

## 1 Kings 5-7

### Limits of the Text

1 Kings 5-7 is a complete literary unit, describing how Solomon built the temple.

### Towards Authorial Intent

The author's use of **pace** gives some indication of his intentions. Various elements of building the temple, particularly designing the interior and its furnishings, are given in great detail, while the other five buildings he built are quickly summarized.

Although there is not much **dialogue** in these chapters, its use is important. Solomon told Hiram that he intended (1 Ki 5:5) to fulfill the Davidic covenant (2 Sa 7:12-13). Hiram's response indicated that he perceived Solomon's God-given wisdom (1 Ki 5:7). Some time between the building of the exterior and the interior of the temple, God spoke to Solomon and reminded him that keeping the covenant required obedience (1 Ki 6:11-13), exactly what his father had told him (1 Ki 2:3-4).

### External Context

1 Kings 5-7 continues with Solomon's reign. It moves from Solomon's fabled wisdom to Solomon's most fabled building project. It is still connected to the previous chapters in that God gave Solomon wisdom (1 Ki 5:12), and Solomon used this wisdom to build the buildings.

## Interpretation

1 Ki 5 describes how Solomon prepared to build the temple.

1 Now Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon when he heard that they had anointed him king in place of his father, for Hiram always loved David. 2 And Solomon sent word to Hiram, 3 “You know that David my father could not build a house for the name of the Lord his God because of the warfare with which his enemies surrounded him, until the Lord put them under the soles of his feet. 4 But now the Lord my God has given me rest on every side. There is neither adversary nor misfortune. 5 And so I intend to build a house for the name of the Lord my God, as the Lord said to David my father, ‘Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, shall build the house for my name.’ 6 Now therefore command that cedars of Lebanon be cut for me. And my servants will join your servants, and I will pay you for your servants such wages as you set, for you know that there is no one among us who knows how to cut timber like the Sidonians.”

7 As soon as Hiram heard the words of Solomon, he rejoiced greatly and said, “Blessed be the Lord this day, who has given to David a wise son to be over this great people.” 8 And Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, “I have heard the message that you have sent to me. I am ready to do all you desire in the matter of cedar and cypress timber. 9 My servants shall bring it down to the sea from Lebanon, and I will make it into rafts to go by sea to the place you direct. And I will have them broken up there, and you shall receive it. And you shall meet my wishes by providing food for my household.” 10 So Hiram supplied Solomon with all the timber of cedar and cypress that he desired, 11 while Solomon gave Hiram 20,000 cors of wheat as food for his household, and 20,000 cors of beaten oil. Solomon gave this to Hiram year by year. 12 And the Lord gave Solomon wisdom, as he promised him. And there was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them made a treaty.<sup>1</sup>

Solomon’s first preparation for building the temple was to acquire the supplies he was missing. Chronicles tells us that David made extensive preparations for the temples, including supplies (1 Chr 22:2-5), plans (1 Chr 28:11-19), and furnishings (1 Chr 29:1-9), but these are barely mentioned in Kings (1 Ki 7:51). Instead, the writer of Kings chose to emphasize Solomon’s role in preparing to build the temple.

One particular item that Solomon needed more of was wood, which he would use to line the interior of the temple (1 Ki 6:15) and his other buildings (1 Ki 7:2-3, 7, 12). So Solomon turned to Hiram, the king of Tyre, for help; this was the same king who had supplied David with the wood for his palace (2 Sa 5:11). Solomon began his request by recounting the covenant God had made with his father. Although Solomon did mention his father’s name, it’s important to note that it was the covenant that was driving his

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<sup>1</sup> ESV.

actions. Solomon intended to build the temple because that's what God had told David. So based on the covenant, Solomon requested more cedar and cypress lumber.

Hiram's response indicates that he perceived Solomon's wisdom; apparently David and Hiram's relationship was close enough for Hiram to know that following the covenant was doing exactly what Solomon should have been doing. Hiram's recognition of Solomon's wisdom connects this chapter to previous two chapters. In chapter 3 he was wise in resolving a judicial dispute. In chapter 4 he was wise in governing Israel and Judah and the surrounding kingdoms; his wisdom had amazing breadth. In chapter 5 he was wise in acquiring supplies and wise in organizing labor. But even the monumental task of building the temple won't be too difficult for Solomon; 1 Ki 5:12 reminds us that the Lord gave him the wisdom he needed, just as he promised.

