

Life of King Solomon

STUDY #11: 1 Kings 7:1-12

TEXT:

v.1 It took Solomon thirteen years, however, to complete the construction of his palace.

v. 2 He built the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon a hundred cubits long, fifty wide and thirty high, with four rows of cedar columns supporting trimmed cedar beams.

v. 3 It was roofed with cedar above the beams that rested on the columns—forty-five beams, fifteen to a row.

v. 4 Its windows were placed high in sets of three, facing each other.

v. 5 All the doorways had rectangular frames; they were in the front part in sets of three, facing each other.

v. 6 He made a colonnade fifty cubits long and thirty wide. In front of it was a portico, and in front of that were pillars and an overhanging roof.

v. 7 He built the throne hall, the Hall of Justice, where he was to judge, and he covered it with cedar from floor to ceiling.

v. 8 And the palace in which he was to live, set farther back, was similar in design. Solomon also made a palace like this hall for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had married.

v. 9 All these structures, from the outside to the great courtyard and from foundation to eaves, were made of blocks of high-grade stone cut to size and trimmed with a saw on their inner and outer faces.

v.10 The foundations were laid with large stones of good quality, some measuring ten cubits and some eight.

v.11 Above were high-grade stones, cut to size, and cedar beams.

v.12 The great courtyard was surrounded by a wall of three courses of dressed stone and one course of trimmed cedar beams, as was the inner courtyard of the temple of the Lord with its portico.

INTRODUCTION:

Let's look at some COWBOY POETRY to get us started in this particular study.

(Cowboy Curmudgeon and Other Poems by Wallace McRae)

OLD BLUFFER

I've long had to suffer you boys cussin' old Bluffer;
 Good a pup as a feller could own.
 But let me tell you a story that's both grim and gory
 When that cow dog's true colors was shown.
 Once old Bluffer 'n me is rawhidin' you see
 Fer a cow that is shelly and old.
 She's twelve year past her youth 'n ain't got a tooth
 In her head and she can't take the cold.
 She's lousy as well so this last arctic spell
 Will for sure turn her titty-side up.
 So we're pokin' around, searchin', coverin' ground,
 Me, my hoss and old Bluffer, my pup.
 As we're sicklin' along, I'm hummin' some song
 Then my hoss hits a hole hid by snow.
 There's no time to get loose. I swaller my snoose.
 Somethin' pops when we land and I know
 That for sure it's a leg—been smashed like some egg.
 But whose leg? My horse's or mine?
 Then I guess I passed out. Comin' to—ain't no doubt—
 Pony's gone. I'm alone. Then a whine
 From old Bluffer, my pard, who's been there standin' guard
 And I'm thankful that I ain't alone.
 Well old Bluff licks my chin 'n wags me a grin
 Then I move and I stifle a moan.
 I'm gittin' cold and I quiver. The pain sends a shiver
 And I pass out again for a spell.
 When I come up for air that good dog is still there
 But my future looks shorter than hell.
 As the waves of pain rage, I tear out a page
 From my faithful old worn tally book,
 And I carefully write a note of my plight
 And location where searchers should look.
 With my wild rag I waller old Bluffer a collar

And I carefully tie on my note.
 I don't give him no choice. In my no-nonsense voice
 "Bluff! Go home!" Said with tears in my throat.
 Can you guess the rest of old Bluff's hero test?
 Well sir, you can all see I ain't dead,
 But I find myself wishin' I could shed this suspicion
 I got rollin' around in my head.
 When them boys cut my track, 'n brought me on back
 Almost out of sight they found Bluffer
 Right there by the trail a-waggin' his tail
 Curled up, restin', watchin' me suffer.

pp. 58-59

(Poetry: Complete Works to 1993 by Skinny Rowland)

GOOD BOY? BY SKINNY ROWLAND

Now I'm telling you all, there ain't no ifs ands or buts,
 just too many people, really spoil their mutts.
 Now if that hound of mine, puts my authority to test,
 I just don't fry his steak, the way he likes best.
 And if he should fail, to do what I said,
 he doesn't get any, clean sheets on his bed.
 Now that dog of mine, really does toe the mark,
 or else I won't come running, when I hear him bark.
 And if he fails to mind, when I know he's able,
 I won't let him lay, on the dining room table.
 He knows lots of tricks, and it really is neat,
 the cute way he jumps on you, with his big muddy feet.
 Not many know this one, he really is great,
 with one running jump, he can swipe the food off your plate.
 He can jump on the drainboard, and get the bread off the shelf,
 now there is one for you, he learned that by his self.
 You have to be strict, to have a smart dog like mine,
 I know I seem cruel, but he stays right in line.
 Now I'm telling you all, and it is a sure bet,
 if you're not stern like I am, you are spoiling your pet.

p. 41

(Sportin' a 'Tude by Patsy Clairmont)

At a retreat I attended, I met a lovely older woman who had never married. In a conversation we had regarding funerals, she told me all her pallbearers were going to be women.

"Really?" I replied, surprised and fascinated.

"Yes," she said. "Since the men didn't want to take me out when I was living, I'm not going to let them take me out when I'm dead."

