD his God for the wars which were about him on every side, until the LORD put them under the soles of his feet. But now the LORD my God hath given me rest on every side, so that there is neither adversary nor evil occurrent. Behold, I purpose to build a house unto the name of the LORD my God, as the LORD spake to David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon the throne in your place, he will build a house unto my name. Now therefore command that they hew me cedar trees out of Lebanon; and my servants shall be with thy servants: and unto thee will I give hire for thy servants according to all that you shall appoint: for thou knowest that there is not among any of us those that have the skill in cutting timber like those of Sidon. So it came to pass, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he rejoiced greatly, and said, Blessed be the LORD this day, which hath given unto David a wise son over this great people ([1Ki 5:1-7](#)).

So Hiram rejoiced that Solomon had such wisdom as he began to reign in David's stead.

Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, I have considered the things which you have sent for me: and I will do all that you desire concerning the timbers of cedar, and fir. My servants shall bring them down from Lebanon unto the sea: and I will convey them by sea in floats unto the place that you shall appoint me, and I will cause them to be discharged there, and thou shalt receive them: and you shall accomplish my desire, in giving food to my household ([1Ki 5:8-9](#)).

So they made an arrangement where they would make these great log rafts, cutting the timbers out of the forest of Lebanon. Up in the area of Sidon and Tyre. Now it used to be that Lebanon was covered with great cedar forests. Most of these were destroyed

during the time of the reign of the Turks. But there are just today a very few cedar groves left in Lebanon. Tragic. Used to be beautiful wooded area. And now just a few cedars left.

But they cut down these great cedars and firs and made these log rafts. And they floated them down the Mediterranean to the port city of Joppa, which is probably about fifty miles from Tyre. And there from Joppa they would take them over land to Jerusalem, a distance of about thirty-five miles. These huge logs. And so it was quite a task indeed.

Now for these logs, he was to pay Hiram in food to take care of these men who were cutting the timber out of the woods.

So Hiram gave Solomon cedar trees and fir trees according to all of his desire. And Solomon gave to Hiram twenty thousand measures of wheat ([1Ki 5:10-11](#))

So again, twenty thousand bushels of wheat.

for his household, twenty measures of pure oil ([1Ki 5:11](#)):

And a measure of oil they figure somewhere between forty-five and eighty gallons. And this was the annual tribute or pay that he gave for the men so that they could eat.

And the LORD gave Solomon wisdom, as he promised him: and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon; for they had made a treaty. And king Solomon raised a tax from all of Israel ([1Ki 5:12-13](#));

Or a draft actually.

and he drafted thirty thousand men. And he sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand each month ([1Ki 5:13-14](#)).

So you go a month; you work a month and had two months off. Just like the fireman almost. Just you know, you work a day and off three and those neat kind of hours. So he had thirty thousand men, ten thousand going each month up to Lebanon to work in helping them in the cutting of the wood and so forth.

And Solomon had seventy thousand slaves ([1Ki 5:15](#)).

That just carried the logs, you know, or worked along with the logs and so forth. They, of course, would put logs and roll them and, you know, they would run and put logs ahead, and they rolled the logs and so forth. And of course, when you have seventy thousand men doing it, you can move quite a few logs. And there were eighty thousand men who were up cutting the logs up in the forest. So really, quite a contingency of labor here.

Beside the chief of Solomon's officers which were over the work, three thousand, three hundred foremen on the job, that guided them in the work. And Solomon commanded that they bring great and costly stones, to lay the foundation of the house of God. And Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders cut them, and the stonesquarers: so that they prepared timber and stones to build the house ([1Ki 5:16-18](#)).

Now near Herod's gate in Jerusalem today, there is a cave that goes under the wall and actually you can go down under the city of Jerusalem into Solomon's quarries. And you can see where much of the stone was quarried for the walls of the city of Jerusalem during Solomon's time for Solomon's house and for the temple. These quarries are still there, and you can see the chisel marks on the wall where they cut out. What they would do actually, the rocks under that area are limestone and they lay in layers actually. And it's excellent for building, because much of it is just flat and sort of layered. And what they would do is they would drill holes into the rock. And then they would put wooden branches in and then they would soak. They would put water on the wooden branches and make them expand and just pop the rock out. And you can always, an interesting thing to see in Jerusalem, Solomon's quarries. Just to the right of Herod's gate, between Herod's gate and Damascus gate. If ever you get over there, you want to take a look at Solomon's quarries. They're very fascinating, because here is where the stone was quarried. And then, of course, they would cut it.

And it is interesting that today in Jerusalem there's a city ordinance that all of the buildings in Jerusalem must be made out of what they call the Jerusalem stone. So even if they build the concrete buildings, they have to put a fascia over all of the buildings of this Jerusalem stone. Jerusalem stone is a very beautiful stone. It has a capacity in the early morning sun to look almost golden and that is why Jerusalem is called The Golden City. Because as the sun is rising, and as it first hits the stone or just even before it hits just in the early dawn, it takes on a golden hue, all of the stones. And it's absolutely gorgeous. Of course, you're in jet lag so you wake up early anyhow when you're first there. But it's always a thrill to see the sun coming up and see this golden color. And then, of course, as the sun hits it, it begins to level out into a sort of a beige kind of a color in the bright sun.

But Jerusalem stone is something beautiful to behold, and in the cutting of the stone and in the shaping of it, they would shape the stones so fine that they did not have to use mortar in putting it together. But the blocks would just all interlock and fit one upon another. And I saw the corner of the temple mount that was done during Herod's time. With these gigantic stones. Now it says that Solomon had some hewn stones and some of them eight cubits, some of them five cubits, which are good size stones really. For Solomon's day eight cubits would be a stone of about eleven, twelve, thirteen feet. But Herod used stones that were thirty-seven feet long, five feet high and eight feet thick. They estimate that they weigh somewhere between eighty and a hundred tons.

