

1KINGS 7: 1 Solomon was building his own house thirteen years, and he finished all his house.

Solomon builds his own house, and completes it in thirteen years, 1Kgs 7:1. He builds another called the house of the forest of Lebanon; and a house for Pharaoh's daughter, 1Kgs 7:2-12. He brings Hiram, a coppersmith, out of Tyre, who makes much curious work for the temple, 1Kgs 7:13-20. He makes the two pillars Jachin and Boaz, 1Kgs 7:21, 1Kgs 7:22. The molten sea, and the twelve oxen that bare it, 1Kgs 7:23-26. And ten brazen bases, and the ten lavers with pots, shovels, and basons, all of which he cast in the plain of Jordan, vv. 27-46. The quantity of brass too great to be weighed; and the vessels of the temple were all of pure gold, 1Kgs 7:47-50. Solomon brings into the house the silver and gold which his father had dedicated, 1Kgs 7:51.

Verse 1

Building his own house - This house is said to have been situated in Jerusalem, and probably was, what some call it, his winter's residence. It is called the king's house, 1Kgs 9:10.

1KINGS 7: 2 For he built the house of the forest of Lebanon; its length was one hundred cubits, and its breadth fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits, on four rows of cedar pillars, with cedar beams on the pillars.

Verse 2

The house of the forest of Lebanon - It was not built in Lebanon, but is thought to have been on Mount Sion. And why it was called the house of the forest of Lebanon does not appear; probably it was because it was built almost entirely of materials brought from that place. See the following verses.

1KINGS 7: 3 It was covered with cedar above over the forty-five beams, that were on the pillars; fifteen in a row.

1KINGS 7: 4 There were beams in three rows, and window was over against window in three ranks.

1KINGS 7: 5 All the doors and posts were made square with beams: and window was over against window in three ranks.

1KINGS 7: 6 He made the porch of pillars; its length was fifty cubits, and its breadth thirty cubits; and a porch before them; and pillars and a threshold before them.

1KINGS 7: 7 He made the porch of the throne where he was to judge, even the porch of judgement: and it was covered with cedar from floor to floor.

Verse 7

A porch for the throne - One porch appears to have been devoted to the purposes of administering judgment, which Solomon did in person.

1KINGS 7: 8 His house where he was to dwell, the other court within the porch, was of the like work. He made also a house for Pharaoh's daughter (whom Solomon had taken as wife), like this porch.

Verse 8

A house for Pharaoh's daughter - This appears to have been a third house; probably the whole three made but one building, and were in the same place, but distinguished from each other; the first as Solomon's palace, the second as a house of judgment, a court-house; the third, the harem, or apartments for the women.

1KINGS 7: 9 All these were of costly stones, even of cut stone, according to measure, sawed with saws, inside and outside, even from the foundation to the coping, and so on the outside to the great court.

1KINGS 7: 10 The foundation was of costly stones, even great stones, stones of ten cubits, and stones of eight cubits.

1KINGS 7: 11 Above were costly stones, even cut stone, according to measure, and cedar wood.

1KINGS 7: 12 The great court around had three courses of cut stone, and a course of cedar beams; like as the inner court of the LORD's house, and the porch of the house.

1KINGS 7: 13 King Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre.

Verse 13

Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre - This was not the Tyrian king, mentioned before, but a very intelligent coppersmith, of Jewish extraction by his mother's side, who was probably married to a Tyrian. In 2Chr 2:14, this woman is said to be of the daughters of Dan, but here of the tribe of Naphtali. The king of Tyre, who gives the account as we have it in Chronicles, might have made the mistake, and confounded the two tribes; or she might have been of Naphtali by her father, and of Dan by her mother, and so be indifferently called of the tribe of Naphtali or of the daughters of Dan. This appears to be the best solution of the difficulty. The versions and MSS. give no help here.

1KINGS 7: 14 He was the son of a widow of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a worker in brass; and he was filled with wisdom and understanding and skill, to work all works in brass. He came to king Solomon, and performed all his work.

1KINGS 7: 15 For he fashioned the two pillars of brass, eighteen cubits high apiece: and a line of twelve cubits encircled either of them about.

Verse 15

He cast two pillars - eighteen cubits high - That is, about thirty feet in English measure.

A line of twelve cubits - In circumference. It would be difficult even now to procure a founder who could cast such massive pillars, whether solid or hollow.

1KINGS 7: 16 He made two capitals of molten brass, to set on the tops of the pillars: the height of the one capital was five cubits, and the height of the other capital was five cubits.

1KINGS 7: 17 There were nets of checker work, and wreaths of chain work, for the capitals which were on the top of the pillars; seven for the one capital, and seven for the other capital.

1KINGS 7: 18 So he made the pillars; and there were two rows around on the one network, to cover the capitals that were on the top of the pillars: and he did so for the other capital.

1KINGS 7: 19 The capitals that were on the top of the pillars in the porch were of lily work, four cubits.

1KINGS 7: 20 There were capitals above also on the two pillars, close by the belly which was beside the network: and the pomegranates were two hundred, in rows around on the other capital.

1KINGS 7: 21 He set up the pillars at the porch of the temple: and he set up the right pillar, and called its name Jachin; and he set up the left pillar, and called its name Boaz.

Verse 21

The right pillar - Jachin - That is, He shall establish. The left pillar - Boaz, that is, in strength. These were no doubt emblematical; for notwithstanding their names, they seem to have supported no part of the building.

1KINGS 7: 22 On the top of the pillars was lily work: so was the work of the pillars finished.

1KINGS 7: 23 He made the molten sea of ten cubits from brim to brim, round in compass, and its height was five cubits; and a line of thirty cubits encircled it.

