

SECOND CHRONICLES

Chapter 4

The Temple's Furnishings

He made a bronze altar twenty cubits long, twenty cubits wide and ten cubits high. ² He made the Sea of cast metal, circular in shape, measuring ten cubits from rim to rim and five cubits high. It took a line of thirty cubits to measure around it. ³ Below the rim, figures of bulls encircled it—ten to a cubit. The bulls were cast in two rows in one piece with the Sea. ⁴ The Sea stood on twelve bulls, three facing north, three facing west, three facing south and three facing east. The Sea rested on top of them, and their hindquarters were toward the center. ⁵ It was a handbreadth in thickness, and its rim was like the rim of a cup, like a lily blossom. It held three thousand baths. ⁶ He then made ten basins for washing and placed five on the south side and five on the north. In them the things to be used for the burnt offerings were rinsed, but the Sea was to be used by the priests for washing. ⁷ He made ten gold lampstands according to the specifications for them and placed them in the temple, five on the south side and five on the north. ⁸ He made ten tables and placed them in the temple, five on the south side and five on the north. He also made a hundred gold sprinkling bowls. ⁹ He made the courtyard of the priests, and the large court and the doors for the court, and overlaid the doors with bronze. ¹⁰ He placed the Sea on the south side, at the southeast corner. ¹¹ He also made the pots and shovels and sprinkling bowls. So Hiram finished the work he had undertaken for King Solomon in the temple of God: ¹²the two pillars; the two bowl-shaped capitals on top of the pillars; the two sets of network decorating the two bowl-shaped capitals on top of the pillars; ¹³ the four hundred pomegranates for the two sets of network (two rows of pomegranates for each network, decorating the bowl-shaped capitals on top of the pillars); ¹⁴the stands with their basins; ¹⁵the Sea and the twelve bulls under it; ¹⁶ the pots, shovels, meat forks and all related articles. All the objects that Hiram-Abi made for King Solomon for the temple of the LORD were of polished bronze. ¹⁷ The king had them cast in clay molds in the plain of the Jordan between Succoth and Zarethan. ¹⁸ All these things that Solomon made amounted to so much that the weight of the bronze was not determined. ¹⁹ Solomon also made all the furnishings that were in God's temple: the golden altar; the tables on which was the bread of the Presence; ²⁰the lampstands of pure gold with their lamps, to burn in front of the inner sanctuary as prescribed; ²¹the gold floral work and lamps and tongs (they were solid gold); ²²the pure gold wick trimmers, sprinkling bowls, dishes and censers; and the gold doors of the temple: the inner doors to the Most Holy Place and the doors of the main hall.

4:1 *bronze altar.* The parallel text in Kings does not mention the main altar of the temple described here (1Ki 7:22–23), though several other passages in Kings do refer to it (1Ki 8:64; 9:25; 2Ki 16:14). The main altar of Solomon's temple was similar to the altar with steps that is described in Eze 43:13–17. (CSB)

4:2 *Sea of cast metal.* Replaced the bronze basin of the tabernacle (Ex 30:18); it was used by the priests for their ceremonial washing (v. 6; Ex 30:21). The NT views these rituals as foreshadowing the cleansing provided by Christ (Tit 3:5; Heb 9:11–14). In the temple of Ezekiel, the Sea, which was on the south side in front of the temple (v. 10), has been replaced by a life-giving river that flows from the south side of the temple (Eze 47:1–12; cf. Joel 3:18; Zec 14:8; Jn 4:9–15; Rev 22:1–2). (CSB)

4:3 *bulls.* 1Ki 7:24 has “gourds.” The Hebrew for the two words is very similar, so the difference may well be due to a copyist’s mistake. (CSB)

figures of gourds. Ornamental knobs on the molten sea. Here their shape is said to resemble oxen. In Hbr, the words for “oxen” and “gourds” are similar; a copyist could easily confuse them. Decorative symbols were strung around the 30-cubit circumference of the great basin in a symmetric pattern so that there were 10 in every cubit. (TLSB)

4:4 *twelve bulls.* Possibly symbolic of the 12 tribes, which also encamped three on each side of the tabernacle during the desert journeys (Nu 2; cf. Eze 48:30–35). (CSB)

4:5 *three thousand baths.* 1Ki 7:26 has 2,000 baths. These figures could easily have been misread by the ancient scribes. (CSB)

4:6 *ten basins.* See 1Ki 7:38–39. (CSB)

sea was for the priests. Used for ceremonial washing of priests. Other basins were built for washing objects (vv 14–16). In the NT, the priests of God (i.e., believers) are washed not in a temple basin but in the water of Holy Baptism. Through that Sacrament, as with the priests of ancient Israel, one is made clean to enter God’s presence. (TLSB)

4:7–9 Some of these details are unique to 2Ch. Solomon, as charged by David, precisely followed the plan for the temple. (TLSB)

4:7 *ten gold lampstands.* Instead of one, as in the tabernacle (Ex 25:31–40). (CSB)

Divinely mandated plans were given to David (1Ch 28:15), who measured out the gold for the work. The statement “as prescribed” probably applies to the tables and golden basins of v 8 as well (cf 1Ch 28:16–17). (TLSB)

specifications. See 1Ch 28:15. These lamps were not necessarily of the same shape as described in Ex 25:31–40, but could have resembled the style of lamp depicted in Zec 4:2–6. (CSB)

4:8 *ten tables.* Instead of one, as in the tabernacle (Ex 25:23–30; 40:4; Lev 24:5–9; 1Sa 21:1–6; Eze 41:22; Heb 9:2; cf. 2Ch 13:11; 29:18). (CSB)

Not mentioned in 1Ki, they seemingly had some connection with the lampstands (v 7). (TLSB)

4:9 *court of the priests*. Restricted to use by priests, it was smaller than “the great court,” where the people assembled and where Solomon erected his bronze platform (6:13). (TLSB)

4:11–16 While Hiram, the master craftsman, did the work (cf 2:13–14), he did so as a “subcontractor” for King Solomon (vv 11, 16), who remained the primary builder. (TLSB)

4:11 *pots ... shovels ... basins*. For handling food, ashes, blood, and whatever else was involved with offering sacrifices. Cf 1Sm 2:12–17; Ezk 46:19–24 for insights into the handling of the sacrifices. (TLSB)

4:16 *burnished bronze*. Utensils were often wrought from sheets of copper. (TLSB)

4:17–22 Cf 1Ki 7:46–50. Summary crediting Solomon with the making of all the contents of the temple. (TLSB)

4:17 *clay molds*. The clay beds of the Jordan plain made it possible to dig molds for these bronze castings. (CSB)

4:19 *tables*. Only one table is mentioned in 13:11; 29:18; 1Ki 7:48. The 10 tables (cf 1Ch 28:16) for exhibiting the bread of the Presence are not explained. (TLSB)

4:21 *flowers*. Design element. Cf v 11. (TLSB)