

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

April 30

MONDAY

There was a great Hall in Solomon's palace, and a porch across the front. The Great Hall was the hall of judgment, and that, too, was made of cedar.

READ: I Kings 7:6-7

Why does the Hall of Judgment get special attention? Because justice is part of God's essential character. He is the Just One and He cannot and will not be part of anything that is unjust. He is the great Judge of all the universe and His judgments are pure and right. God walks the halls of His eternal dwelling places and exercises justice perfectly. Because He is just, the wicked shall be judged. Because He is just, the believer is declared not guilty. He is the Just One and the Justifier! He is the Just One who does all things well.

TUESDAY

Solomon also built a second palace for Pharaoh's daughter. The workmanship on both his palaces included costly and large stones, 10-15 feet across! The palace was three stories high and had rows of cedar beams and precious stones.

READ: I Kings 7:8-12

Back in Deut. 17:17, through Moses, God warned that kings should not multiply wives or collect large amounts of silver and gold. But it's clear that Solomon did that. He strayed from his early days of being determined to follow the Lord. So often, things and money seem to turn a person's heart from the Lord. So we should treat as a great gift the limits God brings into our lives in these areas. Thank you, Lord, that you supply my needs. Thank you for with-holding from me that which might turn my heart from trusting you more.

WEDNESDAY

A man named Hiram came from Tyre. (Don't confuse this man with King Hiram) This man Hiram was a master craftsman and fashioned amazing bronze figures on the two massive pillars which stood in front of the Temple.

READ: I Kings 7:13-22

What strikes me here is that Solomon gives a name to these massive pillars in front of the Temple. People don't usually name pillars. One pillar he named Jachin and the other he named Boaz. Jachin, my study Bible tells me, means *he shall establish*, and Boaz means *in it is strength*. How neat was that! Every time someone comes before the Temple, they are reminded that worship is of God - He established it - and that we can only worship in His strength.

THURSDAY

Hiram also made a huge bronze basin - about eight feet high, forty-five feet

around, and more than three inches thick - supported on twelve oxen.

READ: I Kings 7:23-26

The basin was used for washing - the ceremonial washings associated with Temple worship; the cleansing of the priests; and the washing of the actual sacrifices. God has always put a tremendous emphasis on washing so that His people would be prepared to hear the message of the Cross - that the blood of Jesus Christ cleans us from all sin. Not any penance that we may do that washes away our sin; not any show of remorse; not any positive actions to overshadow the bad. If we are to be cleaned, we must be cleaned by the Blood! Have you been washed in the blood? Is your heart clean before God?

FRIDAY

Hiram also made water-carrying carts. Lions, oxen, and cherubim adorned the carts as a decoration. Each one had four bronze wheels.

READ: I Kings 7:27-33

These water carts were curiously decorated and, when not being used to transport water, they were smaller portable basins themselves, and situated at around the temple. They were placed there so that no one would be eliminated from washing because of distance. That's what the Scriptures say about what Jesus has done for us: He's come near to us and not far from any of us! One song writer put it this way: *He's only a prayer away*. That prayer must be the prayer of confession and repentance. When we come to the Lord that way, He forgives our sin and we have close fellowship with Him. Confession should be part of our prayer each day.

SATURDAY

Ten of these bronze carts were made from the same cast. Other details - the location of handles and the form of the rim - are described. Hiram also made ten smaller basins which were placed on the ten carts.

READ: I Kings 7:34-39

The carts are decorated with cherubim, lions, and palm trees. These three objects all represented something: the cherubim represented the holiness of God (cherubim are always seen around the throne of God); lions pictured the Kingdom of God and His rule over Israel (lions were symbols of royalty); and palm trees represented provision and (during the forty years in the wilderness, palm trees marked the oasis where the wandering Israelites found rest). Once we are cleaned from our sins, all these aspects are ours, as well. And we find rest under the rule of the Holy God!