1KINGS 7: 24 Under its brim around there were buds which encircled it, for ten cubits, encircling the sea: the buds were in two rows, cast when it was cast.

1KINGS 7: 25 It stood on twelve oxen, three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the west, and three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east; and the sea was set on them above, and all their hinder parts were inward.

1KINGS 7: 26 It was a hand breadth thick: and its brim was worked like the brim of a cup, like the flower of a lily: it held two thousand baths.

1KINGS 7: 27 He made the ten bases of brass; four cubits was the length of one base, and four cubits its breadth, and three cubits its height.

Verse 27

He made ten bases - That is, pedestals, for the ten lavers to rest on.

1KINGS 7: 28 The work of the bases was like this: they had panels; and there were panels between the ledges;

1KINGS 7: 29 and on the panels that were between the ledges were lions, oxen, and cherubim; and on the ledges there was a pedestal above; and beneath the lions and oxen were wreaths of hanging work.

1KINGS 7: 30 Every base had four bronze wheels, and axles of brass; and the four feet of it had supports: beneath the basin were the supports molten, with wreaths at the side of each.

1KINGS 7: 31 The mouth of it within the capital and above was a cubit: and its mouth was round after the work of a pedestal, a cubit and a half; and also on its mouth were engravings, and their panels were square, not round.

1KINGS 7: 32 The four wheels were underneath the panels; and the axles of the wheels were in the base: and the height of a wheel was a cubit and half a cubit.

1KINGS 7: 33 The work of the wheels was like the work of a chariot wheel: their axles, and their rims, and their spokes, and their naves, were all molten.

1KINGS 7: 34 There were four supports at the four corners of each base: its supports were of the base itself.

1KINGS 7: 35 In the top of the base was there a round compass half a cubit high; and on the top of the base its stays and its panels were of the same.

1KINGS 7: 36 On the plates of its stays, and on its panels, he engraved cherubim, lions, and palm trees, according to the space of each, with wreaths all around.

1KINGS 7: 37 In this way, he made the ten bases: all of them had one casting, one measure, and one form.

1KINGS 7: 38 He made ten basins of brass: one basin contained forty baths; and every basin was four cubits; and on every one of the ten bases one basin.

Verse 38

Then made he ten lavers - These were set on the ten bases or pedestals, and were to hold water for the use of the priests in their sacred office, particularly to wash the victims that were to be offered as a burnt-offering, as we learn from 2Chr 4:6; but the brazen sea was for the priests to wash in. The whole was a building of vast art, labor, and expense.

1KINGS 7: 39 He set the bases, five on the right side of the house, and five on the left side of the house: and he set the sea on the right side of the house eastward, toward the south.

1KINGS 7: 40 Hiram made the basins, and the shovels, and the basins. So Hiram made an end of doing all the work that he worked for king Solomon in the LORD's house:

Verse 40

So Hiram made an end - It is truly surprising, that in so short a time one artist could design and execute works of such magnitude, taste, and variety, however numerous his assistants might be. The mere building of the house was a matter of little difficulty in comparison of these internal works.

1KINGS 7: 41 the two pillars, and the two bowls of the capitals that were on the top of the pillars; and the two networks to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were on the top of the pillars;

1KINGS 7: 42 and the four hundred pomegranates for the two networks; two rows of pomegranates for each network, to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were on the pillars;

1KINGS 7: 43 and the ten bases, and the ten basins on the bases;

1KINGS 7: 44 and the one sea, and the twelve oxen under the sea;

1KINGS 7: 45 and the pots, and the shovels, and the basins: even all these vessels, which Hiram made for king Solomon, in the LORD's house, were of burnished brass.

1KINGS 7: 46 The king cast them in the plain of the Jordan, in the clay ground between Succoth and Zarethan.

Verse 46

Cast them, in the clay ground - In this place he found that particular kind of clay that was proper for his purpose. Some suppose that the place where Hiram had his foundry was on the other side, some on this side, of Jordan. Calmet supposes that it was near Bethshan.

1KINGS 7: 47 Solomon left all the vessels unweighed, because they were exceeding many: the weight of the brass could not be found out.

1KINGS 7: 48 Solomon made all the vessels that were in the LORD's house: the golden altar, and the table whereupon the show bread was, of gold;

1KINGS 7: 49 and the lamp stands, five on the right side, and five on the left, before the oracle, of pure gold; and the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs, of gold;

1KINGS 7: 50 and the cups, and the snuffers, and the basins, and the spoons, and the fire pans, of pure gold; and the hinges, both for the doors of the inner house, the most holy place, and for the doors of the house, of the temple, of gold.

1KINGS 7: 51 Thus all the work that king Solomon worked in the LORD's house was finished. Solomon brought in the things which David his father had dedicated, the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, and put them in the treasuries of the LORD's house.

Verse 51

Solomon brought in the things - It has been a question whether Solomon, in the structure of the temple, used any of the gold and silver which David had provided? And here it seems answered in the negative; for after the house was finished, with all its utensils and ornaments, with its immense profusion of gold, it is here said that Solomon brought in the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, which David his father had dedicated. It appears therefore that Solomon had employed four years to make preparation for the work before it was begun. During the whole time of the building, he was no doubt still appropriating a part of the public revenue for this purpose; and the provision made by his father he placed among the treasures of the house; but the temple was truly Solomon's, as he had provided all its materials, and borne every expense.

As the temple was built in some measure on the model of the tabernacle, and dedicated to the same use, I wish to refer the reader to the description of the former, in Exodus 25-27 (note) and Exodus 35-39 (note).