13 King Solomon drafted forced labor out of all Israel, and the draft numbered 30,000 men. 14 And he sent them to Lebanon, 10,000 a month in shifts. They would be a month in Lebanon and two months at home. Adoniram was in charge of the draft. 15 Solomon also had 70,000 burden-bearers and 80,000 stonecutters in the hill country, 16 besides Solomon's 3,300 chief officers who were over the work, who had charge of the people who carried on the work. 17 At the king's command they quarried out great, costly stones in order to lay the foundation of the house with dressed stones. 18 So Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders and the men of Gebal did the cutting and prepared the timber and the stone to build the house.

Solomon's second preparation for building the temple was to organize the laborers that he needed. The writer indicates that there were 183,000 construction workers involved one way or another, many of whom were foreigners (2 Chr 2:17-18).<sup>2</sup> Keeping everyone working efficiently and supplied with food and equipment must have been a massive undertaking, but with God's wisdom Solomon managed it.

1 Ki 6 describes how Solomon built the temple.

6:1 In the four hundred and eightieth year after the people of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, he began to build the house of the Lord. 2 The house that King Solomon built for the Lord was sixty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high. 3 The vestibule in front of the nave of the house was twenty cubits long, equal to the width of the house, and ten cubits deep in front of the house. 4 And he made for the house windows with recessed frames. 5 He also built a structure against the wall of the house, running around the walls of the house, both the nave and the inner sanctuary. And he made side chambers all around. 6 The lowest story was five

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<sup>2</sup> House notes an apparent discrepancy between the numbers in this paragraph and those in 2 Chr 2:17-18, but in the end resolves the problem simply as a matter of how different writers classified people.

cubits broad, the middle one was six cubits broad, and the third was seven cubits broad. For around the outside of the house he made offsets on the wall in order that the supporting beams should not be inserted into the walls of the house.

7 When the house was built, it was with stone prepared at the quarry, so that neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron was heard in the house while it was being built.

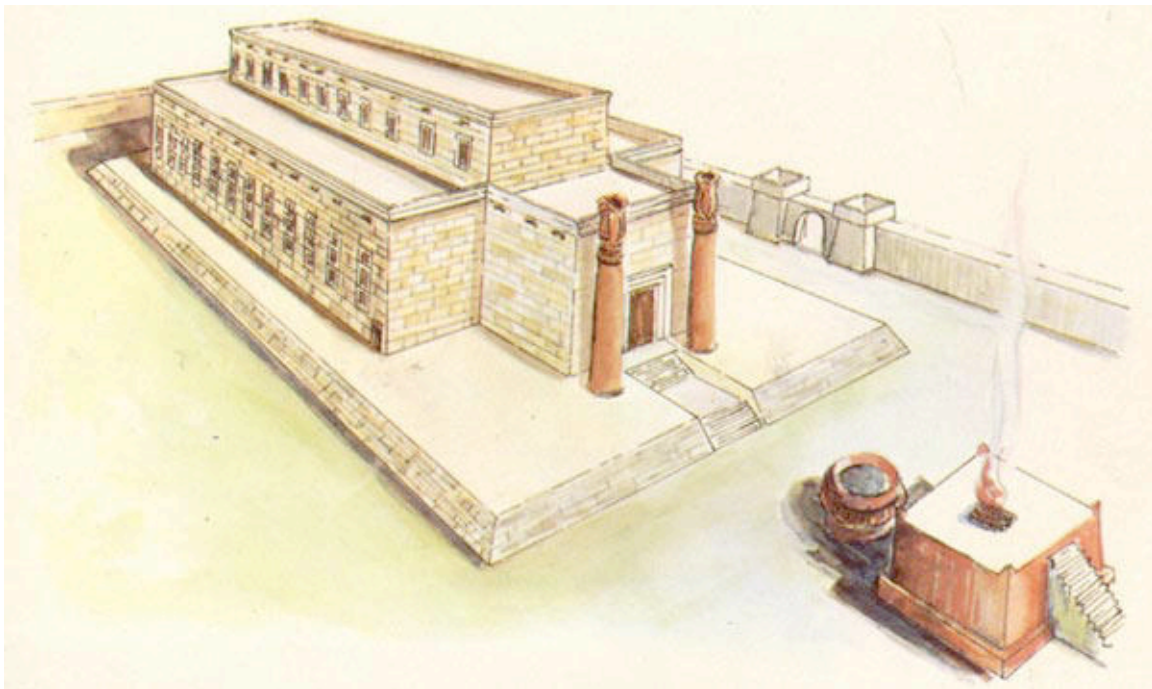
8 The entrance for the lowest story was on the south side of the house, and one went up by stairs to the middle story, and from the middle story to the third. 9 So he built the house and finished it, and he made the ceiling of the house of beams and planks of cedar. 10 He built the structure against the whole house, five cubits high, and it was joined to the house with timbers of cedar.

