

CHAPTER 3

It was a much larger and more particular account of the building of the temple which we had in the book of Kings than is here in this book of Chronicles. In this chapter we have,

- I. The place and time of building the temple (v. 1, 2).
- II. The dimensions and rich ornaments of it (v. 3-9).
- III. The cherubim in the most holy place (v. 10-13).
- IV. The veil (v. 14).
- V. The two pillars (v. 15-17). Of all this we have already and an account, 1 Kings 6, 7.

2 CHRONICLES 3:1-9

THE TEMPLE BUILT

Here is,

I. The place where the temple was built. Solomon was neither at liberty to choose nor at a loss to fix the place. It was before determined (~~1211~~ 1 Chronicles 22:1), which was an ease to his mind.

1. It must be at Jerusalem; for that was the place where God had chosen to put his name there. The royal city must be the holy city. *There must be the testimony of Israel; for there are set the thrones of judgment,* ~~1804~~ Psalm 122:4, 5.

2. It must be on Mount Moriah, which, some think, was that very place in the land of Moriah where Abraham offered Isaac, ~~0121~~ Genesis 22:2. So the Targum says expressly, adding, *But he was delivered by the word of the Lord, and a ram provided in his place.* That was typical of Christ's sacrifice of himself; therefore fitly was the temple, which was likewise a type of him, built there.

3. It must be *where the Lord appeared to David, and answered him by fire,* ~~1218~~ 1 Chronicles 21:18, 26. There atonement was made once; and

therefore, in remembrance of that, there atonement was made once; and therefore, in remembrance of that, there atonement must still be made. Where God has met with me it is to be hoped that he will still manifest himself.

4. It must be in the place which David has prepared, not only which he had purchased with his money, but which he had purchased with his money, but which he had pitched upon divine direction. It was Solomon's wisdom not to enquire out a more convenient place, but to acquiesce in the appointment of God, whatever might be objected against it.

5. It must be in the threshold floor of Ornan, which, if (as a Jebusite) it gives encouragement to the Gentiles, obliges us to look upon temple-work as that which requires the labour of the mind, no less than threshing-work does that of the body.

II. The time when it was begun; not till the fourth year of Solomon's reign, v. 2. Not that the first three years were trifled away, or spent in deliberating whether they should build the temple or no; but they were employed in the necessary preparations for it, wherein three years would be soon gone, considering how many hands were to be got together and set to work. Some conjecture that this was a sabbatical year, or year of release and rest to the land, when the people, being discharged from their husbandry, might more easily lend a hand to the beginning of this work; and then the year in which it was finished would fall out to be another sabbatical year, when they would likewise have leisure to attend the solemnity of the dedication of it.

III. The dimensions of it, in which Solomon was instructed (v. 3), as he was in other things, by his father. *This was the foundation* (so it may be read) *which Solomon laid for the building of the house.* This was the rule he went by, so many cubits the length and breadth, *after the first measure*, that is, according to the measure first fixed, which there was no reason to make any alteration of when the work came to be done; for the dimensions were given by divine wisdom, and *what God does shall be for ever; nothing can be put to it, or taken from it,* ^{<20614>}Ecclesiastes 3:14. His first measure will be the last.

IV. The ornaments of the temple. The timber-work was very fine, and yet, within, it was *overlaid with pure gold* (v. 4), with *fine gold* (v. 5). and that embossed with *palm-trees and chains*. It was gold of *Parvaim* (v. 6), the

best gold. The *beams* and *posts*, the *walls* and *doors*, were overlaid with gold, v. 7. The most holy place, which was ten yards square, was all overlaid with fine gold (v. 8), even the *upper chambers*, or rather the *upper floor or roof* — top, bottom, and sides, were all overlaid with gold. Every nail, or screw, or pin, with which the golden plates were fastened to the walls that were overlaid with them, weighed fifty shekels, or was worth so much, workmanship and all. A great many precious stones were dedicated to God (~~439D~~ 1 Chronicles 29:2, 8), and these were set here and there, where they would show to the best advantage. The finest houses now pretend to no better garnishing than good paint on the roof and walls; but the ornaments of the temple were most substantially rich. It was set with *precious stones*, because it was a type of the new Jerusalem, which has no temple in it because it is all temple, and the walls, gates, and foundations of which are said to be of *precious stones and pearls*, ~~621B~~ Revelation 21:18, 19, 21.

~~448D~~ 2 CHRONICLES 3:10-17

THE FURNITURE OF THE TEMPLE

Here is an account of

1. The two cherubim, which were set up in the holy of holies. There were two already over the ark, which covered the mercy-seat with their wings; these were small ones. Now that the most holy place was enlarged, though these were continued (being appurtenances to the ark, which was not to be made new, as all the other utensils of the tabernacle were), yet those two large ones were added, doubtless by divine appointment, to fill up the holy place, which otherwise would have looked bare, like a room unfurnished. These cherubim are said to be of *image-work* (v. 10), designed, it is likely, to represent the angels who attend the divine Majesty. Each wing extended five cubits, so that the whole was twenty cubits (v. 12, 13), which was just the breadth of the most holy place, v. 8. They stood on their feet, as servants, their faces inward toward the ark (v. 13), that it might appear they were not set there to be adored (for then they would have been made sitting, as on a throne, and their faces towards their worshippers), but rather as themselves attendants on the invisible God. We must not worship angels, but we must worship *with* angels; for we have come into

communion with them (~~8122~~ Hebrews 12:22), and must do the will of God as the angels do it. The thought that we are worshipping him before whom the angels cover their faces will help to inspire us with reverence in all our approaches to God. Compare ~~4110~~ 1 Corinthians 11:10 with ~~2142~~ Isaiah 6:2.

2. The veil that parted between the temple and the most holy place, v. 14. This denoted the darkness of that dispensation, and the distance which the worshippers were kept at; but, at the death of Christ, this veil was rent; for through him we are made nigh, and have boldness not only to look, but to enter, into the holiest. On this he was wrought cherubim. Hebrews *he caused them to ascend*, that is, they were made in raised work, embossed. Or he made them on the wing in an ascending posture, as the other two that stood on their feet in an attending posture, to remind the worshippers to lift up their hearts, and to soar upwards in their devotions.

3. The two pillars which were set up before the temple. Both together were somewhat above thirty-five cubits in length (v. 15), about eighteen cubits high a-piece. See ~~1075~~ 1 Kings 7:15, etc., where we took a view of those pillars, *Jachin* and *Boaz*, *establishment* and *strength* in temple-work and by it.