

2 Chronicles Chapter 5

2 Chronicles 5:1 Thus all the work that Solomon made for the house of the LORD was finished: and Solomon brought in [all] the things that David his father had dedicated; and the silver, and the gold, and all the instruments, put he among the treasures of the house of God.

The temple took 7 years to build and was completed in Solomon's 11th year (959 B.C.), in the eighth month (compare 1 Kings 6:38). Since it was dedicated in the seventh month (5:3), its dedication occurred 11 months later to coincide with the Feast of Booths, or Tabernacles (see note on 1 Kings 8:2). Why is there so much emphasis in the Old Testament on the temple?

- (1) It was the center of worship that called people to correct belief through the generations;
- (2) It was the symbol of God's presence with His people;
- (3) It was the symbol of forgiveness and grace, reminding the people of the seriousness of sin and the availability of mercy;
- (4) It prepared the people for the true Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, who would take away sin;
- (5) It was a place of prayer (compare 7:12-17).

Much of the "silver" and "gold" used in the temple came from the spoils of the many battles King David had fought as well as from his personal resources. Following the example of their king, the people of Israel also gave freely to support the temple (1 Chron. 29:1-9).

The temple which began in the fourth year of the reign of Solomon, took 7 years to construct. (Verse 1), is re-capping the fact that much of the materials to build the temple and the things used in the services were given by king David before he died.

Verses 2-10 (see notes on 1 Kings 8:1-9).

2 Chronicles 5:2 "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 Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which [is] Zion."

The Ark was in Jerusalem in a temporary tent (2 Sam. 6:17), not the original tabernacle, which was still at Gideon (1 Chron. 16:39).

The Ark was in Jerusalem where David had it carried. It was housed in the tent that David had prepared for it. Now it would be moved into the temple and placed in the Holy of Holies. The Ark would be moved with the dignitaries of the land looking on. This is a very important occasion in the lives of all Israel. This is why it was so important for the elders and the heads of

the tribes to witness the moving. Notice, this Scripture explicitly calls the city of David Zion. This is still Jerusalem, but was where the threshing floor had been. This was the place God had chosen for the temple.

2 Chronicles 5:3 "Wherefore all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto the king in the feast which [was] in the seventh month."

"The men assembled": In the feast which was in the seventh month. The feast of the dedication of the temple was on the eighth day of that month. This is related, word for word, the same as in (1 Kings 8:1-10).

"In the feast which ... in the seventh month": I.e. the Feast of Tabernacles. This commenced on the fifteenth of the seventh month, named Ethanim (see 1 Kings 8:2). With this the festivals of the sacred year closed.

All here, does not mean every individual male in Israel. This means representatives of all of them came. The Feast of Tabernacles occurred in the seventh month on the fifteenth day. The moving occurred during the Feast of Tabernacles then.

Verses 4-5: Solomon directed the "Levites" to bring the "Ark" of God to the temple from its temporary shelter in Jerusalem (1 Chron. Chapter 16). The Levites also disassembled the "tabernacle of meeting" that was in Gibeon (1:3), and brought it and all the holy furnishings to the temple.

2 Chronicles 5:4 "And all the elders of Israel came; and the Levites took up the ark."

"The Levites": (see Num. 4:15, 19-20), which (with our verses 5, 7), throw this statement into sufficient harmony with that of the parallel (1 Kings 8:3). Which purports to say that the priests only, unaided by the Kohathite Levites, performed the service.

David had learned a good lesson about who was to move the Ark and how it was to be moved. We may be assured that David had passed this information on to Solomon. The Levites who were chosen to serve God, would be those to actually move the Ark.

2 Chronicles 5:5 "And they brought up the ark, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that [were] in the tabernacle, these did the priests [and] the Levites bring up."

"Brought up the Ark": I.e., such of the Levites as were also priests (compare 2 Chron. 5:7; 1 Kings 8:3).

"The tabernacle of the congregation": Revised Version: the tent of meeting.

This tabernacle then, and these "holy vessels", are carried into the new temple. But the Ark had still its ministry to perform (verse 7).

