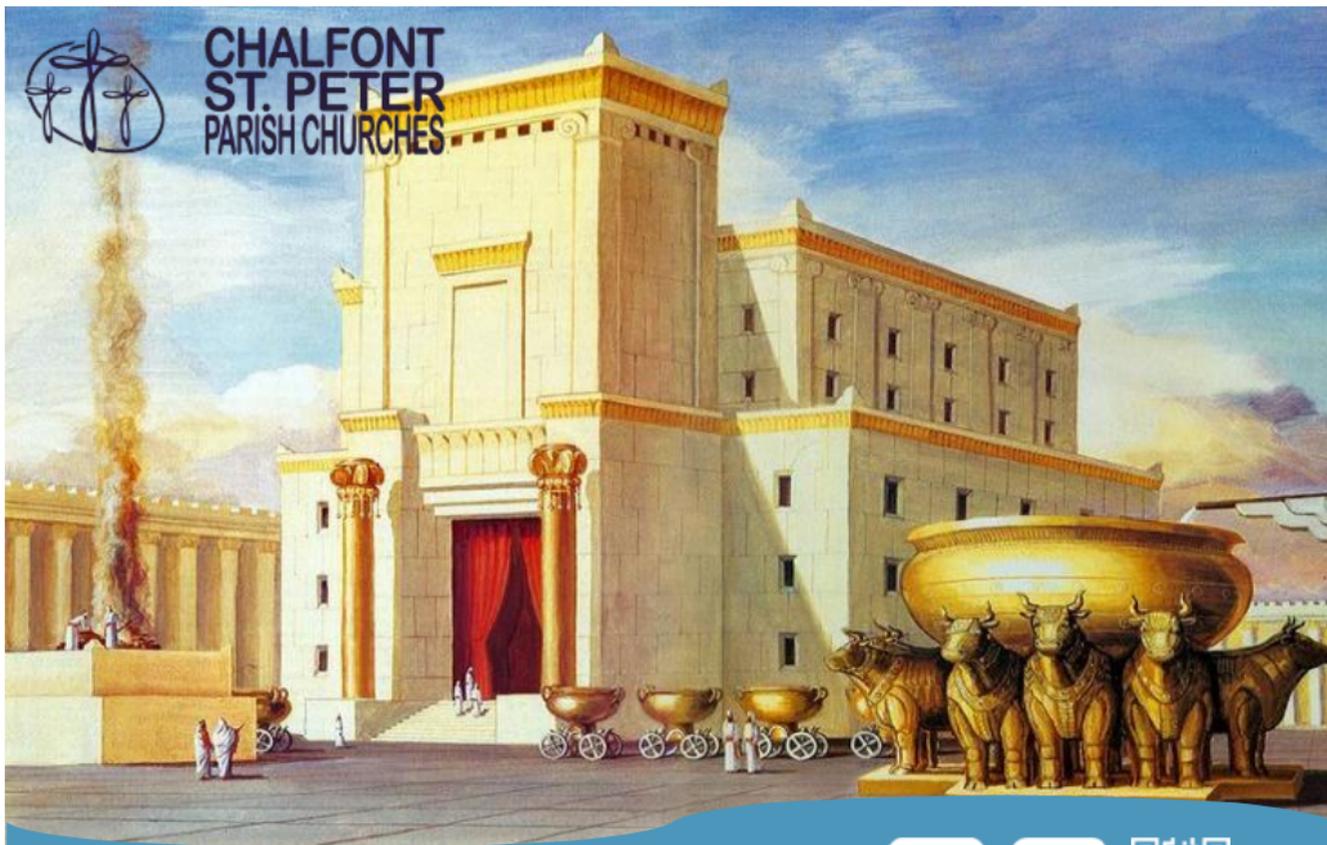




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Solomon's Temple

22nd November, 2015

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KNOW WHAT:

- Today In our series on wise leaders we are looking at Solomon. Solomon was one of King David's sons. David was a great military leader who established the kingdom of Israel. He made Jerusalem the capital city and built a palace. He longed to build a Temple for worship. God told him to prepare for it but that his son would build it.
- When appointed king Solomon prayed for wisdom rather than riches or fame and God rewarded him with all. As a king he was renowned internationally for his wise decisions, e.g. when confronted by two women claiming one baby.
- Solomon established his authority within Israel and internationally and aggregated great wealth through trade and wise government.
- He commissioned the Temple building. Jerusalem had to be enlarged to take it. Solomon required his citizens to give time to building and money for construction materials. The construction of a magnificent Temple took seven years.
- Solomon furnished the Temple richly with items which would enhance worship.
- When the Temple was finished Solomon dedicated it to God in a major festival called specifically for that purpose. He recognised that God did not dwell in a man-made Temple but that it was a focus for worship.
- God was pleased with Solomon and the people in their endeavours. He promised to bless them and remain faithful as long as they remained faithful but warned against deserting him as they had done many times before.
- The Temple lasted from 960 BC to 586 BC when it was destroyed by Babylonian armies and the people taken into exile. It was rebuilt by returning exiles under Ezra and Nehemiah from 536 BC to 516 BC.

- Emperor Antiochus Epiphanes desecrated the Temple with sacrifices of pigs to Zeus and the Jews rebelled in 167 BC. The Jews rebelled under Judas Maccabaeus and rededicated the Temple in 165 BC. (still celebrated in Hanukkah). The Romans looted the Temple in 53 BC. King Herod the Great began a major rebuild and expansion of the Temple which lasted well into Jesus' lifetime. The Jews rebelled against Roman rule in 70 AD and the Romans razed the Temple to the ground in response.
- Jews were banned from Jerusalem by the Romans and the Temple was not rebuilt. When Islamic armies captured Jerusalem in the 7th Century they built the Dome of the Rock and the Al Aqsa Mosque on the site. Jews pray today at the Wailing Wall, the final remains of the Temple foundations.

SO WHAT:

- The Temple was an amazing building, the centre of Jewish worship where people could meet God. It had to be protected and preserved. When people disobeyed God the Temple deteriorated and was destroyed, and so was the nation of Israel. There is no Temple in Jerusalem today.
- When Jesus was crucified the curtain in the Temple, which separated God from man, was torn in two. Jesus has taken our sins and made away for us to come direct to God.
- The Bible teaches that our bodies are temples for God the Holy Spirit to dwell in. We need to protect and preserve our bodies as holy places so that God is honoured in our lives in all we do. We must guard against neglect or disobedience.

NOW WHAT:

- We should clear the rubbish out of our lives (Galatians 5. 19 – 21) and be filled with the fruit that the Holy Spirit provides Galatians 5. 22 – 25).
- In the Temple worship was conducted every day. We should discipline ourselves to spend time worshipping God every day.