She made me giggle, as did this senectitude poem about grandmothers:

In the dim and distant past when life's tempo wasn't fast,
Grandma used to rock and knit, crochet, tat, and baby-sit.
When the kids were in a jam, they could always count on
Gram,

In an age of gracious living, Grandma was the gal for giving.
Grandma now is at the gym exercising to keep slim,
She's off touring with the bunch, taking clients out to lunch,
Driving north to ski or curl, all her days are in a whirl,
Nothing seems to stop or block her now that Grandma's off
her rocker!

pp. 76-77

(When Nations Die: Ten Warning Signs of a Culture in Crisis by Jim Nelson Black)

President Theodore Roosevelt once said, "Americanism means the virtues of courage, honor, justice, truth, sincerity, and hardihood—the virtues that made America. The things that will destroy America are prosperity-at-any-price, peace-at-any-price, safety-first instead of duty-first, the love of soft living, and the get-rich-quick theory of life." At that time, at least, people still understood the value of their cultural heritage.

p. 91

(Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives by Richard A. Swenson, M.D.)

“As I’ve come to feel a deep sense of urgency about the Future Forces at work today, I’ve decided to do all I can to communicate to you the pressing need for action,” writes Princeton pollster George Gallup, Jr. “If swift, forceful steps aren’t taken to defuse the political and social time bombs facing us, we may well find ourselves on a track that could lead to the destruction of civilization as we know it.”⁸

8. George Gallup, Jr., with William Proctor, *Forecast 2000* (New York: Morrow, 1984), page 12.
p. 53

(Walking With Saints: Through the Best and Worst Times of Our Lives by Calvin Miller)

Nike has sold a lot of tennis shoes by saying, "Just do it." America has become the world's largest gathering of the indulgent. From many billboards comes the grand doctrine of "feel good." Its popular proverb is, "If it feels good, do it." But those who "feel good" are often materialistically sick. Richard Foster confronts those who hunger for this "feel-goodism": "It is time we awaken to the fact that conformity to a sick society is to be sick."⁴

4. Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978) p. 80.
p. 163

David Wells defined worldliness as “what any particular culture does to make sin look normal and righteousness look strange.”

(From *Our Daily Bread*, Thursday, January 25, 1996)

(Reflecting the Character of Christ: His Kindness, His Confidence, His Grace
by Dr. Les Carter)

I asked Miquel to tell me about life back in Nicaragua, and he chuckled as he said, "It's very different there. Here, you have so many things you just want more. There, you don't have much so you appreciate anything you have."
p. 23

(Inspiring Quotations compiled by Albert M. Wells, Jr.)

If Christians were afraid of worldliness as much as they are of holiness, they would set the world on fire for Christ.
p. 88

(Living in the Lions' Den Without Being Eaten by William Carr Peel)

The following letter appeared in a career advice column in the *Dallas Morning News*:

I have read your column for some time and now have a question that may surprise you. I'm 43, a successful professional still on my way up and unhappy. With my long hectic work hours, I sometimes feel that I'm running between the raindrops. My personal life has been a series of exploding relationships, including one divorce. I feel I'm successful but not driving on the scenic route. Do many of your readers express a similar problem?
p. 107

(Shepherding the Church into the 21st Century by Joseph M. Stowell)

Periodically I'm asked what my greatest challenge is at Moody. It's not a hard question to answer. The answer does not relate to finances, personnel, management, or even the busyness of my schedule. My greatest challenge at Moody is me. When I'm keeping myself spiritually, emotionally, and physically fit, I have a far greater capacity to deal with the problems at the office. More specifically, when I keep myself functioning in the context of my gifts and sense that I am growing as a person and am committed to staying at it, even on the tough days, that's when I do my best on behalf of the Lord who called me to serve Him at MBI. Like the old spiritual says, "It's not my brother, nor my sister, but it's me, O Lord, standing in the need of prayer." p. 259

(A Heart Like His: The Shaping of Character in the Choices of Life by Rebecca Manley Pippert)

First, our view of God is shortsighted. Too often we see God as a celestial Santa Claus who is far too enlightened to be bothered with such antiquated nonsense as "who has been naughty or nice." He just wants to fill our stockings with the toys of our choice. Or we have the opposite problem. We see God as a celestial Scrooge who wants our lives to be dreary, drab, and dull. The truth is, it's the other way around. The Bible shows us that it is *God* who grieves the most when we miss out on the joy, the peace, and the ecstasy that he intends for us. As C. S. Lewis said in *The Weight of Glory*, ". . . it would seem that Our Lord finds our desires, not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling around with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased." pp. 14-15

(No More Excuses: Be the Man God Made You to Be by Tony Evans)

Do you remember an old B-grade movie called *The Blob*? As I recall, a meteor came hurtling in from outer space, crashed to earth in a wooded area, and split open. As it lay there glowing, a man came up to it and poked it with a stick. Suddenly and violently, this cosmic goo slithered up the stick and onto the man's arm.

The man began screaming and running, doing all kinds of things to try and get this glue-like substance off his body. But as we watched, the blob began to consume him. The harder he worked to shake off the blob, the more completely he was consumed until finally, he was gone. This blob-like creature had devoured him.

As the movie went on, the blob got bigger and bigger by consuming everything in its path. Pretty soon, it was eating everyone in town. People were running around screaming because the blob was taking over.

TEMPTATION: A LITTLE GOES A LONG WAY

When I think about temptation, I am reminded of *The Blob*. Like the blob, temptation is pervasive. It didn't matter whether the people in the movie wanted to deal with the blob. It was there, and it was coming for them. Their only choice was to run or get blobbed.

That's the way it is with temptation. If you're a man and you're alive, you're on the list. It's that simple. Temptation will find you.

Now, the blob started off small. It was just an interesting-looking lump of glowing goo. The man who poked at it with a stick didn't really feel threatened at that point. He was just curious to see what it was.

Temptation usually starts in a small way too. It's in just one little area. We reach out to touch it and get a little bit of it on us. But when we try to shake it off, we find out it's sticky. No matter what we do, it doesn't let go. In fact, it starts moving up our arms, eating away at us until it consumes us.
pp. 133-4

(Faith Under Fire: Standing Strong When Satan Attacks by Steven J. Lawson)

Let me give an example of what happens when we don't say no to temptation promptly.

