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### **MASSIVE MODEL OF THE TEMPLE OF KING SOLOMON BY THOMAS NEWBERRY**

9525

**A MASSIVE ARCHITECTURAL MODEL OF THE TEMPLE OF KING SOLOMON IN JERUSALEM TO A DESIGN BY THOMAS NEWBERRY, BUILT BY MESSRS. BARTLETT OF KING ST., LONDON**

**London. 1883.**

#### **Measurements:**

Temple Alone: Height: 26" (66 cm); Width: 46" (117 cm); Depth: 48" (122 cm).

Overall measurement, including forecourt: Length: 7' 8" (234 cm); Width: 3' 8" (112 cm)



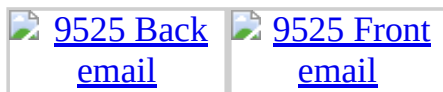


Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7

## Research

*Of giltwood, gilded carton pierre, silver gilt with date mark 1883, gilt-bronze, enamel, linen and embroidery on a scale of 1" = 5 feet (1:60), together with numerous figures and appurtenances. Accompanied by an engraving by Thomas Newberry, executed by Hans Price & Wooler (see figure 5).*

*“The temple is comprised of Porch, Holy Place, Holy of Holies, side chambers and galleries. It is outfitted with the Altar of Burnt Offerings, the Brazen Sea, ten Lavers, Golden Altar of Incense, ten Lamp Stands, ten Tables for Shew Bread, Ark of the Covenant, two Great Cherubims, two pillars (called “Jachin and Boas”),” and numerous figures including robed priests.*

## Marks:

Birmingham assay marks of W. Spurrier denoting the following:

Bust- Queen Victoria’s reign

Lion- Made of silver

Anchor- Made in Birmingham, England

Lowercase I- 1883

## Provenance:

Sir William MacKinnon

## Exhibited:

This Temple formed the central display at The Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition at the Royal Albert Hall April 4th to August 1887 (catalogue no. 2249 to 2255).

This important 19th century architectural model of the Temple of Solomon is the culmination of research, which had fascinated

architectural and biblical scholars since the Renaissance, and a focal point of the upsurge in the interest in history of Judaism in 19th Century England. It served as the centerpiece of the Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition at the Royal Albert Hall April 4th to August 1887. Figure 1 depicts the exhibition catalog entries for the temple and associated displays, Nos. 2249 to 2255. It was given a prominent position within the exhibit, visible on the 'Plan of Rooms 3 & 4' in the exhibition catalog (figure 2).

The Jewish Chronicle highlighted the model in a line drawing on the front of a four-page supplement to the exhibit from April 8, 1887 (figure 3). Both the exhibition catalog and contemporary publications described the temple as "remarkable" (The Menorah Magazine, Volume 2, 1887, p.269), while another declared that "Mr. J.W. McKinnon showed clever models of the Temple and its accessories" (Israel: The Jewish Magazine, Volume 5, 1901, p. 52). Sadly, the Jewish Historical Society of England's archives were destroyed during World War II, and extant contemporary accounts, drawings and photographs of the exhibition are limited.

The present model was the culmination of a sixty-year quest by Thomas Newberry (1811-1901), a biblical expert of remarkable scholarship, to elucidate the design of the first Great Temple in a way that is consistent with the verbal descriptions in the Bible. Newberry was born into a Christian household and, although little is known of his upbringing, he often "praised God for the blessing of a Christian mother and a godly elder sister,"<sup>1</sup> who instilled in him the scriptures and their Christian testimony. He was born again at a young age and came into fellowship with other Christians at the Plymouth Brethren assembly on Meadow Street, Weston-super-Mare, Somerset.

Newberry was an ordinary reader of the Bible, turning to the book for comfort and direction, but felt there was conflict between the practices of the fellowship and the Word of God.<sup>2</sup> In 1840, at the age of 29, he became determined to read the Scriptures in the original Hebrew to derive their true meaning. The result of these immense labors was "The Englishman's Bible," published in at least five editions between the late 1870s and 1902. In one of the earliest editions of the Old Testament, the title page reads: "The Englishman's Hebrew Bible, Shewing the Urim and Thummim, the Lights and Perfections of the Inspired Original on the Page of the Authorized Version, a Fac-simile of the Hebrew Scriptures in English." Selected other works by Newberry include "Notes on the Temple," "Notes on the Tabernacle," "The Temples of Solomon and Ezekiel," and "The Perfections and Excellencies of Scripture."

Newberry devoted a tract of his study to the interpretation of the Temple of Solomon, closely reading the scripture to elucidate its construction. "The Temple of Solomon: Notes and Addresses Delivered at the Victoria Hall, Weston-Super-Mare," (1887) describes the temple courts, the temple itself, the materials of the temple and the Altar of Burnt-Offering. With the help of Hans Price & Wooler, architects and surveyors also of Weston-Super-Mare, Newberry created interior and exterior plans of the Temple based on his descriptions (figures 4 and 5).

