

THE WORLD OF THE BIBLE

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The Promised Land

Not until Moses had died, and Joshua took over as leader, did the Israelites finally enter the Promised Land. According to the Book of Joshua, they now had to conquer the land and settle it among the different tribes. The Book of Joshua records three campaigns: a central thrust through Jericho and Ai, a southern campaign, and a northern campaign (Joshua 5:13—8:29, 10:1—11:23).

Although the Israelites won many victories, the Philistines still controlled the coastal cities, and the Canaanites many inland towns. After they entered the Promised Land, the Israelites faced the choice of serving God or the Canaanite gods.

High place and well at Dan, northern Israel.



Areas settled by the 12 tribes of Israel



God's House

KING SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

Following the conquest of Canaan, the Israelites stopped carrying the Tabernacle wherever they went. Finally, when the monarchy was established, King David brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, planning to build a temple there (2 Samuel 6:1-19). But it was his son Solomon who actually built the first Temple.

Like the Tabernacle

Built of stone, the Temple was similar in its ground plan to the Tabernacle, but much larger. It was paneled inside with cedarwood imported from Lebanon. Like the Tabernacle, the Temple housed the altar of incense, the table of showbread, lampstands, and, in the Holy of Holies, the Ark of the Covenant (1 Kings 5:1—6:38, 7:13—8:11).

Not a church

The Temple was not a meeting place for God's people, like a modern church; only priests were permitted inside it to perform the ritual sacrifices and other duties.

Solomon's Temple was destroyed when the Babylonians captured Jerusalem in 587 B.C. (2 Chronicles 36:15-19).

High Priest



Below: An artist's cutaway illustration of Solomon's Temple.