When our youngest son, John, was three years old, he walked up to my wife, Anne, clutching a Tootsie Roll Pop in his hand.

Innocently, he asked, "Mom, can I eat it now?"

"No," Anne said. "It's too close to lunchtime. Let's wait until after lunch to eat it. Why don't I put it away for you until it's time for dessert."

"I promise I'll keep it in my pocket," John assured her.

Reluctantly, Anne gave him the chance. But as she continued visiting with another lady, Anne looked up and saw John lifting up the wrapper of the candy sucker. Holding it up to his nose, he was sniffing the Tootsie Roll Pop.

"John," Anne asked, "what are you doing?"

"I'm just seeing what it smells like," he replied.

Anne warned him again, "Do not eat the sucker." So John wrapped it back up and put it into his pocket again.

Anne went back to her chatting, but—sure enough—she looked up a few minutes later to see John, this time with the wrapper half off. He was holding the Tootsie Roll Pop up to his mouth, touching it with the tip of his tongue.

"John, what are you doing?" Anne inquired.

"I'm just seeing if it'll be good," John sheepishly responded. After a stern warning, John wrapped the sucker back up and poked it back down into his pocket.

Anne soon checked on John a third time and—you guessed it!—he had the wrapper completely off. And this time the entire Tootsie Roll Pop was in his mouth. Saliva was drooling down both sides of his lips.

"John, I told you not to eat the sucker," Anne reprimanded him.

To which John replied, "I'm just helping keep all the juice in it."

Unfortunately, if we don't consciously submit to God, that's the way temptation works in our lives, whether we're three years old or ninety-three. First it's just a sniff. Then a taste. Until finally no matter how many times we are warned by God, we've got the whole thing in our mouth. And every step along the way we are yielding to temptation, rationalizing our sin, offering excuses left and right—especially when we get caught.

pp. 140-41

(Inspiring Quotations compiled by Albert M. Wells, Jr.)

Learn to say no; it will be of more use to you than to be able to read Latin.

—Charles H. Spurgeon

At every fork in the road the devil is dangling the carrot down the wrong path.

—William Vander Hoven

p. 199

(Windows of the Soul: Experiencing God in New Ways by Ken Gire)

I jotted down the experience in my journal.

Jan. 6, 1986, Poolville

A family of stray cats (a mother and three kittens) has sought refuge from the cold underneath the pier-and-beam foundation of our house. They are timid & fearful, scared of coming too close to us in spite of our gentle efforts at coaxing them. Every night I leave some food out with some milk. As I peek through the blinds of the front porch door, I see them cautiously approach their daily allotment, ears erect, eyes darting. They are cold and scared and, I suppose, the world has shown them little kindness—if not outright cruelty.

As I bend the blind, looking down on them as they eat, I feel a certain kindred spirit with them—the cold, the scared, the abandoned—and I hope that somewhere God is bending a blind to look down on me.

Every night I watched as one by one, a tentative step at a time, the gray-and-white kittens came out. I tried to lure them into the house by opening the door and leaving a trail of food for them to follow, hoping they would come just far enough in so I could close the door and catch one. But they were too wary for that.

So one day at dusk I put a big cardboard box in front of the crawl space opening with some cat food at the end of it. I waited. And waited. And finally . . . the sound of a tentative paw. Then another. Step by scratchy step. Until the kitten reached the end of the box. And then I flipped it over.

Gotcha!

I brought the box inside. We all gathered around the square rim of cardboard, nosing down for a good look. I put on a pair of leather work gloves and picked up the ball of brindled fluff. The kitten didn't move. Not a muscle. Not a whisker. It was as lifeless as a stuffed animal.

After we oohed and aahed over it a while, I put it in the bathroom with a saucer of milk and some food and closed the door so it could get used to the foreign surroundings. An hour or so later I came back. As soon as I opened the door, the kitten shot to a corner of the tiled bathroom and wedged itself there. It arched its back and hissed, taking a swipe at me with its paw when I approached. With my gloved hand, I reached for it. It slashed at the glove and bit into the leather, making all sorts of fierce little sounds, spitting, hissing, its eyes wild with anger.

What the kitten didn't know was that all I wanted to do was to draw it close, to give it a safe and warm place in our house, feed it so it didn't have to hunt down its food. I wanted to take care of it, give it a better life, pet it, and look after it. That's all. I didn't want to hurt it. But how would a kitten born in the wild know that?

Suddenly I realized.

I was that kitten. Scared stiff one minute; spitting mad the next. Was that what God was wanting to do with me? Draw me close? Give me shelter, food, look after me? But the shelter I was wanting was the security of a job, not the security of His arms. The food I was wanting was from the grocery store, not from His hand. And I could look after myself—thank you very much—I just needed a break, that was all.

The God who now held me in the clutches of His hand was so foreign to the God I had once held in mine. Was it His face I was scratching at, His hand I was biting?

p. 102

(God's Little Devotional Book for Dads by various contributing authors,
Honor Books, Inc.)

An infallible way to
make your child
miserable is to satisfy
all his demands.

p. 108

(God's Little Devotional Book for Dads by various contributing authors,
Honor Books, Inc.)

The sheriff's office in a Texas city once published and distributed a list of rules titled "How to Raise a Juvenile Delinquent in Your Own Family." Among the advice given were these admonitions:

Begin with infancy to give the child everything he wants.

This will insure his believing that the world owes him a living.

Pick up everything he leaves lying around.