The temple model itself was the result of "Three years labour of Messrs. Bartlett."<sup>3</sup> Giles and Philip Bartlett, who traded as Bartlett & Co. from 1811 at 20 King St., Soho, London, described themselves as Japanners, chair japanners and gilders. The firm relocated to 18 Blenheim St, Great Marlborough St. in 1820, where they remained through 1886. Philip Bartlett seems to disappear from the records, however Giles continued the partnership with this son William from about 1838. After Giles' death, circa 1849, William continued to trade, acting as a Buhl worker for Queen Victoria 1846-57. His son Charles entered the business at age 19 and they traded as William Bartlett & Co. A billhead of their account to the National Portrait Gallery in February 1882 (for cleaning sculpture) describes this incarnation of Bartlett & Co. as "Carvers, Gilders, Decorators and Restorers of Works of Art and Vertu" and lists a wide range of services offered, including "Sevres, Dresden, Chelsea, Majolica, Oriental and all kinds of China restored...Limoges & Oriental Enamels, Venetian Glass, Wedgwood and Etruscan Ware Restored... Japanese Lack Work, Bantam(?), Indian & Chinese Cabinets, Screens, &c, &c. Painted oak carvings cleaned off, bleached & brought to one even color. Ancient Tapestries repaired & revived. Gilding executed in the rich Venetian style,"<sup>4</sup> as well as offering to clean, repair and varnish pictures.

Perhaps as important as the biblical scholarship and astonishingly detailed fine craftsmanship which the model exhibits is its sociological importance to Jewish Society in England in the nineteenth century. The model helped to promote both a better understanding of the scriptures and to encourage knowledge of Jewish history and culture in Victorian England at a time when Jewish contributions to British life were taking on an ever more burgeoning role. The apex of this interest was the Royal Albert Hall Exhibition, "An Exhibition illustrating Anglo-Jewish history and Jewish ecclesiastical art, with the following objects: (1) to promote a knowledge of Anglo-Jewish history; to create a deeper interest in its records and relics, and to aid in their preservation

(2) to determine the extent of the materials which exist for the compilation of a History of the Jews in England.”

The idea for the exhibition, the first of its kind in Europe, and the prototype of many modern permanent exhibitions in Jewish Museums around the world, was generated by Mr. (later Sir) Isidore Spielman (1854-1925). The exhibition lasted for twelve weeks and was visited by almost twelve thousand people of all denominations. Several thousand items were loaned by private and institutional collections, and, to quote the president of the Committee F.D. Mocatta, the exhibition served both its intended purpose, and that of “the advancement of Jewish ecclesiastical art.” Tellingly, Isidore Spielman’s other great contribution to the aesthetic life of England, a few years later, was as one of the founding members of the National Art Collections Fund, which has been instrumental in collecting many great works of art for the National Collections since the beginning of the 20th Century. He was also President of the Jewish Historical Society in whose foundation in 1893 he was instrumental.

King Solomon’s Temple is perhaps the single most famous building of the land of Israel, yet to date not one single stone of it has ever been discovered: it was destroyed root and branch by the Babylonians in 587 BC. It has nevertheless had a hold on the imagination of scholars for the past 500 years, both as a source for archaeological research and for speculation about its physical appearance. A remarkable amount of description of the temple survives in written form in the Book of Kings and the Book of Chronicles, and, in later form, the Book of Ezekial, from which Thomas Newberry derived his model.

The temple was built in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah in the mid-10th century BC by Solomon, the son of King David of Israel, who charged him with building a house for the Lord, and the present model displays all of the details as described. The temple complex was comprised of a Great Court, which surrounded the entire temple, where people assembled to worship God. Within in the Great Court was the court of the priests, called the “Inner Court,” and inside this, the Court of the Altar contained the Altar of Burnt-Offering, a large sacrificial altar with four sets of steps on each ascending to the fire, and a prong at each corner for tying up the sacrificial animals. Animal sacrifice, also called *korban* in the Hebrew bible (meaning “offering”) was a standard part of Ancient Israelite religion as an act of worship. Also part of the altar court was the Brazen Sea, a large laver for the ablution, or ritual washing, of priests, which was raised on the backs of twelve oxen. Ten smaller lavers stood, five on each side of the temple, for the washing of sacrifices. The Porch, or entrance, to

the temple was flanked by two pillars given the names Jachin (“God establishes”) and Boaz (“by strength”), decorated with 200 rows of carved pomegranates and lilies at the top. The domed roof of the present model has been a point of interest, as no other known model of the temple employs a dome. Newberry’s design derives from the Hebrew translation of the Book of Kings which reads “covered the house with beams and boards of cedar” “ (1 Kings, 6:9). In Newberry’s *Types of the Temple* (189-?) he explains: “These vault-beams, as the Hebrew word informs us (geibirn. from gab, an arch), were semi-circular, thus forming a DOME for the covering.”<sup>5</sup>

