

being built upon an advanced ground, with steps to it, part of the inside was so obscured by the hill, that it could not be discerned. At the top of these fourteen steps there was a plain level of three hundred cubits up to the wall, and from thence five steps more to the gates of the temple. There were also four from the north, as many from the south, and two from the east.

The women had an oratory, or place of worship, by themselves, with a partition wall to it, and two gates, one to the south, and the other to the north, which were the two only passages of entrance for the women; nor were they permitted to pass their own. This place was free indifferently to women, inhabitants as well as strangers, that came hither on purposes of devotion. The west side was a dead wall, without any door at all. Betwixt the aforelaid gates, and over against the wall, near the treasury, there were galleries, with stately pillars to support them, single, and, excepting their magnitude, not inferior to those of the lower court.

Some of the gates were plated over with gold and silver, poits, fronts and all: but there was one without the temple of Corinthian brass, which was much the richer metal of the three. There were double doors to every gate, each thirty cubits high, and fifteen broad. They were wider within, and had drawing rooms on each hand, of thirty cubits square, after the manner of turrets, upwards of twenty cubits high, each of them borne up with pillars of twelve cubits in thickness, the other gates being of the same dimensions in proportion. As to the Corinthian portal, on the east-side of the temple, where the women entered, it was certainly the largest and most magnificent of them all, being fifty cubits high, and the gold and silver plates upon it more substantial than those that Alexander, the father of Tiberius, laid upon the other nine. There were fifteen steps which led from the wall of the court of the women to the greater gate, whereas those that led thither from the other gates were five steps shorter.

The holy temple itself, called emphatically the sanctuary, was placed in the middle, with twelve steps to ascend it. The height of it was an hundred cubits, and the breadth as many in the front; but behind it wanted forty of that number. The height of the first gate was seventy cubits, and twenty-five over; but it had no doors, being an emblem visible and open to the whole world. The front and out-sides were gilt; nor was there any thing in the middle of the temple that had not a brilliant lustre.

The inner part was divided into two partitions. The first of them in sight was open to the top, which was ninety cubits in height, forty in length, and twenty in breadth. There were lavers and branches of vines over head, and large clusters of grapes that hung pendant, between five and six feet deep, all of gold. The other partition of the temple, being ceiled above, appeared the lower of the two. The doors also of it were of gold, fifty-five cubits in height, and sixteen in breadth, with a piece of Babylonian tapestry hanging before them of the same dimensions, interwoven with blue, purple, and scarlet, in a most curious manner. Nor was this mixture of colours without a mystical interpretation, as it alluded to the four elements, either by the colours themselves, or the matter of which they were composed; the scarlet representing the fire, the silk the earth that produced it, the azure the air, and the purple the sea from whence it comes. So that this veil, or hanging, was, in miniature, an emblem of the universe.

This entrance led to the lower part of the temple; the height and length of it was sixty cubits, and the breadth twenty. This length of sixty cubits was then subdivided into two unequal parts, one of forty cubits, and the other of twenty. The former part, of forty cubits, had in it the three wonders that had been celebrated over the whole world; the candlestick, the table of shew-bread, and the altar of incense. The candlestick had seven branches all out of the same stem, with seven lights, representing

the seven planets. The twelve loaves of shew-bread, upon the table, pointed at the twelve signs of the zodiac, and the course of the year. By the thirteen sorts of perfumes in the censer upon the altar of incense, with which the sea replenished it, we are given to understand, that the Almighty Creator is sovereign of the universe, and that all things are formed for his honour and service.

The inner part of the temple being only twenty cubits in height, was also divided by a veil from the other: nor was any man permitted to enter, or so much as look into it. It was called the Sanctuary, or Holy of Holies. Upon the sides of this lower temple there were several apartments leading from one to another, with three stories over head, and passages into them out of the great portal. The upper part, being narrower than the other, could not have the convenience of the same order of chambers; but it was forty cubits higher, though the less splendid of the two. Thus we collect that the whole height, including the sixty cubits from the floor, amounted to an hundred cubits.

The curiosity and beauty of the outside of the temple was charming to a degree, being faced every where with substantial golden plates, that sparkled like the beams of the sun, and dazzled the eye of the beholder. Where there was no gilding, the parts were so delicately white, that it appeared, at a distance, to travellers, like a marble mountain, or pillar of snow. The roof was covered with sharp-pointed spikes, to prevent any pollution by birds sitting upon it. Some of the stones of this building were forty-five cubits in length, five in height, and six in breadth.

The altar before the temple was fifteen cubits high, and forty square, with four angles to it, resembling horns. The passage to the altar was by an insensible acclivity. It was formed without any iron tool. There was a partition raised of stone-work, curiously wrought, and of one cubit in height, enclosing the temple, or the sanctuary and the altar, and separating the people from the priests. No unclean persons, either male or female, were suffered in the temple, or even in the city: nor were men allowed to enter the inner temple without being first purified, and even then also they were not to mix with the priests.

Those of the sacerdotal race, that were hindered by any defect from the exercise of their function, took their places with those that had none, and had their allowance in common with the rest, but under the distinction of a lay habit: for no man is allowed to wear the vestments of a priest, but he that actually executes the office.

The priests that ministered in the temple, and at the altar, were to be men exemplary in their lives and conversation, and without either scandal or blemish. Their cloathing was to be fine linen, and they were to be abstemious and temperate in their eating and drinking, out of reverence to their holy function. The high-priest went up, with the other priests, to the altar every seventh day, upon the first day of every month, and upon all public anniversary festivals, when he officiated in a veil girt about him, and hanging down over part of his thighs, with a linen veil under it, that reached down to the ground. On both these he wore a large violet coloured garment, fringed at the bottom, and golden bells and pomegranates interchangeably fastened to it; the bells representing the thunder, and the other the lightning. His pectoral, or girdle, that tied the garment to the breast, was embroidered with five rows of variegated colours, as gold, purple, scarlet, linen, and violet, which were the colours also of the veils of the temple.

The like embroidery was upon the ephod; but it had more gold in it, its form resembling that of a breast piece. It was bound together with two golden buckles, and set with the largest and richest sardonyx stones that could be procured, with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel inscribed upon them. There were also four rows of emeralds hanging down in the order of three and three in a row; that is to say,

The Holy of Holies.

The exterior part of the temple.

The altar.

No unclean persons admitted into the temple.

The priests men of exemplary characters.

Their vestments.