This will teach him he can always throw off responsibility on others.

Take his part against neighbors, teachers, and policemen. Teach him that they are all prejudiced against your child and that he is a "free spirit" and never wrong.

This will instill in him that he is to have no regard for any person who ever attempts to correct him or limit his behavior.

Finally, prepare yourself for a life of grief.

You're going to have it.

A child who never hears the word *no* has a limited understanding of the word *yes*.

p. 109

As we begin this study let us take time to meditate on Paul's words to Timothy in:

1 Timothy 6:6-17

But godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by contentment. For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang. But flee from these things, you man of God; and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate, that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which He will bring about at the proper time—He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords; who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light; whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen. Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.

Wiersbe says:

God is not impressed with our buildings, for He provides everything we put into them (Isa. 66:1-2). He wants our loving obedience, and then He can make the buildings a blessing.

p. 200

Gaebelein points out:

These buildings are called “Solomon’s own house.” (Verse 1.) The buildings consisted of the following: The House of the Forest of Lebanon. (Verses 2-5.) The Porch of Pillars. (Verse 6.) The Porch of Judgment, where the King judged. (Verse 7.) The House where the King dwelt. (Verse 8.) The House where Pharaoh’s daughter dwelt “like unto his House.” (Verse 8.) The Wall which surrounded the great court. Seven things are mentioned in connection with the Palace buildings. While the Temple was God’s dwelling place the Palace Buildings were the dwelling place of the King and his wife, Pharaoh’s daughter.

p. 263

McNeely observes:

These few verses, which seem strangely placed, intimate that Solomon had three separate residences. Most commentators concede that the first house was his royal palace in the city of Jerusalem. The thirteen years of building do not indicate that more time, and consequently more ornamentation, were lavished on his house than on the Temple. Rather, great time-consuming preparations were not made for it as for the Temple, and neither was there need for haste in its construction.

p. 43

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

The description of Solomon’s **palace** in verses 1-12 raises a question as to whether one building or several were constructed. Probably one palace complex was built that contained several separate but interconnected buildings. The arrangement harmonizes with the style of other large oriental mansions and palaces.

p. 501

v. 1 It took Solomon thirteen years, however, to complete the construction of his palace.

I did a little calculation on the RULE AND REIGN OF SOLOMON and we discovered last week that SOLOMON WAITED until the 4th year of his 40-year reign to begin the building of the temple.

It took him 7 1/2 YEARS to BUILD THE TEMPLE.

That brings him to the 11 1/2 YEAR MARK when the temple is COMPLETED.

When you ADD 13 MORE YEARS to that for the palace complex, you come to 24 1/2 YEARS into his reign before all this BUILDING IS DONE.

This leaves just 15 1/2 YEARS that he is going to be able to RESIDE AND ENJOY the facilities which he has constructed before his death.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

The palace **took** longer to build than the temple (**13 years** compared with 7 ½; cf. 6:37-38) because it was larger.
p. 501

J. Vernon McGee says:

It took seven years to build the temple, but it took almost twice that long to build his own house. It must have been a very elaborate palace.
p. 262

Baxter says:

. . . "But Solomon was building his own house *thirteen* years." Since the temple only took *seven* years, it might seem to suggest selfishness on Solomon's part that he should take six years longer than this over the building of his own house; but we wrong Solomon if we think thus. The "but" with which chapter vii. commences should be "And" (as in the Revised Version). There is no thought of *contrast* between the last words of chapter vi. (which say that Solomon took seven years to build the temple) and the first words of chapter vii. The *palace* buildings were much larger, and the undertaking a more extensive one; nor had there been any such preparation of materials for these building as there had been for the temple; and probably less workmen were engaged. It speaks well for Solomon that before ever he commenced his own house he completed the house for the Lord.
p. 93

Patrick & Lowth say:

He did not begin to build his own house till he had finished the house of God; that nothing might hinder that holy work. This appears from ix. 10. where we read he was twenty years in building both.
p. 312

Delitzsch says much the same thing:

The thirteen years are to be reckoned after the completion of the temple in seven years, so that the two buildings were executed in twenty years (ch. ix. 10).
p. 89

Parker says:

No man loses anything by taking part in the building of the temple of God. He comes away from that sacred erection with new ideas concerning what may be made of the materials he is using in the construction of his own dwelling-place. The Spirit of God acts in a mysterious manner along all this line of human conduct. The eyes are enlightened in prayer: commercial sagacity is sharpened in the very process of studying the oracles of God: the spirit of honourable adventure is stirred and perfected by the highest speculations in things divine, when those speculations are balanced by beneficence of thought and action in relation to the affairs of men.

p. 301

Lange says:

Ver. 1 forms a heading to the section concluding at ver. 12. The palace consisted of several buildings following upon one another, all of which, *i.e.*, his “*whole*” house, Solomon finished in thirteen years; but he only required seven years to complete the temple, because, perhaps, there were more buildings in the former, or fewer workmen were employed on them.

p. 82

Lange says further:

Vers. 1-12. Solomon first builds the house of the Lord, then begins to build his own house. We must first render to God what is of God, and when this has been truly done, then to Cæsar what is Cæsar’s (Matt. xxii. 21). He who strives first after the kingdom of God, will likewise succeed in what he undertakes for his personal and temporal welfare (Matt. vi. 33).

p. 91

(Reality and the Vision by Philip Yancey, Editor)

Escape! To many people the term "escapist fantasy" connotes frivolity, sensuality, idleness, and unreality—hardly healthy involvements for hard-headed, feet-on-the-sold-ground, no-nonsense, just-the-facts Christians.
p. 35

(Inspiring Quotations compiled by Albert M. Wells, Jr.)

