

More than a temple



■ READ: A selection from 1 Kings 5-6

So I intend to build a house for the name of the Lord my God, as the Lord said to my father David, "Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, shall build the house for my name." ...

Now the word of the Lord came to Solomon, "Concerning this house that you are building, if you will walk in my statutes, obey my ordinances, and keep all my commandments by walking in them, then I will establish my promise with you, which I made to your father David. I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people Israel."

So Solomon built the house, and finished it.

■ REFLECT:

The temple is more than a temple. You've probably figured that out by this point in Advent. All of these Old Testament stories point beyond themselves. Like little mirrors, they catch the light of Christ's birth, his life and death, his resurrection and ascension. Their reflective beams even give us a glimpse of what's to come—his ultimate return to set all things right.

So how is the temple more than a temple? Well, throughout Israel's history, the temple served as the meeting place for God and humanity. (Before Solomon built the temple, that meeting place was the leather-sided tabernacle, a tent that could be set up and taken down as Israel moved from place to place.) In the temple, in the holy depths of its interior, God lived. There, in the temple, God coexisted with humanity.

Eventually, the temple was destroyed by Israel's enemies. So now where would God coexist with humanity?

In Jesus Christ. In the person of Jesus, deity and humanity exist together. They are one. Jesus is the temple. Despite the efforts of the Jewish leaders to destroy that temple by crucifying Jesus, it was rebuilt—resurrected, risen.

And because of Jesus, we don't have to go into the inmost interior of a building to meet God. Through Jesus, we can know God directly. What a gift!

■ PRAY:

Jesus, thank you for being the temple, the place where I can meet God. I don't have to trek for miles to a specific place where God dwells. By your Holy Spirit, I am connected with God as I'm connected with you. Remind me of your presence with me today. Amen.