

~HOUSE OF THE FOREST OF LEBANON (172)

- A part of the complex of government buildings erected by King Solomon during his 13-year building program after he had finished the temple at Jerusalem, **1027-1014 B.C.E.**
- The building was evidently used for the storage and display of valuable arms and utensils. This structure, located South of the temple, received its name either because it was constructed of cedar from Lebanon or because its many large cedar pillars reminded one of the forests there.
- The House of the Forest of Lebanon was 100 cubits (44 meters)(146 feet) long, 50 cubits (22 meters)(73 feet) wide, and 30 cubits (13 meters)(44 feet) high. It appears to have had stone walls
- All these were of expensive stones according to measures, hewn, sawed with stone-saws, inside and outside, and from the foundation up to the coping, and outside as far as the great courtyard. (**1 Kings 7:9**)
- With cedar beams the ends of which were laid into the walls and were additionally supported by four rows of pillars, four in the **Hebrew** text, three in the **Greek Septuagint**.
- Above the pillars, there were evidently cedar-paneled chambers. Some suggested reconstructions of this **house** have three tiers of chambers above the pillars and these face an unroofed court in the middle of the building.
- The chambers were said to have, an illumination opening opposite an illumination opening in three tiers. This seems to have meant that, looking out over the court, there were openings or large windows that faced corresponding windows in the chambers on the opposite side of the court.
- Or, it possibly meant that there was a window in each chamber facing the court and one facing the outside. The entrances, likely the doorways leading to the chambers and perhaps between them, were squared with the frame. They were therefore not arch-shaped or vaulted. The windows were of like shape.

- And he proceeded to build the **House of the Forest** of Lebanon a hundred cubits in its length, and fifty cubits in its width, and thirty cubits in its height, upon four rows of pillars of cedarwood, and there were beams of cedarwood upon the pillars. (**1 Kings 7:2**)
- And it was paneled in with cedarwood above upon the girders that were upon the forty-five pillars. There were fifteen to a row. (**1 Kings 7:3**)
- As for framed windows, there were three rows, and there was an illumination opening opposite an illumination opening in three tiers. (**1 Kings 7:4**)
- And all the entrances and the doorposts were squared with the frame, and also the forefront of the illumination opening opposite an illumination opening in three tiers. (**1 Kings 7:5**)
- A problem arises in regard to the number of rows of pillars, as mentioned in the foregoing. For the **Hebrew** text says that there were four rows and later speaks of 45 pillars, then says,
- And he proceeded to build the **House of the Forest** of Lebanon a hundred cubits in its length, and fifty cubits in its width, and thirty cubits in its height, upon four rows of pillars of cedarwood, and there were beams of cedarwood upon the pillars. (**1 Kings 7:2**)
- And it was paneled in with cedarwood above upon the girders that were upon the forty-five pillars. There were fifteen to a row. (**1 Kings 7:3**)
- Some have thought that the text here applies to the chambers in three tiers, 15 chambers to a row, and that there may have been a greater number of pillars placed in the four rows. Others prefer the **Septuagint** reading of three rows of pillars.
- A number of translations alter the reading of the text so that the forty-five refers to the beams rather than to the upright pillars, or columns. See **NE, NAB, AT, AS**
- After Solomon finished the **house**, he placed in it 200 large shields of alloyed gold, each overlaid with 600 shekels of gold worth

currently \$77,000, and 300 bucklers of alloyed gold, each plated with three minas of gold worth currently \$19,300.

- This would be over 21 million dollars worth of gold on the shields and bucklers. Besides this, there was an unstated number of gold vessels used in the house.
- And King Solomon went on to make two hundred large shields of alloyed gold, six hundred shekels of gold he proceeded to lay upon each large shield. (1 Kings 10:16)
- And three hundred bucklers of alloyed gold, three minas of gold he proceeded to lay upon each buckler. Then the king put them in the **House** of the Forest of Lebanon. (1 Kings 10:17)
- And all the drinking vessels of King Solomon were of gold, and all the vessels of the **House of the Forest of Lebanon** were of pure gold. There was nothing of silver, it was considered in the days of Solomon as nothing at all. (1 Kings 10:21)
- And King Solomon went on to make two hundred large shields of alloyed gold, six hundred shekels of alloyed gold he proceeded to lay upon each large shield. (2 Chronicles 9:15)
- And three hundred bucklers of alloyed gold, three minas of gold he proceeded to lay upon each buckler. Then the king put them in the **House** of the Forest of Lebanon. (2 Chronicles 9:16)
- And all the drinking vessels of King Solomon were of gold, and all the vessels of the **House of the Forest of Lebanon** were of pure gold. There was nothing of silver, it was considered as nothing at all in the days of Solomon. (2 Chronicles 9:20)
- These gold shields were carried away by Shishak king of Egypt during the reign of Solomon's son Rehoboam. Rehoboam replaced them with shields of copper, which he committed to the control of the chiefs of the runners, the guards of the entrance of the king's house.
- And it came about in the fifth year of King Rehoboam that Shishak the king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem. (1 Kings 14:25)
- And he got to take the treasures of the **house** of Yehowah and the treasures of the house of the king, and everything he took.

And he went on to take all the gold shields that Solomon had made. (1 Kings 14:26)

- Consequently King Rehoboam made in place of them copper shields, and he committed them to the control of the chiefs of the runners, the guards of the entrance of the king's house. (1 Kings 14:27)
- And it would occur that as often as the king came to the house of Yehowah, the runners would carry them, and they returned them to the guard chamber of the runners. (1 Kings 14:28)
- So Shishak the king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem and took the treasures of the house of Yehowah and the treasures of the king's house. Everything he took, and so he took the gold shields that Solomon had made. (2 Chronicles 12:9)
- Consequently King Rehoboam made in their place copper shields, and he committed them to the control of the chiefs of the runners, the guards of the entrance of the king's house. (2 Chronicles 12:10)
- And it would occur that as often as the king came to the house of Yehowah, the runners came in and carried them and returned them to the guard chamber of the runners. (2 Chronicles 12:11)
- The House of the Forest of Lebanon is also called, the armory of the house of the forest.
- And one will remove the screen of Judah. And you will look in that day toward the armory of the house of the forest. (Isaiah 22:8)