Socrates, on looking around the market place containing almost anything an Athenian of his day could want, made this observation: "What a lot of things there are a man can do without."
p. 129

Possessions weigh me down in life;
I never feel quite free.
I wonder if I own my things,
Or if my things own me.

We saved money to buy all the things we have accumulated over the years; and now we finally know we didn't need them.
p.130

The difference between Patrick Henry and the average American today is that Patrick Henry said: "Give me liberty or give me death," and the average American today just says: "Gimme."

—Vance Havner

p. 128

Things are to be used and God is to be loved. We get into trouble when we begin to use God and love things.

—Jay Kesler

p. 128

Deuteronomy 32:28, 29

They are a nation without sense, there is no discernment in them. If only they were wise and would understand this and discern what their end will be!

Deuteronomy 17:18-20

When he takes the throne of his kingdom, he is to write for himself on a scroll a copy of this law, taken from that of the priests, who are Levites. It is to be with him, and he is to read it all the days of his life so that he may learn to revere the Lord his God and follow carefully all the words of this law and these decrees and not consider himself better than his brothers and turn from the law to the right or to the left. Then he and his descendants will reign a long time over his kingdom in Israel.

Matthew 8:20

And Jesus said to him, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."

Hebrews 11:13-16

All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.

John 14:1-3

Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

1 Corinthians 2:9

but just as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him."

(A Heart Like His: The Shaping of Character in the Choices of Life by
Rebecca Manley Pippert)

In October 1971 thousands of residents lost their homes in the Oakland Bay firestorm. When they were able to return to the charred hillside that was once their neighborhood, they were stunned to see the totality of their loss. The fire had consumed *everything* in its path. As one man was sifting through the ashes searching for some memento for his only daughter, he found one small treasure: a tiny porcelain rabbit. Both father and daughter marveled that of all their possessions, this fragile piece came through the fire unscathed.

In the weeks that followed, the media reported that other fire victims had found pottery and porcelain items intact in the ashes of their homes. Why was that the case? According to writer Susan Williams, a minister appeared in his pulpit the Sunday after the fire carrying the unbroken vase that had been all he had recovered from his home.

"Do you know *why* this is still here and our house isn't?" he asked the congregation as he held up the vase. "Because *this* passed through fire once before." As the fires of the kiln give porcelain and pottery pieces the strength to survive, so too, with faith in God, our own trials can strengthen us now and in years to come.

pp. 235-6

v. 2 He built the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon a hundred cubits long, fifty wide, and thirty high, with four rows of cedar columns supporting trimmed cedar beams.

Evidently, this total PALACE COMPLEX involved a campus of at least 5 BUILDINGS.

Our text tells us:

“HE BUILT THE PALACE OF THE FOREST OF LEBANON.”

The DIMENSIONS of this building are:

150 feet long,

75 feet wide, and

45 feet high.

DeVries says:

Solomon’s five edifices. The only building material mentioned is cedar, no gold as in the temple, though there must have been some in David’s palace and the palace of Pharaoh’s daughter, which are not described. The last two structures are given no special name, but for the first three we are given the names “House of the Lebanon Forest,” “Hall of Pillars,” and “Throne Hall” (also known as “the Hall of Judgment”).

p. 101

Delitzsch says:

. . . the palace consisted of several buildings connected together; namely, (1) the house of the forest of Lebanon (vers. 2-5); (2) the pillar-hall with the porch (ver. 6); (3) the throne-room and judgment-hall (ver. 7); (4) the king's dwelling-house and the house of Pharaoh's daughter (ver. 8). That all these buildings were only different portions of the one royal palace, and the house of the forest of Lebanon was not a summer residence of Solomon erected on Lebanon itself, as many of the earlier commentators supposed, is indisputably evident, not only from the first verse when correctly interpreted, but also and still more clearly from the fact that when the buildings of Solomon are spoken of afterwards (see ch. ix. 1, 10, 15, and x. 12), we only read of the house of Jehovah and the house of the king, that is to say, of the temple and *one* palace.
p. 89

Delitzsch says further:

The house of the forest of Lebanon.—This building—so named because it was built, so to speak, of a forest of cedar pillars—is called in the Arabic the “house of his arms,” because, according to ch. x. 17, it also served as a keeping-place for arms:” it is hardly to be regarded, however, as simply an arsenal, but was probably intended for other purposes also.
p. 89

McNeely says:

The reference to “the house of the forest of Lebanon” (v. 2) presents a minor problem. Is this a separate residence from that mentioned in verse 1 or does the phrase mean that Solomon's house in Jerusalem, being constructed of Lebanese cedar wood, was dubbed with that title? Was the author of 1 Kings emphasizing the residence's predominant decor rather than its location? Some writers have conjectured that this was a separate palace from that in verse 1. Further references however indicate this building was a part of a great royal complex consisting of the royal residence, the great hall and armory, and the residence for the Egyptian princess, Solomon's bride.
pp. 43-44

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

The Palace of the Forest of Lebanon (cf. 10:17, 21; Isa. 22:8) was probably given its name because of the extensive use of Lebanese **cedar** throughout (cf. 1 Kings 7:2-3); it was located not in Lebanon but in Jerusalem.
p. 501

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says further:

It measured 150 feet by 75 feet and was 45 feet high. The floor space was 11,250 square feet, more than four times the 2,700 square feet of the temple floor (cf. 6:2).
pp. 501-2

Lange agrees with this when he says:

This was the first of the various buildings composing the palace, therefore by no means a separate summer residence apart on Mount Lebanon (Dathe, Michaelis, and others). It was only given the name of Lebanon on account of the multitude of cedars standing alongside of each other. According to 1 Kings x. 16 *sq.*, and Isai. xxii. 8, it seems to have served chiefly, if not altogether, as an armory; . . .
p. 82

(Inspiring Quotations compiled by Albert M. Wells, Jr.)