The first stage of temple construction was to build the outside. But before describing the work, the author of Kings noted that temple construction began 480 years after the Exodus. Connecting the Exodus to the construction of the temple is a huge theological statement. What God began in the Exodus, the freeing of his people from slavery, has finally happened. The promises of a land all their own and peace on every side has now come to pass, and thus the worship of God will finally have a permanent location. God's promise in Dt 12:5—" But you shall seek the place that the Lord your God will choose out of all your tribes to put his name and make his habitation there. There you shall go."—is about to be fulfilled. The author of Kings was implying that "the building of the temple was as significant an event in Israel's history as that which saw the birth of the nation."<sup>3</sup> And it lasted nearly as long, almost four centuries.

Cubits are not a common unit these days, but the NET helpfully converts everything to feet: "The temple King Solomon built for the Lord was 90 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 45 feet high" (1 Ki 6:2). 2700 square feet is not all that big of a building, though there were three stories connected by stairs. It had an inner sanctuary (nave) that was divided from the rest of the main hall. The front porch (vestibule) added another 15 feet to its length, and there were exterior rooms around the building, perhaps for the priests to live in and store temple supplies.

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<sup>3</sup> Carson, 1 Ki 6:1.



*Artist's Rendition of the Temple*<sup>4</sup>

It's interesting to note that Solomon used no iron tools on the building site. Carson speculates that this due to the Mosaic command not to use tools when building altars (Ex 20:25; Dt 27:5-6); though Solomon was not building an altar, he was building a place of worship and thus worked in the spirit of that law.<sup>5</sup>

11 Now the word of the Lord came to Solomon, 12 "Concerning this house that you are building, if you will walk in my statutes and obey my rules and keep all my commandments and walk in them, then I will establish my word with you, which I spoke to David your father. 13 And I will dwell among the children of Israel and will not forsake my people Israel."

Somewhere in the middle of the construction, God broke into the story and gave a Solomon a reminder on perspective. Although this would be a magnificent building, "the building of a temple will not guarantee God's presence among his people;"<sup>6</sup> buildings are not what is truly important to God. He desires obedience; for Solomon and Israel that meant obedience to the Law, just as David had said (1 Ki 2:3-4). This was the condition for God's presence among his people. Of course, the readers of Kings knew that their nation, particularly many of their kings, had not obeyed very well.

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<sup>4</sup> Taken from  
[http://www.bquestpublications.com/samples/solomons\\_temple\\_files/solomon\\_temple.jpg](http://www.bquestpublications.com/samples/solomons_temple_files/solomon_temple.jpg).

<sup>5</sup> Carson, 1 Ki 6:1.

<sup>6</sup> Carson, 1 Ki 6:1.