Holy Place

Holy of Holies

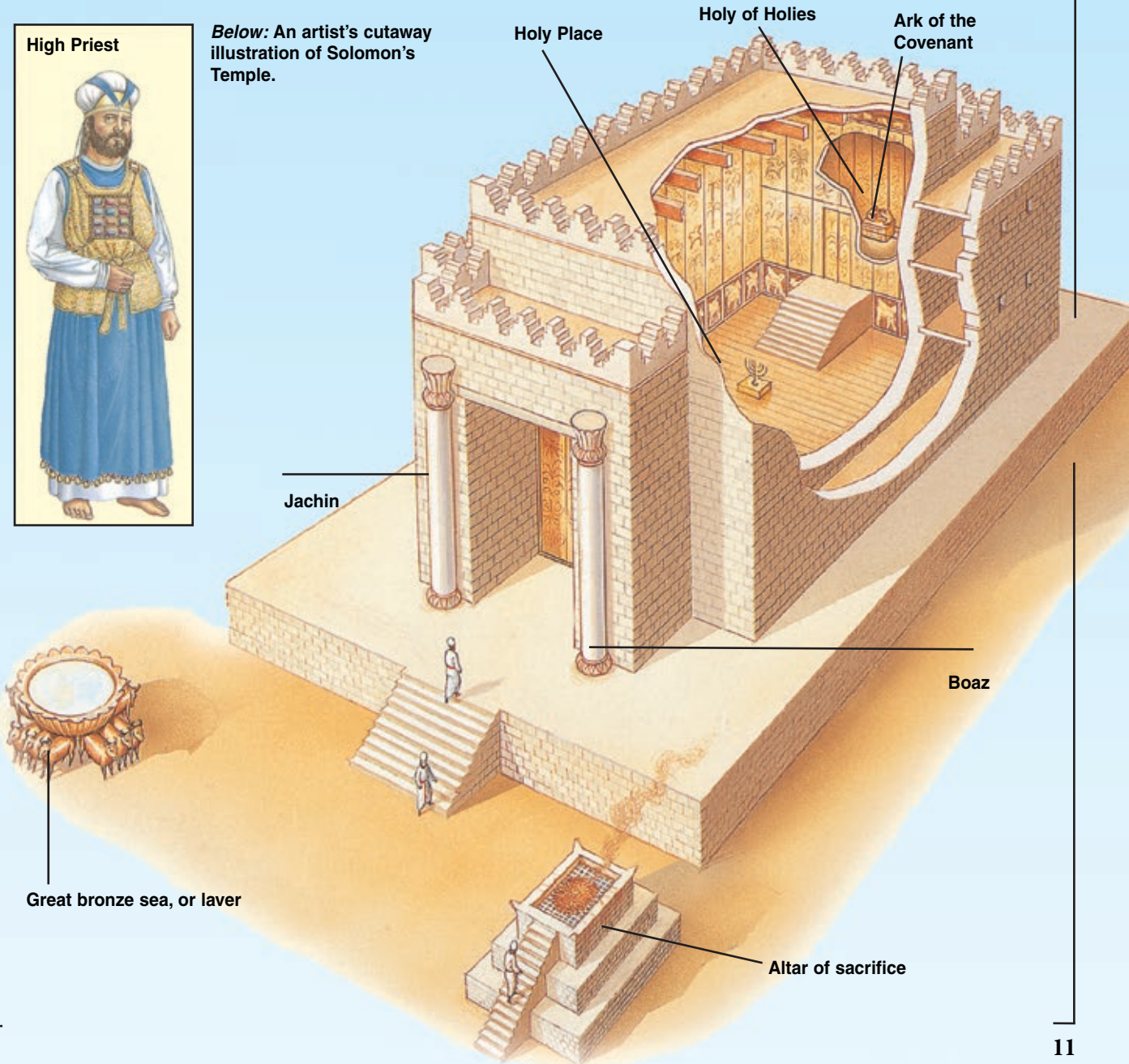
Ark of the Covenant

Jachin

Boaz

Great bronze sea, or laver

Altar of sacrifice



Jerusalem

JESUS' LAST DAYS

Saturday: Supper at Bethany.

Sunday: The triumphal entry into Jerusalem, seated on a donkey (Mark 11:1-11).

Monday: Jesus cleanses the Temple of the money changers and merchants (Mark 11:15-19).

Tuesday: Jesus teaches in the Temple (John 12).

Wednesday: Judas agrees with the high priests that he will betray Jesus, which is why this is often called Spy Wednesday (Matthew 26:14-16).

Thursday: The Last Supper with the Twelve Apostles in an Upper Room in Jerusalem. After the meal, Jesus takes them to the Garden of Gethsemane, across the Kidron Valley, to pray. He is arrested after Judas betrays Him with a kiss (Matthew 26:36-56).

Friday: Jesus is tried before the high priests and is then taken to the Sanhedrin, the Court of the Jews (Matthew 26:57-68). Next, He is taken for trial before Pontius Pilate (Luke 23:1-7), who sends Him to Herod for a hearing. Finally, after Pilate has sentenced Jesus to death, He is taken to Golgotha, the place of crucifixion (Mark 15:20-41).

After His Body has been taken down from the Cross, Jesus is buried in the tomb of the rich Jew, Joseph of Arimathea (Luke 23:50-54).

Sunday: Disciples see the risen Christ in Jerusalem (Luke 24:36-49).



Jerusalem from Mount of Olives



A relief from the Via Dolorosa, Jerusalem.

THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF Asia Minor

The first three chapters of Revelation consist of letters to seven churches in Asia Minor.

Ephesus

With a population of up to 500,000, Ephesus was the leading port of Asia Minor, famed for the worship of Artemis, whose priestesses were cult prostitutes (2:1-7).

Smyrna

This ancient port (modern Izmir) had a population of c. 200,000; was a wealthy academic community; boasted a “street of gold” with a temple at each end (2:8-11).

Pergamum

With the second largest library in the Roman Empire, Pergamum was famous for parchment, and as the site of the Asclepion (health resort) and altar of Zeus (2:12-17).

Thyatira

A city of many trade guilds, located on an imperial post road (2:18-29).

Sardis

A wealthy fortress city set on a hill; accessible to a fertile river basin; rebuilt by Tiberius (3:1-6).

Philadelphia

A fortress city on an imperial post road; educational center for Hellenism (3:7-13).

Laodicea

Producer of world-famous black wool; a banking center; had a medical school (3:14-22).

The Library of Celsus, Ephesus.



The Gymnasium, Sardis.



The Seven Churches of Asia Minor