The weakness of so many modern Christians is that they feel too much at home in the world. In their effort to achieve restful "adjustment" to unregenerate society they have lost their pilgrim character and become an essential part of the very moral order against which they are sent to protest.

—A. W. Tozer

Worldliness is an accepted part of our way of life. Our religious mood is social instead of spiritual. We have lost the art of worship. We are not producing saints. Our models are successful businessmen, celebrated athletes and theatrical personalities. Our homes have been turned into theatres. Our literature is shallow and our hymnody borders on sacrilege. And scarcely anyone appears to care.

—A. W. Tozer

p. 219

Worldliness is an accepted part of our way of life. Our RELIGIOUS MOOD is SOCIAL instead of SPIRITUAL.

(Building High Commitment in a Low-Commitment World by Bill Hull)

The effect this has on the church is put so well by George MacDonald: "That need which is no need is a demon sucking at the spring of your life." The need for spiritual speed in maturation is no need at all.

p. 77

While considering the magnitude of this “PALACE OF THE FOREST OF LEBANON” I found myself singing that great old hymn:

“I’m a Child of the King”

My father is rich in houses and lands,
He holdeth the wealth of the world in His hand!
Of rubies and diamonds, of silver and gold,
His coffers are full, He has riches untold.

REFRAIN

I’m a child of the King.
A child of the King:
With Jesus my Savior
I’m a child of the King.

My father’s own Son, the Savior of men,
Once wandered on earth as the poorest of them.
But now He is pleading our pardon on high,
That we may be His when He comes by and by.

I once was an outcast stranger on earth,
A sinner by choice, and an alien by birth;
But I’ve been adopted, my name’s written down,
An heir to a mansion, a robe and a crown.

A tent or a cottage why should I care?
They’re building a palace for me over there;
Tho’ exiled from home, yet, still I may sing;
All glory to God, I’m a child of the King.

("I'm a Child of the King" by Hattie E. Buell, Rev. John B. Sumner, arr.)

v. 3 It was roofed with cedar above the beams that rested on the columns—
forty-five beams, fifteen to a row.

I guess you could say it was ROOFED WITH CEDAR SHAKES.

v. 4 Its windows were placed high in sets of three, facing each other.

v. 5 All the doorways had rectangular frames; they were in the front part in
sets of three, facing each other.

v. 6 He made a colonnade fifty cubits long and thirty wide. In front of it was
a portico, and in front of that were pillars and an overhanging roof.

This SECOND STRUCTURE in the complex is 75 feet long and 45 feet wide.

This structure was 3,375 square feet.

We are told that:

“IN FRONT OF IT WAS A PORTICO [or porch], AND IN FRONT OF
THAT WERE PILLARS AND AN OVERHANGING ROOF.”

McNeely observes:

The floor plan of the palace area was similar to other Eastern royal
houses. The dominant feature was the hall of pillars (v. 6). Measuring forty-
five feet by seventy-five feet, this room probably housed the three hundred
golden shields (see 1 Kings 10:17) and served as an armory (see Isa 22:8).

p. 44

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

The palace evidently served as an armory (10:17; cf. Isa. 22:8). Apparently next to it was a pillared **colonnade** (a covered walkway surrounding a patio) that had a front **portico** (porch) with a **roof** and supporting **pillars**.

p. 502

v. 7 He built the throne hall, the Hall of Justice, where he was to judge, and he covered it with cedar from floor to ceiling.

We have very little detail about this third structure in the complex. It is the place that houses his throne, the place where justice is meted out.

This is where he functioned as king. His wisdom was on display, here in this building “HE WAS TO JUDGE.”

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Solomon’s **throne hall, the Hall of Justice**, was attached to the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon, as were his own residence (v. 8a) and a separate residence (**palace**) for **Pharaoh’s daughter, whom he had married** (v. 8b), all of harmonious **design**.

p. 502

v. 8 And the palace in which he was to live, set farther back, was similar in design. Solomon also made a palace like this hall for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had married.

We come now to the 4TH AND 5TH BUILDINGS in the complex and these are the:

RESIDENCES OF SOLOMON AND PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER.

Evidently, these two residences were similar in design to the "Hall of Justice" that has just been described in verse 7.

Selman remarks on Solomon's marriage to Pharaoh's daughter:

The fact of this unique marriage (1 Ki. 9:16; 11:1) and the separate *palace* built for her (1 Ki. 3:1; 7:8, 9:24) are both taken from Kings, but mention of the *ark's* holiness as the explanation for her move (v. 11b) has no parallel. It is widely assumed that this has to do with her sex, but, since the context is about foreigners, her paganism is the more likely reason (*cf.* Ezk. 44:7-9). If the former were true, one would also expect separate accommodations for Solomon's Israelite wives, but mention is made only of new buildings in connection with his foreign wives (*cf.* 1 Ki. 11:7-8). In fact, building a palace for her was probably part of a policy of separate shrines for foreign wives.
p. 348

1 Kings 11:1, 2

King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter—Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites. They were from nations about which the Lord had told the Israelites, "You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods." Nevertheless, Solomon held fast to them in love.

2 Chronicles 8:11

Solomon brought Pharaoh's daughter up from the City of David to the palace he had built for her, for he said, "My wife must not live in the palace of David king of Israel, because the places the ark of the Lord has entered are holy."