And these stones are carved so accurately, I guess is what you'd say, is that I took a knife blade and tried to insert it between them and you can't. Now can you imagine how much chipping that must have taken. I know. That's the kind of stuff I think about; how

long did it take a guy to chip that thing that smooth? You know, because they're working with just chisels and all, hand tools, no power grinders or pneumatic tools. Just chipping away. And the interesting thing is today, you can see these old men around Jerusalem sitting there in the ground or in the squatted position and they're chipping away at stones. It's still an art that is current to the present day because of the city ordinance that all of the building must be faced at least with Jerusalem stone. So stone-cutting, very interesting art indeed, and it is fascinating to watch. And Solomon ordered these stones and, of course, all of the material.

Chapter 6

So in chapter six he began to build the temple.

In the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, and in the fourth year of Solomon's reign, in the second month, they began the building of the temple. Now the temple was to be ninety feet long and thirty feet wide, and forty-five feet tall ([1Ki 6:1-2](#)).

So if you can picture now in your mind, ninety feet is just about from the edge of the platform here to the back door. So that's how long Solomon's temple was. It's a little more than forty-five feet from arch to arch. So it wasn't quite as wide. And of course, it was quite a bit taller because actually it was only thirty feet wide. So that will be from this aisle about over to the middle of this one over. But forty-five feet high. So that is quite high for a building. So it was rather high and long and narrow. And of course, it had the one end that was partitioned off and had doors at that time into the holy of holies. The doors were of carved olive wood and overlaid with gold.

And as you get into chapter six, it begins to give you the description of the temple that they were constructing. Now in verse seven, it tells us:

When they were building it, it was built of stone made ready before it was brought to the site: so that there was neither hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building ([1Ki 6:7](#)).

So all of the cutting of the stone was done at the quarry, which was, of course, under the city. And they would cut the stones to size and all there, and then bring them out and just lay them in. So there was no noise of a hammer or any iron or tool at the actual construction site of the temple.

Now again,

The word of the LORD came to Solomon [in verse twelve], declaring, Concerning this house which you are building ([1Ki 6:11-12](#)),

Again, conditional.

if you will 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 your father: and I will dwell among the children of Israel, I will not forsake my people Israel ([1Ki 6:12-13](#)).

So God's promise, conditional promise to Solomon that God would dwell there in the midst of the people. Now they did not build temples to worship in. That is, to congregate to worship. The temple and the idea of the temple was a place for God to dwell in. David said, "It isn't right that I'm dwelling in this house that is all sealed and nice and God is still dwelling in a tent. I'm going to make a house for God."

Now when we build churches, we think of accommodating the people that we might all gather together in order that we might worship God together here and study His word and grow in our knowledge and understanding of God. But not so in those days. In their building of a temple, the idea was to build a house for God and the common ordinary person was never allowed inside. Only the priests were allowed to go inside of the temple to visit with God. But the common people weren't allowed inside the building at all. There were the porches where they could go into the porches. But into the actual building itself, only the priests could enter.

So it wasn't a center of worship like buildings that we build today in the church. And our idea is to accommodate the people, to gather together to worship God. Their idea was to build a house for God to dwell in. But then when Solomon finished the temple, he saw how foolish the whole thing was. He said, "God, I look up and I know that the heavens of heaven aren't big enough to contain You. How much less this little house that I've built here?" And we know that "God doesn't dwell in temples or in houses made with hands" ([Acts 7:48](#)). But He dwells, of course, within our hearts and lives. But He who fills the universe fills my heart and my life tonight. For my body has become the temple of the Holy Spirit. The dwelling place of God and God's Spirit within me.

So we don't need to build temples for God to dwell in. We build places where we can assemble to acknowledge God and to worship God. So God said, "I will dwell among my people. As long as they walk in my statutes, keep my commandments, I will dwell among them. And I will not forsake my people Israel."

And so it goes on and tells of the building of the house for God and of the holy of holies which was a thirty-foot cube, and of the two cherubim that they built to go into the holy of holies, carved them out of olive wood and then overlaid them with gold, and how that the cherubims wing spans were ten feet from wing to wing. So they were pretty good size cherubim. And they were set in the holy of holies, and at this point, the only furnishing within the holy of holies was the ark of the covenant, and the golden cherubims were sort of over the ark of the covenant.

Now even as the tabernacle was a model of heaven, so the temple in a sense became a model of heaven, because the design was much as the tabernacle with the holy place on the outer part where the priest would come and daily bring the sacrifices and so forth

to sprinkle before the mercy seat. But then, the holy of holies with the ark of the covenant were... was all overlaid with gold, with the golden cherubim and the ark of the covenant in the middle.

Now the ark of the covenant was lost or was placed in hiding at the time of Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem. There are some rumors that Jeremiah hid the ark of the covenant. But the ark of the covenant was not in Herod's temple. And perhaps someplace in the earth today that ark of the covenant still exists. It would be a fascinating archaeological find because within the ark of the covenant are the two tables of stone upon which God inscribed the Ten Commandments. And so how fascinating it would be to find this little golden box, and inside two stones with strange writing on them.

They were the... it was the only furnishing within the holy of holies, and Solomon built this seven years, overlaid the whole thing with gold, the planks and all overlaid with gold. It must have been fabulously beautiful and of course, extremely expensive. They estimated, of course, that was at gold thirty-two dollars an ounce; they estimated the cost at into the hundreds of millions. Now at five hundred forty-seven dollars an ounce, I don't know. It would really be something.

So it gives you the sort of the dimensions of the building and the carvings and so forth. And I'll leave you to peruse those at your own leisure. So it was seven years, the end of chapter six, in building the house of God.