Within the temple, chambers were built on the perimeter of the north, west and south sides, surrounding the two most important rooms. The first and larger of the two was called the Holy Place. Its walls were lined with cedar and carved with cherubim and palms, all overlaid with gold and garnished with jewels. Ten tables stood within the Holy Place, five on the left side and five on the right, for holding shewbread, which was always present as an offering to God. There were also ten lampstands of gold, five on each side, made according to the pattern given by David to Solomon, which comprised seven lamps with bowls, flowers and knobs. At the end of the Holy Place stood the Altar of Incense, made of cedar and overlaid with gold, which the priests tended in the morning and the evening. The altar stood before two-leaved olivewood gold-covered doors that separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place, or Holiest of Holies. In addition to the doors, a veil of blue (representing heaven), crimson (representing earth) and purple (the joining of the two), adorned with cherubim, hung before the altar. The veil represented Christ, who is the entrance to the dwelling place of God.

The Holiest of Holies was where the most special presence of God resided. It was half the length of the Holy Place, windowless, with walls and floor made of cedar overlaid with gold. The walls in this room, too, were carved with palm trees, cherubim and open flowers. Within this chamber stood two cherubim, made of olivewood and covered with gold. They stood facing the entrance “and they stretched forth the...so that the wing of the one touched the one wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall; and their wings touched one another in the midst of the house” (1 Kings 6:27). Most importantly, the Holiest of Holies contained the Ark of the Covenant, which sat between the cherubim. The Ark of the Covenant was constructed by Moses, to God’s detailed instructions (Exodus, 25:10-21), to house the Tablets of Stone on which Moses inscribed the Ten Commandments. Upon the Ark rested the Mercy Seat, two

cherubs facing each other, and it was from between these two cherubs that God would commune.

The silver gilt and gilt-brass appurtenances to the temple were constructed based on Newberry's interpretation of the scriptures, as well as extant illustrations from the previous century. Figures de la Bible, illustrated by Gerard Hoet and others, and published by Pierre de Hondt in The Hague (1728), depicts scenes from the scripture, and those related to Solomon's Temple and its furnishings are nearly identical in design to the model's accessories (figure 6).

The List of Exhibitors in the catalog of the Anglo Jewish Historical Exhibition names "MacKinnon, W." (misspelt McKinnon later in the brochure) as the lender of the Temple. It must be assumed that this is Sir William MacKinnon of Scotland (1823-193), a highly successful ship-owner and business man. MacKinnon established the British India Steam Navigation Company in 1856 and the Imperial British East Africa Company in 1888, which was committed to eliminating the slave trade, prohibiting trade monopoly and ensuring equal treatment for all nations. He lived in grand style at his home in Balinakil, and used his wealth generously. He established the Independent Keil School and Kintyre Technical College, donated the 3,500 volume library of Rev. Dr. Alexander Cameron to the University of Edinburgh in 1889 and founded the Free Church of Scotland East Africa Mission in 1891. MacKinnon was known to have been a devotee of Newberry's writings. A copy of the 'Englishman's Bible', for sale with Adjala Bookshop of Ontario Canada in 2009, contained a typed note stating that the volume "Presented to me by Sir William Mackinnon, Bat, of Balnakill, Argyllshire, Scotland, 1887", supporting evidence of MacKinnon's habit of making gifts to those with whom he shared theological interests.

Another such beneficiary was Dwight L. Moody of Northfield Massachusetts (1837-1899), the American evangelist who founded the Moody Church, the Northfield School and Mount Hermon School in Massachusetts, the Moody Bible Institute and Moody Publishers. Moody was presented by MacKinnon with a second model of the temple, identical to the present, in 1884, which would be placed in the Talcott Library of the Northfield Seminary.<sup>6</sup> Moody had been raised in the Unitarian church but after going to live and work with his uncle in Boston at the age of 17, Moody was introduced to the Congregational Church of Mount Vernon and converted to evangelical Christianity in 1855. In the following years Moody's fame as an evangelist grew in the United States and across the Atlantic. On a trip to England in the

spring of 1872 he preached to tens of thousands of congregants, and came into communion with the Plymouth Bretheren, where he may have been introduced to Thomas Newberry. Figure 7 depicts the D.L. Moody temple model in situ in the library of Northfield Mount Herman School circa 1987, where it rests today.



- February 1, 2013
- Comments Off
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