Lange says:

The plan and arrangement of the king's house quite accord with the conception Israel had of the calling of the monarchy. When the people desired a king, they said to Samuel, "that our king may judge us, and fight our battles" (1 Sam. viii. 20). The first or foremost of the three buildings which together formed the royal palace, namely the armory, set forth the mission of the king against his enemies; and it represented his protecting war-strength; the next building, the porch of pillars and the porch of the throne, or of judgment, signified the vocation of the king in respect of his subjects, viz., judging and ruling (see above on chap. iii. 9; 1 Sam. viii. 5, 6; 2 Sam. xv. 4); it represented the royal elevation and majesty; lastly, the third and innermost building was the real dwelling-house, where the king lived with his consort; a private house which he had an equal right with any of his subjects to possess.

p. 88

v. 9 All these structures, from the outside to the great courtyard and from foundation to eaves, were made of blocks of high-grade stone cut to size and trimmed with a saw on their inner and outer faces.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

A great courtyard (v. 9) united all these buildings into one palace complex. The **structures** were all built of **stone** (except the roofs) and they rested on stone **foundations**. Each stone was **cut to size . . . with a saw**. Palestinian limestone can be cut with a saw when freshly quarried, but hardens when exposed to the elements.

p. 502

v. 10 The foundations were laid with large stones of good quality, some measuring ten cubits and some eight.

The SIZE OF THE STONES were:

some were 15 FEET, and

some were 12 FEET.

The FOCUS in verse 9 is on “high-grade stone.”

The FOCUS in verse 10 is on its “GOOD QUALITY.”

1 Kings 5:17

At the king's command they removed from the quarry large blocks of quality stone to provide a foundation of dressed stone for the temple.

They have followed the same pattern here in the laying of the foundation for these buildings in that “high-grade stone . . . OF GOOD QUALITY” is used in the building process.

Verse 11 only reinforces again the fact that “high-grade stone[s]” were used.

v. 11 Above were high-grade stones, cut to size, and cedar beams.

v. 12 The great courtyard was surrounded by a wall of three courses of dressed stone and one course of trimmed cedar beams, as was the inner courtyard of the temple of the Lord with his portico.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

The great palace courtyard was protected by a wall similar in design to that around **the inner courtyard of the temple** (cf. 6:36). The palace was probably built close to (perhaps south of) the temple, though none of its remains have been found by archeologists.
p. 502

(Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to
Overloaded Lives by Richard A. Swenson, M.D.)

“Discontent doth dislocate and unjoint the soul, it pulls off the wheels,” advises Thomas Watson in *The Art of Divine Contentment*. “Discontent is a fretting humour, which dries the brains, wastes the spirits, corrodes and eats out the comfort of life.”²²

“*Christian contentment*,” counters Jeremiah Burroughs in *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, “*is that sweet, inward, quiet, gracious frame of spirit, which freely submits to and delights in God’s wise and fatherly disposal in every condition.*”²³

22. Thomas Watson, *The Art of Divine Contentment* (Glasgow, Scotland: Free Presbyterian Publications, reprint of 1855 edition), pages 16,22.

23. Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment* (Edinburgh, Scotland: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1987 [1648]), page 19.

p. 200

After doing all of this study I found myself singing:

MANSION OVER THE HILLTOP

I’m satisfied with just a cottage below,
A little silver and a little gold;
But in that city where the ransomed will shine,
I want a gold one that’s silver lined.

CHORUS

I’ve got a mansion just over the hilltop,
In that bright land where we’ll never grow old;
And some day yonder we will never more wander
But walk the streets that are purest gold.

Tho’ often tempted, tormented and tested
And like the prophet my pillow stone;
And tho’ I find here no permanent dwelling,
I know He’ll give me a mansion my own.

Don’t think me poor or deserted or lonely.
I’m not discouraged, I’m heaven bound;
I’m just a pilgrim in search of a city,
I want a mansion, a harp and a crown.

("Mansion Over the Hilltop" Ira Stanphill)

(Inspiring Quotations compiled by Albert M. Wells, Jr.)

Aim at heaven and you get earth thrown in. Aim at earth and you get neither.

—C. S. Lewis

p. 11

The one thing that all men need to learn about joy is that joy has nothing to do with material things, or with a man's outward circumstances. It is the simple fact of human experience that a man living in the lap of luxury can be wretched, and a man in the depths of poverty can overflow with joy.

—William Barclay

p. 103

There are two tragedies in life. One is not to get your heart's desire and the other is to get it.

—George Bernard Shaw

p. 110

CONCLUSION:

What are some of the lessons that we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: Many times the building of a house is for the purpose of making a statement and ministers to our pride.

LESSON #2: “But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you” (Matthew 6:33).

LESSON #3: “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matthew 6:19-21).

LESSON #4: “Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth” (Colossians 3:2).

LESSON #5: “And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God” (Revelation 21:10).

LESSON #6: “In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you” (John 14:2).

LESSON #7: Solomon has broken the law by marrying Pharaoh's daughter.

LESSON #8: His present compromises will lead to future condemnation.

LESSON #9: If Christians were afraid of worldliness as much as they are of holiness it would set the world on fire for Christ.

LESSON #10: “There are two tragedies in life. One is not to get your heart's desire and the other is to get it” (George Bernard Shaw).