14 So Solomon built the house and finished it. 15 He lined the walls of the house on the inside with boards of cedar. From the floor of the house to the walls of the ceiling, he covered them on the inside with wood, and he covered the floor of the house with boards of cypress. 16 He built twenty cubits of the rear of the house with boards of cedar from the floor to the walls, and he built this within as an inner sanctuary, as the Most Holy Place. 17 The house, that is, the nave in front of the inner sanctuary, was forty cubits long. 18 The cedar within the house was carved in the form of gourds and open flowers. All was cedar; no stone was seen. 19 The inner sanctuary he prepared in the innermost part of the house, to set there the ark of the covenant of the Lord. 20 The inner sanctuary was twenty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and twenty cubits high, and he overlaid it with pure gold. He also overlaid an altar of cedar. 21 And Solomon overlaid the inside of the house with pure gold, and he drew chains of gold across, in front of the inner sanctuary, and overlaid it with gold. 22 And he overlaid the whole house with gold, until all the house was finished. Also the whole altar that belonged to the inner sanctuary he overlaid with gold.

23 In the inner sanctuary he made two cherubim of olivewood, each ten cubits high. 24 Five cubits was the length of one wing of the cherub, and five cubits the length of the other wing of the cherub; it was ten cubits from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other. 25 The other cherub also measured ten cubits; both cherubim had the same measure and the same form. 26 The height of one cherub was ten cubits, and so was that of the other cherub. 27 He put the cherubim in the innermost part of the house. And the wings of the cherubim were spread out so that a wing of one touched the one wall, and a wing of the other cherub touched the other wall; their other wings touched each other in the middle of the house. 28 And he overlaid the cherubim with gold.

29 Around all the walls of the house he carved engraved figures of cherubim and palm trees and open flowers, in the inner and outer rooms. 30 The floor of the house he overlaid with gold in the inner and outer rooms.

31 For the entrance to the inner sanctuary he made doors of olivewood; the lintel and the doorposts were five-sided. 32 He covered the two doors of olivewood with carvings of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers. He overlaid them with gold and spread gold on the cherubim and on the palm trees.

33 So also he made for the entrance to the nave doorposts of olivewood, in the form of a square, 34 and two doors of cypress wood. The two leaves of the one door were folding, and the two leaves of the other door were folding. 35 On them he carved cherubim and palm trees and open flowers, and he overlaid them with gold evenly applied on the carved work. 36 He built the inner court with three courses of cut stone and one course of cedar beams.

37 In the fourth year the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid, in the month of Ziv. 38 And in the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, which is the eighth month, the

house was finished in all its parts, and according to all its specifications. He was seven years in building it.

The second stage of temple construction was to build the inside. The interior was completely covered in wood, cedar for the walls and cypress for the floor. The wood was ornately carved and covered with gold. The central addition to the temple was the two 15-foot high cherubim over the resting place of the ark. The exact appearance and purpose of the cherubim is unknown. Probably they were angelic beings, such as those who guarded Eden (Ge 3:24), though Carson speculates that they resembled sphinxes common in “ancient Near Eastern art...a creature with a human head, an animal body with four legs, and a pair of wings.”<sup>7</sup> If they were made in memory of the Edenic cherubim, then they may have been the guardians of the ark. House allows that they may have represented God’s personal chariot (2 Sa 22:11; Ps 18:10) or his throne. Whatever their appearance or purpose, they denoted the presence of God.<sup>8</sup>

Many commentaries on this text note that Solomon’s temple was similar to other temples in the Middle East during that time in size, construction, and decoration. “Solomon’s temple was unique in purpose but not in conception. In its architectural design and artistic decoration it very much reflected the conventions of the time. It is a striking example of how elements of a prevailing culture can be employed for the worship and glory of God.”<sup>9</sup>

Given the wood, the carvings, and all the gold, this was an extravagantly decorated house of worship. Was this extravagance good, bad, or indifferent? First, note that the text itself makes no comment, neither positive nor negative, on the matter. Second, God has already stated what is truly important, Solomon’s obedience (1 Ki 6:12); everything else is secondary. Third, extravagance can be bad, particularly when there is no obedience; see the parable of the rich fool (Lk 12:16-21). Fourth, extravagance can be good, especially when used to worship God with a pure heart; see the story of the prostitute’s oil (Mk 14:3-9). Summarizing these, I believe Solomon’s heart, though not perfect, was right in this matter; he desired to fulfill the Davidic covenant, obey God, and worship him.<sup>10</sup> Thus the extravagance was good. House suggests “that the splendor of the temple is meant to reflect the splendor of Israel’s God, that the temple’s gold points to Yahweh’s glory.”

