

BOOK OF 1 KINGS
GOD'S COVENANT WITH SOLOMON
1 KINGS 9

I. WE SEE THAT GOD APPEARED TO SOLOMON AGAIN.

Vs 1-2 – God Appeared To Solomon A Second Time In A Vision.

Solomon had finished building the Temple, his own house, and other buildings. We saw in chapter 8 how that he had the furniture from the Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant brought into the Temple and then had this big dedication ceremony which included a lot of sacrifice, an address to the people of God, and a prayer of dedication.

The appearance of the LORD spoken of in these verses here were some 24 years after Solomon came to the throne.

The Temple and the palace work at Jerusalem were finished. Now Solomon had to deal with life **after** completing his greatest accomplishment. Sometimes there can be a letdown after great victories or accomplishments!

When the LORD appeared to Solomon this time it was in the same manner as God appeared to him at the beginning of his reign!
(*Cf. 1 Kings 3:5-9*)

Vs 3 – God Answered Solomon's Prayer.

The great prayer of Solomon in *1 Kings 8* meant nothing unless God heard and answered the prayer. **The true measure of our prayer is if God in heaven answers the prayer.**

This answer seems to have come many years after the actual dedication of the Temple. Yet God also gave Solomon an immediate answer of approval at the time of dedication...when the sacrifices were consumed with fire from heaven! (*2 Chronicles 7:1-7*)

The building was Solomon's work, done in the power and purpose of the LORD. The consecration of the building was also God's work. Solomon could build a building, but only God could hallow it.

Vs 4-5 – God Made A Covenant With Solomon.

God's answer to Solomon's previous prayer had a great condition.

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If Solomon walked before God in obedience and faithfulness, he could expect blessing on his reign and the reign of his descendants, and the dynasty of David would endure forever.

God did not demand perfect obedience from Solomon. David certainly did not walk perfectly before the LORD, and God told Solomon to walk before Me as your father David walked. This was not out of reach for Solomon.

Vs 6-9 – God Warned Solomon.

The positive promise of *1 Kings 9:3-4* was followed by this negative promise. If Solomon or his descendants were to turn from following the LORD, God promised to correct a disobedient Israel.

God answered Solomon's prayer that he made in *1 Kings 8*, but it was **not** an unqualified promise to bless the Temple in any and all circumstances. God had blessed the Temple and filled it with the glory of His presence, but He would cast it out of His sight if the kings of Israel forsook the LORD.

It is sad, but even with such a glorious Temple, Israel would be tempted to forsake the God of the Temple and go serve idols that were nothing more than the product of men's hands. Here the LORD made Solomon know that He could never bless that error.

Under the Old Covenant, God promised to use Israel to exalt Himself among the nations one way or another. **If Israel obeyed, He would bless them so much that others had to recognize the hand of God upon Israel.**

If Israel disobeyed, He would chastise them so severely that the nations would be astonished at the hard work of God among His disobedient people, and they would know that the LORD has brought all this calamity on them.

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II. WE SEE THE WAYS AND MEANS OF SOLOMON'S GREAT BUILDING PROJECTS.

Vs 10-14 – We see the lumber and gold from King Hiram of Tyre.
We've said before that Tyre was a prominent city in the land just north of Israel (modern Lebanon) – and was noted for its fine wood.

Hiram was indeed a friend to both David and Solomon, but **the land of Israel was given to Israel by divine decree.** It wasn't Solomon's to be trading off. Trading Israel's land for a glorious temple and palace was not a good deal even if the cities he gave Hiram were not the best.

However, the transaction may be described here to show that Solomon was a shrewd dealer and got the better of Hiram in these arrangements. It seems that Solomon gave Hiram some fairly insignificant settlements and received a large amount of gold in return.

It is clear that Hiram considered the cities to be worthless, and taunted Solomon for giving him '*displeasing*' or '*dirty*' towns. (That's the meaning of '*Cabul*'— his name for the cities!)

Even though he was displeased with the trade, Hiram went ahead with it in good humor and sent Solomon 120 talents of gold. A talent is calculated to be about 70 pounds of gold.

We don't know exactly why Hiram was displeased with these cities. Perhaps he was displeased with his compromise, knowing that Solomon did something his father David never would.

Vs 15-24 – We see slave labor from remnant Canaanite peoples.
Solomon raised this massive labor force to complete his massive building projects. Archaeology is a witness to the ambitious and successful building projects of Solomon.

The Hebrew name *Millo* is believed to be a name for a prominent fortress near the temple and the palace. (*Cf. 2 Samuel 5:9*)

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Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer were three prominently fortified cities in the days of Solomon.

From all the people who were left of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, Solomon raised forced labor.

This was another apparent compromise by Solomon. **God strictly commanded that the remnants of these tribes be driven out of the land, not used as slave laborers in Israel.** Solomon didn't make Israelites forced laborers, but used them to oversee the remnants of the Canaanite tribes.

Vs 25 – We see Solomon's annual sacrifices unto the LORD.

It is possible that this was another transgression by Solomon. It may be that he took upon himself the exclusive duties of a priest, offering burnt offerings and incense. However, as is the case in some other passages, this may refer to Solomon initiating such sacrifice and ceremony properly through a priest.

Vs 26-28 – We see some naval expeditions that brought back gold.

It is hard to say with certainty where the land of Ophir was. Some suggest it was in southern Arabia or the eastern coast of Africa. This shows the great enterprise and industriousness of Solomon's administration.