This makes it appear to be two different people, when it speaks of the priests and the Levites. The priests are Levites, but they alone of the Levitical tribe can handle the Ark. Even they must not touch the Ark. The staves that go through the rings on the sides of the Ark for carrying purposes. The descendants of Aaron were the priests.

2 Chronicles 5:6 "Also king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel that were assembled unto him before the ark, sacrificed sheep and oxen, which could not be told nor numbered for multitude."

"Assembled": To meet at an appointed time and place (Exodus 25:22).

"Sacrificed": I.e., of course with the intervention of their priests.

This means the priests sacrificed the animals that Solomon and the congregation had offered for sacrifice. There were literally thousands of animals offered.

Verses 7-9 (see the note on 1 Kings 8:8).

2 Chronicles 5:7 "And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto his place, to the oracle of the house, into the most holy [place, even] under the wings of the cherubims:"

"The wings of the cherubim": (see 2 Chronicles 3:10). Their situation was by the west wall of the oracle (1 Kings 6:16).

The cherubims were already in place, when the Ark was placed before them. We see again, the place of the Ark was the Most Holy Place. We remember from an earlier lesson, that the wings covered with gold were so large they covered the entire back wall of the temple.

2 Chronicles 5:8 "For the cherubims spread forth [their] wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof above."

Rather, And the cherubim were spreading forth wings. Kings has for (kî); making the sentence an explanation of the last clause of (2 Chron. 5:7).

It appears from this Scripture, that the staves stayed in place while the Ark was in the most holy place.

2 Chronicles 5:9 "And they drew out the staves [of the ark], that the ends of the staves were seen from the ark before the oracle; but they were not seen without. And there it is unto this day."

"From the Ark": Or, according to a different reading here and according to (1 Kings 8:8). Some read, "the ends of the staves were seen from the Holy Place."

"There it is unto this day": That is, at the time when this history was composed. For after the Babylonish captivity there is no trace of either Ark or staves.

In this Scripture, they appear to have been removed and been left somewhere in the room. It is our understanding that is not clear, not an error in Scripture.

2 Chronicles 5:10 "[There was] nothing in the ark save the two tables which Moses put [therein] at Horeb, when the LORD made [a covenant] with the children of Israel, when they came out of Egypt."

The Ark of the covenant contained only the "two tables which Moses put therein". Two other items were associated with the Ark: a golden pot containing manna and the rod of Aaron that had budded (Num. 17:1-9). The Bible records that these items were set alongside or within the Ark, apparently at different times than those recorded here (Exodus 16:33-34; Num. 17:10; Heb. 9:4).

See the note on 1 Kings 8:9.

In the original Ark there were the two tables of stone with the ten commandments on them, Aaron's rod that bloomed, and the golden pot with the manna. Perhaps the golden pot with the manna and Aaron's rod that bloomed had been removed, when the Ark had been in the hands of the enemy. Mount Horeb was believed to be a lower peak of Mount Sinai. This is the spot where God gave Moses the tables with the ten commandments.

Verses 11-13: This grand procession of the "priests" and "Levites" recalls the procession of David bringing the Ark to Jerusalem (1 Chron. 15:25-28). The role that the priests and Levites took in worshiping God through music should be fulfilled by every believer (Eph. 5:19-21).

2 Chronicles 5:11 "And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy [place]: (for all the priests [that were] present were sanctified, [and] did not [then] wait by course:"

"The Holy Place": This was to be the last time anyone but the High-Priest went in, and then only once a year. It took several priests to place the Ark in its new home.

These priests took turns ministering in the temple. For this great occasion, they were all there. They were all sanctified and could watch this wonderful event for all of Israel.

2 Chronicles 5:12 "Also the Levites [which were] the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, [being] arrayed in white linen, having cymbals and psalteries and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them a hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets:)"

"All of them of Asaph . . . brethren": Hebrew, to all of them, to Asaph, to Heman, etc., and to their sons, and to their brethren. This use of the particle le (to, for), is characteristic of the chronicler, whose style in these verses stands in marked contrast with the former part of the chapter. As to the Levitical guilds of musicians (compare 1 Chron. 25:1-7; 15:16).