After a brief interruption, 1 Ki 7 describes how Solomon furnished the temple.

7:1 Solomon was building his own house thirteen years, and he finished his entire house. 2 He built the House of the Forest of Lebanon. Its length was a hundred cubits and its breadth fifty cubits and its height thirty cubits, and it was built on four rows of

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<sup>7</sup> Carson, 1 Ki 6:1.

<sup>8</sup> House, 129.

<sup>9</sup> Carson, 1 Ki 6:1.

<sup>10</sup> 1 Ki 8.

cedar pillars, with cedar beams on the pillars. 3 And it was covered with cedar above the chambers that were on the forty-five pillars, fifteen in each row. 4 There were window frames in three rows, and window opposite window in three tiers. 5 All the doorways and windows had square frames, and window was opposite window in three tiers. 6 And he made the Hall of Pillars; its length was fifty cubits, and its breadth thirty cubits. There was a porch in front with pillars, and a canopy in front of them. 7 And he made the Hall of the Throne where he was to pronounce judgment, even the Hall of Judgment. It was finished with cedar from floor to rafters. 8 His own house where he was to dwell, in the other court back of the hall, was of like workmanship. Solomon also made a house like this hall for Pharaoh's daughter whom he had taken in marriage.

9 All these were made of costly stones, cut according to measure, sawed with saws, back and front, even from the foundation to the coping, and from the outside to the great court. 10 The foundation was of costly stones, huge stones, stones of eight and ten cubits. 11 And above were costly stones, cut according to measurement, and cedar. 12 The great court had three courses of cut stone all around, and a course of cedar beams; so had the inner court of the house of the Lord and the vestibule of the house.

This is a strange interruption. In between building the temple and furnishing the temple, the author of Kings inserted a couple paragraphs describing another of Solomon's building projects, the place complex. This was apparently a series of interconnected buildings near the temple. The House of the Forest of Lebanon "evidently served as an armory"<sup>11</sup> (1 Ki 10:17; Is 22:8). The Hall of Pillars was a colonnade. The Hall of the Throne was his judicial courtroom. His house and Pharaoh's daughter's house—she was apparently his chief wife—were living quarters.

By the juxtaposing the building of this complex next to the building of the temple, the author intentionally created three obvious contrasts. The first contrast is time; the temple took 7 years, but the palace complex took 13. The second contrast is size; the temple was 2700 square feet on the ground floor, while the House of the Forest of Lebanon alone was over 11,000 square feet. Taken together, the buildings of the palace complex would have dwarfed the temple. The third contrast is the detail of description; the writer used 77 verses to describe building and furnishing the temple, one building, while using 12 verses to describe the building of the palace complex, five buildings.

How should these contrasts be interpreted? If one is inclined to take a skeptical attitude towards Solomon, one would notice that far Solomon spent more time and resources on his own buildings than he did on God's building. DeVries concludes that "what is displayed here is far more Solomon's 'riches and honor' than his 'wisdom'."<sup>12</sup> Provan

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<sup>11</sup> Walvoord, 1:500.

<sup>12</sup> DeVries, 103.

argues from the Hebrew that the reason these paragraphs are inserted here in the text is that Solomon interrupted construction of the temple in order to build the complex.<sup>13</sup>

While it is possible that this text says something negative about Solomon, I don't think that's the primary point. The temple served one purpose, while the palace complex served many purposes, thus it's not surprising that the palace complex was larger. And because it was larger, it's not surprising that it took longer to build. Additionally, no one had done any advance work for the palace complex, whereas David had already completed extensive planning and preparation for the temple.

