

broken lineage back to the Exodus could enter them. Ascending by other fourteen steps the great court of Israel would be reached, within which again was the court of the Priests containing the great brazen altar of burnt offering 35 feet square. Here was the great laver of brass or moulten sea nine feet in depth and twenty-one in diameter, resting upon twelve brazen bulls, and was capable of holding some 20,000 gallons of water. It was surrounded by ten smaller vessels of brass placed upon wheels, each holding 1080 gallons. These and the laver were trophies of the victories of David, being made by Hiram Abiff of the brass which David brought back from the conquest of Syria. In this court the animal sacrifices were slaughtered and offered. Here also was a raised scaffold or platform of brass, where King Solomon sat or stood when he attended the public sacrifices. Behind the altar was the entrance to the beautiful porch on either side of which and within but not supporting it stood the two gigantic pillars of brass, Jachin and Boaz, which rested on golden pedestals, and were by Hiram carved, wreathed and adorned with the utmost skill and delicacy. They were 32 feet high and 7 in diameter, and 4 fingers breadth in thickness. On the top of each was a chapiter or capital 9 feet in height. Their golden pedestals, their bright brazen shafts, their rich capitals and their light festoons were prodigies of art so remarkable that the Israelites were never weary of recounting their glories. Passing between these pillars and through the porch and brazen gate, which was furnished with a costly Babylonian veil that mystically denoted the universe, and also another pair of folding doors of Cypress wood, you would be within the temple proper and in the largest apartment thereof—the Holy Place or Sanctuary. This was a large room or hall about 71 feet long, 35 wide, and some 50 high at the front or entrance. It would have been almost dark in spite of a few loopholes or narrow windows above but for the lights of ten golden candlesticks, each with seven branches, which revealed the glittering interior lined completely with plates of gold glued to the sides, ceiling and floor.

Contained in this hall was an amount of wealth that sums beyond our comprehension. All was of gold or silver, or the most costly fabrics and jewels. Josephus describes them as follows:—"The grand golden altar of incense, the large golden table for the shew bread, 10,000 smaller tables of gold, upon which lay 20,000 golden and 40,000 silver cups; besides these there were other 80,000 pouring vessels of gold, 100,000 golden and 200,000 silver vials, 80,000 plates or platters of gold and 160,000 of silver, 60,000 golden basins and 120,000 silver basins, and 10,000 golden candlesticks, 20,000 golden and 40,000 silver measures called hins, 20,000 great golden censers and 50,000 smaller ones. There were 1000 sacerdotal garments ornamented with precious stones for the high priests alone, and 10,000 sacerdotal garments for other priests, 200,000 trumpets and 200,000 garments of fine linen for the singers and 40,000 psalteries and harps."

Such an accumulation of treasure seems to us almost incredible, and the computation of it cannot fail to modify our ideas of our own greatness, wealth or power.

A wall of partition and folding doors of olive wood overlaid with gold, over which was hung a particolored curtain embroidered with cherubs and flowers and chains of gold, shut in the innermost sanctuary—the Holy of Holies.

He who in the progress of the building ventured to look in would have seen a chamber between 35 and 36 feet square, absolutely dark except when the folding doors were open, but in the darkness two huge golden forms would have been discovered with wings expanded from wall to wall, sheltering a vacant space wherein was to rest the ark of the covenant. These figures, the cherubims, were of wood overlaid with gold. This chamber, like the sanctuary, had its ceiling, walls and floor covered with plates of gold, and although it contained little besides the figures mentioned, no less than the enormous value, according to Herodotus, of £4,320,000 Stg., or \$21,600,000 were expended in its adornment. Into it the high priest entered once a year and no one else.

Round about the temple walls ran lines of chambers for the use of the priests and their attendants. A sandal wood door on the south was the approach to them from the outside, and a winding staircase led thence to the second and third storeys into chambers, some of which were accessible to the king alone. Here was one interesting to us called the middle chamber. The locality of this middle chamber has been a matter of conjecture to many masonic investigators. My chief authority for supposing it to have been upon the south side of the temple is contained in the 1st Book of Kings, vi, 8, which says: "The door for the middle chamber was in the right (south) side of the house; and they went up by winding stairs into the middle chamber and out of the middle into the third." It seems to have been used as a paymaster's office during the construction of the temple, and afterwards either as one of the king's private apartments, or for the convenience of the priests.