

פקודי

First Kings, chapter 7, verse 51 to chapter 8, verse 21

Introduction

Connection of sidra and haftarah:

The sidra recounts the completion of the Tabernacle; the haftarah, the completion of the Temple. But while in the Torah, God had chosen Bezalel to do the work; in the haftarah, Solomon had chosen Hiram to be his chief architect and adviser.¹

The setting:

Solomon, who succeeded his father David on the throne of Israel about the year 970 B.C.E., began his large-scale building program by erecting the First Temple, which his father had hoped to build, but could not (see commentary on 8:19). The project took only seven years (then considered a brief time), and its completion was observed with elaborate ceremonies. They served to make Jerusalem the spiritual and political center of the nation and also to fortify and legitimate Solomon's reign.

The haftarah is taken from the First Book of Kings.² For more on the book, see our *General Introduction*; on Solomon, see the haftarah for Va-y'chi.

Content of the haftarah:

The text begins where the haftarah for Vayakhel left off and ends with verse 21 of chapter 8. Verses 54-66 of that chapter constitute the haftarah for Sh'mini Atzeret. Also, 8:2-21 serve as the haftarah for the second day of Sukkot. When the weekly readings Vayakhel and Pikudei are combined (as is often the case), the haftarah for Pikudei is used.

1. The consecrated items that David had set aside for a sanctuary are now transferred to the Temple. (7:51)
2. The people are assembled and the Ark of the Covenant is conveyed to the Temple. (8:1-5)
3. The Ark, with its cherubim and tablets, is installed. (6-9)
4. The descent of the cloud of God. (10-11)
5. Solomon's opening recitation. (12-13)
6. His review of the project and a tribute to his father. (14-21)

The haftarah ends here, but the chapter continues with Solomon's prayer and benediction.