I believe that the key to interpretation is in the attention to detail, the pace of the narrative. Although the palace complex physically dwarfed the temple, the writer knew it wasn't really that important. By describing the temple in detail, he was inviting his readers to pay attention to the temple. "By minimizing the space given the governmental buildings [the author] magnifies the importance of the temple."<sup>14</sup> "In the writer's view this restores the correct perspective; for the temple was the true heart of the city and of the nation."<sup>15</sup>

Finally, while reading this section, we must keep an eye on the following section: The glory of the Lord filled the house (1 Ki 8:11). God was pleased with Solomon's work.

13 And King Solomon sent and brought Hiram from Tyre. 14 He was the son of a widow of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a worker in bronze. And he was full of wisdom, understanding, and skill for making any work in bronze. He came to King Solomon and did all his work.

The third stage of temple construction was to furnish the temple with items of bronze and gold. In 1 Ki 7:13-47, the writer of Kings described the work of Hiram,<sup>16</sup> who was in charge of building the bronze items used outside of the temple. Before he described Hiram's work, he gave Hiram's credentials. He was skilled in working with bronze, a trade he learned from his father in Tyre; evidently Tyrian bronze-workers had a reputation for good work. But lest someone be concerned that a foreigner was working on the temple, the writer was quick to note that his mother was an Israeli widow; either Hiram was half-Jew or, if born of his mother's first husband, maybe even full Jew. The writer's description of Hiram—he was full of wisdom, understanding, and skill—reminds the reader of Bezalel and Oholiab, whom God enabled with the ability to build the items for the tabernacle (Ex 31:1-11). "The author wants readers to know that a man of similar skill is on the job now. Careful artistry can be expected."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Provan, 70.

<sup>14</sup> Davis, 72.

<sup>15</sup> Carson, 1 Ki 7:1.

<sup>16</sup> That this bronze worker shares a name with the king of Tyre appears to be a coincidence.

<sup>17</sup> House, 133.

15 He cast two pillars of bronze. Eighteen cubits was the height of one pillar, and a line of twelve cubits measured its circumference. It was hollow, and its thickness was four fingers. The second pillar was the same. 16 He also made two capitals of cast bronze 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. 17 There were lattices of checker work with wreaths of chain work for the capitals on the tops of the pillars, a lattice for the one capital and a lattice for the other capital. 18 Likewise he made pomegranates in two rows around the one latticework to cover the capital that was on the top of the pillar, and he did the same with the other capital. 19 Now the capitals that were on the tops of the pillars in the vestibule were of lily-work, four cubits. 20 The capitals were on the two pillars and also above the rounded projection which was beside the latticework. There were two hundred pomegranates in two rows all around, and so with the other capital. 21 He set up the pillars at the vestibule of the temple. He set up the pillar on the south and called its name Jachin, and he set up the pillar on the north and called its name Boaz. 22 And on the tops of the pillars was lily-work. Thus the work of the pillars was finished.

Hiram built four main items. The first item Hiram built was a pair of bronze pillars. They were 27 feet tall, six feet diameter, freestanding pillars set on either side of the entrance to the temple. Given their names, their function was probably purely symbolic. One was named Jachin, which means “he will establish,”<sup>18</sup> the verb used three times in 2 Sa 7 where God promised to establish David’s throne.<sup>19</sup> The other was named Boaz, the name of Solomon’s great-grandfather, and apparently means something like “in your strength,” a reference to Ps 21:1 “O Lord, in your strength the king rejoices” and Ps 21:13 “Be exalted, O Lord, in your strength!” These appear to be massive one-word reminders about the Davidic covenant. It was God who established the dynasty, and it would remain only if the people trusted in God’s strength. Davis summarizes these as the promise of God and the power of God, what he has said and what he can do.<sup>20</sup>

23 Then he made the sea of cast metal. It was round, ten cubits from brim to brim, and five cubits high, and a line of thirty cubits measured its circumference. 24 Under its brim were gourds, for ten cubits, compassing the sea all around. The gourds were in two rows, cast with it when it was cast. 25 It stood on twelve oxen, three facing north, three facing west, three facing south, and three facing east. The sea was set on them, and all their rear parts were inward. 26 Its thickness was a handbreadth, and its brim was made like the brim of a cup, like the flower of a lily. It held two thousand baths.

