

# CHAPTER 4

We have here a further account of the furniture of God's house.

**I.** Those things that were of brass. The altar for burnt-offerings (v. 1), the sea and lavers to hold water (v. 2-6), the plates with which the doors of the court were overlaid (v. 9), the vessels of the altar, and other things (v. 10-18).

**II.** Those that were of gold. The candlesticks and tables (v. 7, 8), the altar of incense (v. 19), and the appurtenances of each of these (v. 20-22). All these, except the brazen altar (v. 1), were accounted for more largely, <sup><1072></sup>1 Kings 7:23, etc.

## <sup><400></sup>2 CHRONICLES 4:1-10

### THE FURNITURE OF THE TEMPLE

David often speaks with much affection both of the *house of the Lord* and of the *courts of our God*. Both without doors and within there was that which typified the grace of the gospel and *shadowed out good things to come*, of which the substance is Christ.

**I.** There were those things in the open court, in the view of all the people, which were very significant.

**1.** There was the *brazen altar*, v. 1. The making of this was not mentioned in the Kings. On this all the sacrifices were offered, and it sanctified the gift. This altar was much larger than that which Moses made in the tabernacle; that was five cubits square, this was twenty cubits square. Now that Israel had become both numerous and more rich, and it was to be hoped more devout (for every age should aim to be wiser and better than that which went before it), it was expected that there would be a greater abundance of offerings brought to God's altar than had been. It was therefore made such a capacious scaffold that it might hold them all, and none might excuse themselves from bringing those temptations of their devotion by alleging that there was not room to receive them. God had greatly enlarged their borders; it was therefore fit that they should enlarge his altars. Our returns should bear some proportion to our receivings. It

was ten cubits high, so that the people who worshipped in the courts might see the sacrifice burnt, and their eye might affect their heart with sorrow for sin: "It is of the Lord's mercies that I am not thus consumed, and that this is accepted as an expiation of my guilt." They might thus be led to consider the great sacrifice which should be offered in the fulness of time to take away sin and abolish death, which the blood of bulls and goats could not possibly do. And with the smoke of the sacrifices their hearts might ascend to heaven in holy desires towards God and his favour. In all our devotions we must keep the eye of faith fixed upon Christ, the great propitiation. How they went up to this altar, and carried the sacrifices up to it, we are not told; some think by a plain ascent like a hill: if by steps, doubtless they were so contrived as that the end of the law (mentioned <sup><12126></sup>Exodus 20:26) might be answered.

2. There was the molten sea, a very large brass pan, in which they put water for the priests to wash in. in, v. 2, 6. It was put just at the entrance into the court of the priests, like the font at the church door. If it were filled to the brim, it would hold 3000 baths (as here, v. 5), but ordinarily there were only 2000 baths in it, <sup><10726></sup>1 Kings 7:26. The Holy Ghost by this signified,

(1.) Our great gospel privilege, that *the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin*, <sup><61007></sup>1 John 1:7. To us there is a *fountain opened* for all believers (who are spiritual priests, <sup><61005></sup>Revelation 1:5, 6), nay, for *all the inhabitants of Jerusalem to wash in*, from sin, which is uncleanness. There is a fulness of merit in Jesus Christ for all those that by faith apply to him for the purifying of their consciences, that they might serve the *living God*, <sup><3094></sup>Hebrews 9:14.

(2.) Our great gospel duty, which is to cleanse ourselves by true repentance from all the pollutions of the flesh and the corruption that is in the world. Our hearts must be sanctified, or we cannot sanctify the name of God. Those that draw nigh to God must *cleanse their hands, and purify their hearts*, <sup><3048></sup>James 4:8. *If I was thee not, thou hast no part with me*; and he that *is washed* still needs *to wash his feet*, to renew his repentance, whenever he *goes in to minister*, <sup><61310></sup>John 13:10.

3. There were *ten lavers* of brass, in which *they washed such things as they offered for the burnt-offerings*, v. 6. As the priests must be washed, so must the sacrifices. We must not only purify ourselves in preparation for our religious performances, but carefully put away all those vain thoughts

and corrupt aims which cleave to our performances themselves and pollute them.

4. The doors of the court were overlaid with brass (v. 9), both for strength and beauty, and that they might not be rotted with the weather, to which they were exposed. *Gates of brass* we read of, <sup><B&V76></sup>Psalm 107:16.

II. There were those things in *the house of the Lord* (into which the priests alone went to minister) that were very significant. All was gold there. The nearer we come to God the purer we must be, the purer we shall be.

1. There were ten *golden candlesticks*, according to the form of that one which was in the tabernacle, v. 7. The written word is a lamp and a light, shining in a dark place. In Moses's time they had but one candlestick, the Pentateuch; but the additions which, in process of time, were to be made of other books of scripture might be signified by this increase of the number of the candlesticks. Light was growing. The candlesticks are the churches, <sup><R11></sup>Revelation 1:20. Moses set up but one, the church of the Jews; but, in the gospel temple, not only believers, but churches, are multiplied.

2. There were ten *golden tables* (v. 8), *tables whereon the show-bread was set*, v. 19. Perhaps every one of the tables had twelve loaves of show-bread on it. As the house was enlarged, the house-keeping was. *In my father's house there is bread enough for the whole family*. To those tables belonged 100 golden basins, or dishes; for God's table is well furnished.

3. There was a *golden altar* (v. 19), on which they burnt incense. It is probable that this was enlarged in proportion to the brazen altar. Christ, who once for all made atonement for sin, ever lives, making intercession, in virtue of that atonement.

## <sup><4411></sup>2 CHRONICLES 4:11-22

### THE FURNITURE OF THE TEMPLE

We have here such a summary both of the brass-work and the gold-work of the temple as we had before (<sup><10713></sup>1 Kings 7:13, etc.), in which we have nothing more to observe than, 1. That Hiram the workman was very punctual: *He finished all that he was to make* (v. 11), and left no part of his work undone. *Hiram, his father*, he is called, v. 16. Probably it was a

sort of nickname by which he was commonly known, *Father Hiram*; for the king of Tyre called him *Hiram Abi, my father*, in compliance with whom Solomon called him his, he being a great artist and *father of the artificers* in brass and iron. He acquitted himself well both for ingenuity and industry.

**2.** Solomon was very generous. He made *all the vessels in great abundance* (v. 18), many of a sort, that many hands might be employed, and so the work might go on with expedition, or that some might be laid up for use when others were worn out. Freely he has received, and he will freely give. When he had made vessels enough for the present he could not convert the remainder of the brass to his own use; it is devoted to God, and it shall be used for him.