DeVries summarizes it all when he says:

This was the great complex on which King Solomon spent his nation's wealth. He did everything imaginable to show that, as Yahweh was a great God, he was a great king. What is displayed here is far more Solomon's "riches and honor" than his "wisdom." His was undoubtedly the piety of worldly success.

p. 103

(No More Excuses: Be the Man God Made You to Be by Tony Evans)

Remember our movie *The Blob*? They tried every which way to get rid of that pile of cosmic goo. They shot it and bombed it, but every time they split it into a thousand little pieces it just grew back together again—that is, until someone haphazardly put some ice on it. They discovered the blob couldn't handle the cold.

So they started spraying the blob with cold things. The cold didn't destroy it, but it did hold it at bay until they could move it to a place where it was perpetually cold. That way, it could never cause trouble again. While they couldn't get rid of the blob, they controlled it by changing its environment.

That's what God wants us to do with our "blob," our propensity to sin. We need to change its environment. We cannot feed the flesh and expect to be victorious in the Spirit. We need to starve the flesh and feed the spirit, because when we do that, the law of the Spirit will transcend the law of the flesh.

p. 147

(Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives by Richard A. Swenson, M.D.)

Does the Bible infer that we are to live like *a king* or like *the King*?" asks Rev. Tom Allen. "The simplicity, sacrifice and servanthood of Jesus Christ should be our way of life, too."⁸

8. Tom Allen, "Living Like the King," *Alliance Life*, 10 June 1981, pages 5-6.
p. 203

(In His Image by Dr. Paul Brand & Philip Yancey)

The beautiful, the strong, the politically powerful, and the rich do not easily represent God's image. Rather, His spirit shines most brightly through the frailty of the weak, the impotence of the poor, the deformity of the hunchback. Even as bodies are broken, His image can grow brighter.

p. 42

(Inspiring Quotations compiled by Albert M. Wells, Jr.)

Death is an offer we can't refuse.

—Robert M. Fine

p. 54

In one of his more extreme moments, George Bernard Shaw said that every man should be arrested every five years. He should be asked to justify his continued existence. If one could not provide such justification, his life should be terminated. I would not advocate that, but I would urge upon us the acceptance of the imminence of death. . . . This is realistic, not morbid. It could provide the motivation to help us make the most of our time.

—Jerry W. McCant

p. 54

Because the human mind is able to avoid contemplating the future, most men die totally unprepared.

p. 55

(Inspiring Quotations compiled by Albert M. Wells, Jr.)

It's just a good thing that God
 above
 Has never gone on strike;
 Because He wasn't treated fair
 Or things He didn't like.

If He had ever once sat down
 And said, "That's it—I'm
 through,
 I've had enough of sin on earth
 So this is what I'll do.

"I'll give my orders to the sun—
 'Cut off your heat supply,'
 And to the moon, 'Give no more
 light,'
 And run those oceans dry.

"Then, just to really make it tough
 And put the pressure on,
 I'll turn off air and oxygen
 Till every breath is gone."

Do you know He'd be justified
 If fairness were the game?
 For no one has been more abused
 Or treated with disdain

Than God—and yet He carries on
 Supplying you and me
 With all the favors of His grace,
 And everything—for free.

Men say they want a better deal,
 And so on strike they go;
 But what a deal we've given God
 To Whom everything we owe.

We don't care whom we hurt or
 harm
 To gain the things we like;
 But what a mess we'd all be in
 If God should go on strike.

Philippians 3:7, 8

But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ,

Romans 12:1, 2

I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

(Future Grace by John Piper)

The prayer of consecration that rises in my heart, and I hope in yours, is this: "O Lord, I promise that by your grace my future will be a future of unfailing Yes to you. I consecrate myself to forsake the No and the Maybe and the Not of my unbelief. And I say Yes to everything in your Yes to me. I pledge myself to a holy dissatisfaction until my thoughts and my words and my deeds express the radical holiness that comes from the wonderful, joyful freedom of living by faith in guaranteed future grace. Amen. And I do mean, AMEN."

p. 108

(A Gentle Thunder: Hearing God Through the Storm by Max Lucado)

Let's pray. You and me. I'll show you the way; you fill in the blanks.

Precious Father, I praise your name. You have reclaimed so much in my life. I was lost, and you found me. I was confused, and you guided me. I had nothing to offer, but still you loved me.

I confess that I still need help. I have a part of my life that needs your touch. Satan is battling for a garden in my heart. Don't let him win. Drive him out. He is a liar and has been since the beginning. Please defeat him. I'll give you the glory.

Father, here is the area where I need your strength

p. 56

(Flying Closer to the Flame by Charles R. Swindoll)

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me!

Be honored in my submissive spirit.

Be seen and heard in my melodious heart.

Be observed in my thankfulness.

Be glorified in the fellowship and worship that I have
with others in Your family.

p. 89

George Beverly Shea says:

"Over the years, I've not sung any song more than 'I'd Rather Have Jesus,' but I never tire of Mrs. Miller's heartfelt words." As a young man of 23, Bev allowed the message of this text to guide him wisely to a wonderfully productive and worthwhile life of service to Christ as he shared his musical "theme song" with audiences around the world—

I'd rather have Jesus than silver or gold; I'd rather be His than have riches untold; I'd rather have Jesus than houses or land; I'd rather be led by His nail-pierced hand:

I'd rather have Jesus than men's applause; I'd rather be faithful to His dear cause; I'd rather have Jesus than world-wide fame; I'd rather be true to His holy name:

He's fairer than lilies of rarest bloom; He's sweeter than honey from out the comb; He's all that my hungering spirit needs—I'd rather have Jesus and let Him lead:

Refrain: Than to be the king of a vast domain or be held in sin's dread sway! I'd rather have Jesus than anything this world affords today.

(From Amazing Grace: 366 Inspiring Hymn Stories for Daily Devotions by Kenneth W. Osbeck, page 190)