The second item Hiram built was a gigantic basin for holding water. The NET is again helpful: “It measured 15 feet from rim to rim, was circular in shape, and stood seven-

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<sup>18</sup> Brown, 467.

<sup>19</sup> 2 Sa 7:12, 13, 16.

<sup>20</sup> Davis, 74.

and-a-half feet high. Its circumference was 45 feet...It could hold about 12,000 gallons.” According to 2 Chr 4:6, this basin, known as The Sea, was for the priests to wash in as part of their cultic responsibilities, as per Ex 30:18-21 and Ex 40:30-32.

27 He also made the ten stands of bronze. Each stand was four cubits long, four cubits wide, and three cubits high. 28 This was the construction of the stands: they had panels, and the panels were set in the frames, 29 and on the panels that were set in the frames were lions, oxen, and cherubim. On the frames, both above and below the lions and oxen, there were wreaths of beveled work. 30 Moreover, each stand had four bronze wheels and axles of bronze, and at the four corners were supports for a basin. The supports were cast with wreaths at the side of each. 31 Its opening was within a crown that projected upward one cubit. Its opening was round, as a pedestal is made, a cubit and a half deep. At its opening there were carvings, and its panels were square, not round. 32 And the four wheels were underneath the panels. The axles of the wheels were of one piece with the stands, and the height of a wheel was a cubit and a half. 33 The wheels were made like a chariot wheel; their axles, their rims, their spokes, and their hubs were all cast. 34 There were four supports at the four corners of each stand. The supports were of one piece with the stands. 35 And on the top of the stand there was a round band half a cubit high; and on the top of the stand its stays and its panels were of one piece with it. 36 And on the surfaces of its stays and on its panels, he carved cherubim, lions, and palm trees, according to the space of each, with wreaths all around. 37 After this manner he made the ten stands. All of them were cast alike, of the same measure and the same form.

38 And he made ten basins of bronze. Each basin held forty baths, each basin measured four cubits, and there was a basin for each of the ten stands. 39 And he set the stands, five on the south side of the house, and five on the north side of the house. And he set the sea at the southeast corner of the house.

The third item Hiram built was a set of ten movable stands,<sup>21</sup> each with a water basin on top. “Each stand was six feet long, six feet wide, and four-and-a-half feet high...each [basin] could hold about 240 gallons.”<sup>22</sup> The parallel text, 2 Chr 4:6, says these basins were for the priests to rinse off what was used for the burnt offering. “Along with the Sea, these vessels held sufficient water for priestly cleansing, the ritual washing of animals, and the removal of blood and refuse from the area.”<sup>23</sup>

40 Hiram also made the pots, the shovels, and the basins.

The fourth item Hiram built was a set of implements used for various cultic rituals.

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<sup>21</sup> The word “movable” is interesting, as Davis estimates that the bronze stand and basin plus 200 gallons of water would have weighed in around one ton. How many Levites did it take to move a stand?

<sup>22</sup> NET.

<sup>23</sup> House, 134.

So Hiram finished all the work that he did for King Solomon on the house of the Lord: 41 the two pillars, the two bowls of the capitals that were on the tops of the pillars, and the two latticeworks to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were on the tops of the pillars; 42 and the four hundred pomegranates for the two latticeworks, two rows of pomegranates for each latticework, to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were on the pillars; 43 the ten stands, and the ten basins on the stands; 44 and the one sea, and the twelve oxen underneath the sea.

45 Now the pots, the shovels, and the basins, all these vessels in the house of the Lord, which Hiram made for King Solomon, were of burnished bronze. 46 In the plain of the Jordan the king cast them, in the clay ground between Succoth and Zarethan. 47 And Solomon left all the vessels unweighed, because there were so many of them; the weight of the bronze was not ascertained.

1 Ki 7:40a-47 summarizes and concludes the section on Hiram's work.

48 So Solomon made all the vessels that were in the house of the Lord: the golden altar, the golden table for the bread of the Presence, 49 the lampstands of pure gold, five on the south side and five on the north, before the inner sanctuary; the flowers, the lamps, and the tongs, of gold; 50 the cups, snuffers, basins, dishes for incense, and fire pans, of pure gold; and the sockets of gold, for the doors of the innermost part of the house, the Most Holy Place, and for the doors of the nave of the temple.

