

# 'Ain Dara Temple (1000 BC)

'Ain Dara temple in northern Syria parallels Solomon's Temple in:

- Age it was built
- Size
- Plan
- Decoration

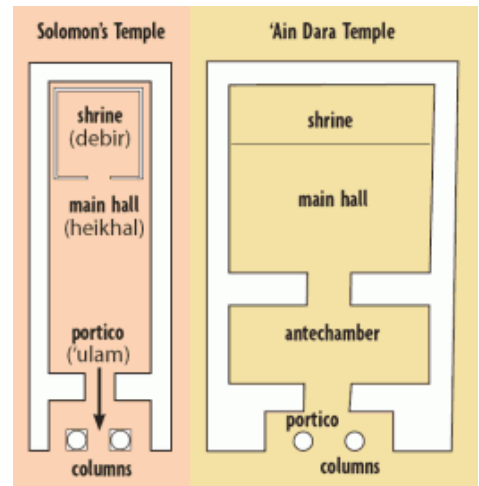
There are 30 architectural and decorative features similar to Solomon's Temple.



- Both Temples were built on manmade platforms
- Both Temples were built at the highest point of the city
- Both Temples had a three part layout:
  - entry porch supported by two columns
  - a main sanctuary (Holy Place)
  - elevated shrine (Holy of Holies)
- Both Temples had multistoried rooms or chambers built along both sides and the back for use as store rooms, meeting rooms and a variety of other purposes.

The interior and exterior of the 'Ain Dara temple was covered with carvings of:

- lions
- mythical animals (cherubim, sphinxes)
- floral patterns
- geometric patterns





The 'Ain Dara temple was discovered by chance after an enormous basalt lion was uncovered in 1955. The site was excavated in 1956, 1962 and 1964. After the invasion of the Sea People this site was rebuilt around 1100-900 BC. It appears the Temple was built on a holy site recognized since the Chalcolithic period (4000-3000 BC). The 'Ain Dara temple was built and developed between 1300 BC-740 BC in three phases and remained in use for 560 years:

- 1300-1000 BC
- 1000-900 BC
- 900-740 BC

The 'Ain Dara Temple seems to have been dedicated to the goddess Ishtar.

It is believed the 'Ain Dara Temple was constructed with mud-brick that was covered with wood paneling.



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The threshold of the 'Ain Dara temple have two 36 inch footprints (one right, one left) carved into the stone floor. This is followed by a 30 foot stride marked by a right foot and then a second 30 foot stride marked by a left foot carving in the main sanctuary. These footprints show the arrival of the goddess Ishtar and her entrance into the Holy Place to be seated. The foot size and the stride would indicate the goddess was 65 feet tall.

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existence and the discovery of the 'Ain Dara temple undermines the academic argument the Solomon's Temple fantasy or merely a literary device. The design, decoration existence of a Temple extremely similar to Solomon's from Solomon is real and not fictional.



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