

Solomon's Temple

An overview

Solomon's Temple, also known as the First Temple, is the name of a temple in Jerusalem, which, according to the Hebrew Bible, was built during the reign of King Solomon. (1 Kings 6:37-38). At the place of Mount Moriah (2 Chron 3:1) Completed in **957 BC**. It was destroyed in 587 BC by the Neo-Babylonian Empire under the second Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar II (2 Kings 25:8-17).

Cyrus II, founder of the Achaemenian dynasty of Persia and conqueror of Babylonia, in 538 BC issued an order allowing exiled Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple.(Ezra 1:1-2). During Ezra and Nehemiah period, work was completed in **515 BC**. (Ezra 5:1-2; 6:14-15), called Second Temple.

Antiochus IV Epiphanes, however, plundered it in 169 BC and desecrated it in 167 BC by commanding that sacrifices be made to Zeus on an altar built for him. This final act touched off the Hasmonean revolt, during which Judas Maccabeus cleansed and rededicated the Temple in **164 BC**; the event is celebrated in the annual festival of Hanukkah.

During the Roman conquest, Pompey entered (63 BC) the Holy of Holies but left the Temple intact. In 54 BC, however, Crassus plundered the Temple treasury.

Rebuilding of the Second Temple begun by Herod the Great, king of Judaea. In **37 BC**, he enlarged the Temple Mount and rebuilt the temple with the consent of the public. Also known in its later years as Herod's Temple.(John 2:20)

In 70 AD the Roman army led by future emperor Titus besieged Jerusalem and destroyed the Second Temple. (Matthew 24:1-2)