In 1 Ki 7:48-40, the writer of Kings described the work of Solomon, who was in charge of building the gold items used inside of the temple. Generally, these items correspond to the items that were made for the tabernacle. They include a golden altar for burning incense (Ex 30:1-4), a golden table for the bread of the Presence (Ex 25:23-30), ten lampstands (Ex 25:31-40), and various tools.

51 Thus all the work that King Solomon did on the house of the Lord was finished. And Solomon brought in the things that David his father had dedicated, the silver, the gold, and the vessels, and stored them in the treasuries of the house of the Lord.

1 Ki 7:51 summarizes and concludes the both the final section as well as the entire literary unit. All of Solomon's work was finished, so he then brought in the items his father had dedicated (2 Sa 8:11; 1 Chr 22:14). "This action was practical, since these riches were an endowment that helped with temple expenses. Solomon's act here also honors his father's long-term commitment to the Lord and the Lord's house."<sup>24</sup>

Now the temple was ready for worship.

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<sup>24</sup> House, 135.

## Three Levels of History

1. Personal history – This is a story of a king building a temple to his God.
2. National History – This is a story about building the temple, the national center point for worshipping God.
3. Redemptive History – This is a story about obediently working to fulfill God's plan.

## Jesus and the Gospel

This story reflects mankind's **need for redemption** through Jesus and the gospel.

1. What does this text teach us about ourselves? What need or deficiency in our lives does it expose? We tend to forget what's really important to God. He's not most concerned about buildings, even buildings that he commands to be built. We forget that God is interested in personal holiness.
2. What does this text teach us about God? How does it reveal God's grace to meet our need? God knows our heart, and he graciously reminds us in the middle of other things that he's interested in us personally and wants us to be obedient in all our lives.

## Outline

One way to outline this text would be to connect it to the previous text; as Solomon used God's wisdom for judicial disputes and governing his realm, so Solomon used God's wisdom to build the temple. Thus the outline used in 1 Ki 3-4 could simply be expanded:

1. Solomon needed God's wisdom (1 Ki 3:1-9).
2. Solomon received God's wisdom (1 Ki 3:10-15).
3. Solomon used God's wisdom:
  - a. To solve a judicial dispute (1 Ki 3:16-28).
  - b. To govern Judah and Israel (1 Ki 4:1-20).
  - c. To govern the surrounding kingdoms (1 Ki 4:21-28).
  - d. To understand the world (1 Ki 4:29-34).
  - e. To build the temple (1 Ki 5-7).

However, the volume of detail that the writer gives to building the temple compared to the previous sections suggests that while connected to the previous text, this text should have its own outline:

1. Solomon prepared for the temple (1 Ki 5).
  - a. Solomon acquired building supplies (1 Ki 5:1-12).
  - b. Solomon organized the labor (1 Ki 5:13-18).

2. Solomon constructed the temple (1 Ki 6-7).
  - a. Solomon built the outside of the temple (1 Ki 6:1-10).
  - b. Solomon received a reminder (1 Ki 6:11-13).
  - c. Solomon built the inside of the temple (1 Ki 6:14-38).
  - d. Solomon built the palace complex (1 Ki 7:1-12).
  - e. Solomon furnished the temple (1 Ki 7:13-51).

### **Central Truth of the Story**

The author of Kings wrote 1 Kings 5-7 in order to illustrate to exilic Jews that fulfilling God's plan requires obedience.

### **Teaching Outline**

God wants his people to obey him, and God wants this church to know that he the helps those who are trying to obey. In 1 Kings 5-7 we are going to see 5 ways that God helps his people to obey.

1. God helps his people obey by giving provision (1 Ki 5:1-18).
2. God helps his people obey by giving endurance (1 Ki 6:1-38).
3. God helps his people obey by giving timely reminders (1 Ki 6:11-13).
4. God helps his people obey by giving co-laborers (1 Ki 7:1-47).
5. God helps his people obey by giving detailed instructions (1 Ki 7:48-51).

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