"Arrayed in white linen": (1 Chron. 15:27).

"Having cymbals and psalteries and harps": With cymbals and nebel and kinnors; which are harps and lutes, or guitars. (See 1 Chron. 15:28).

"Stood at the east end of the altar": Were standing east of the altar.

"And with them . . . trumpets": And with them priests, to a hundred and twenty, were trumpeting with trumpets (see 1 Chron. 15:24).

"A hundred and twenty": Thus five to each of the twenty-four classes of the priests.

For "Asaph, Heman," and "Jeduthun" (see the note on 1 Chron. 6:31-48; 1 Chron. Chapter 25).

White linen symbolized righteousness. In an earlier lesson, we learned that Asaph was the overseer of the praise and worship with singing and musical instruments. All 24 of the choirs were there for this very special occasion. The trumpets were being blown as a victory sound. The Ark was in the temple.

Verses 13-14: The glory of the Lord": The Lord's presence indwelt the temple and the first service of worship was held. In the same manner, He descended on the tabernacle (Exodus 40:34-38). He will do likewise on the millennial temple (Ezek. 43:1-5). His glory is representative of His person (compare Exodus chapter 33), and entering the temple signified His presence.

2 Chronicles 5:13 "It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers [were] as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up [their] voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the LORD, [saying], For [he is] good; for his mercy [endureth] for ever: that [then] the house was filled with a cloud, [even] the house of the LORD;"

"It came even to pass . . . thanking the Lord": And the trumpeters and the minstrels were to sound aloud, as one man, with one sound, in order to praise and thank the Lord. This ends the parenthesis.

"Their voice with the trumpets": Rather, a sound with trumpets, etc.

"And praised the Lord, saying, For he is good": For this common liturgical formula (see 1 Chron. 16:34; 16:41).

"That then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord": Omit that (1 Kings 8:10). "Then the cloud filled the house of the Lord." The LXX. reads, "with the cloud of the glory of the Lord; "the Vulgate simply, "so that the house of God was filled with a cloud." The Authorized Version is preferable; the phrase, "the house of the Lord," being added as a sort of climax (compare 2 Chron. 4:21).

God inhabits the praises of His people. This beautiful praising in word, song, and music was in perfect harmony. Notice the things that were said of the LORD. He is good. His mercy endureth forever. This was the presence of the LORD that was in the smoke that entered the temple. God had accepted the temple and the people. This was shown by His presence.

2 Chronicles 5:14 "So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God."

(See Exodus 40:34-35).

"House of God": Kings, "house of the Lord." (See 1 Kings 8:11, and 2 Chron. 7:2; see the note on 1 Kings 8:10-12).

This just means that the priests fell on their faces in worship to their LORD. Their strength had all left them, and they fell before the LORD. The LORD had moved into the temple that Solomon and all the people had built for Him.

2 Chronicles Chapter 5 Questions

1. Who had dedicated much of the material and the vessels for the temple?
2. When had Solomon begun the temple?
3. How many years did it take to build the temple?
4. Who did Solomon assemble?
5. Where did he assemble them?
6. Where was the Ark located, at the time the temple was finished?
7. What does verse 2 call the city of David?
8. What is meant by all the men assembled themselves?
9. When did they move the Ark to the temple?
10. What feast was taking place at the time?
11. Who took up the Ark?

12. What did he bring, besides the Ark, to the temple?
13. The priests are _____.
14. How must the priests handle the Ark?
15. How many animals were sacrificed?
16. Who sacrificed the animals?
17. How large were the wings of the cherubims?
18. Where were they positioned?
19. What did the Ark contain, at the time it was moved to the temple?
20. What, besides this, had been in the Ark before?
21. When does the author believe the other things might have been removed?
22. Which of the priests were in the temple for the moving of the Ark?
23. White linen symbolizes _____.
24. What instruments were they playing in the temple?
25. Who blew the trumpets?
26. What happened, as they were playing and singing praises to the LORD?
27. What did the smoke represent?
28. What effect did this have on the priests?