

Ezekiel 40 - Millennial Mountain; Description of the Temple Gates, Chambers, Outer Court, Inner Court, Altar of Sacrifice & Temple Building

III. Restoration of Israel (Ezek 33:1—48:45)

(7) Restored Temple (Ezek 40:1—48:35)

(A) Temple (Ezek 40:1—43:27)

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Ezekiel 40-48: A Problem for Judaism

An Orthodox Jewish commentary makes the following two observations:

The text of the concluding chapters, dealing with this temple and the future, presents almost insurmountable difficulties. The types, numbers, and sacrifices prescribed there differ from those mentioned in the Pentateuch; and there are many innovations,

which, according to the accepted law, are normally beyond the authority of a prophet to institute (Shabbat 104a). With reference to these difficulties, the rabbis said that only Elijah, the prophet who is to herald the final redemption, will be able to explain them satisfactorily (Menachot 45a). These closing chapters present almost insuperable difficulties. They contain discrepancies, contradictions with Pentateuchal laws and terms which do not occur elsewhere.

The root of the problem for Judaism is two-fold: first, the rabbis assume that the Law of Moses is eternal; second, they fail to recognize the Messiahship of Christ. Orthodox Judaism takes Ezek 40-48 literally, but because there are a number of contradictions between the Mosaic system and the Ezekiel (millennial) system, the early rabbis had a difficulty in accepting Ezekiel into the Hebrew Canon. Finally one rabbi, Rabbi Hananiah ben Hezekiah, is said to have burned three hundred barrels of oil rectifying all the discrepancies, and only then was Ezekiel accepted into the Hebrew Canon.

A Problem for Amillennialism

Amillennialists simply dismiss the literal view as untenable without providing any exegetical grounds for doing so. It is enough to state that Jesus was the final sacrifice, and that alone becomes the grounds for allegorizing these chapters of Ezekiel. However, even they have to admit that it is "an unjustifiable inconsistency" to take the prophecies of Israel's final restoration literally, but then to allegorize the prophecies of the Ezekiel Temple and sacrifices, and so, the problem for amillennialists is also two-fold: first, they presuppose that these chapters cannot be literal; second, they assume that these sacrifices are the Levitical sacrifices, which is clearly not the case when you compare the two systems. While amillennialists agree that Ezekiel would have understood his own prophecy quite literally, they insist that it must be reinterpreted in light of the NT, which they see as teaching replacement theology. They argue that since the vision of the dry bones is symbolic, then the vision of the Temple and sacrifices must also be symbolic. The fallacy of this reasoning is obvious: Ezekiel tells us that the vision of the dry bones is symbolic and interprets the symbols for us; however, he makes no such statement in Ezek 40-48. If these chapters are symbolic, then Ezekiel does not interpret the symbols. In fact, throughout his book, Ezekiel has symbolic actions and visions, and when they are symbolic, he tells us so and interprets them all for us. He makes no such statement or interpretation of the Temple or sacrifices.

Finally, some amillennialists claim that Ezekiel "does not offer a clear chronology of latter-day occurrences." This ignores the chronology the book clearly gives. The only possible reason to draw such an obvious faulty conclusion is based on a simple presupposition that these chapters cannot be understood literally.

Various Interpretations

The only reason there are so many different interpretations is because so many assume the Scriptures cannot be taken literally. Once you move away from a literal interpretation, there is no way to figure out what the text actually means. The interpreter must resort to subjectivity, and the text means what the interpreter thinks it means.

1. A Memorial of Solomon's Temple

This view states that this is only a literary memorial of the Solomonic Temple, and therefore it plays nothing more than a sentimental role of remembrance of the First Temple. However, there is very little similarity between the Solomonic Temple and the Ezekiel Temple. In fact, Ezekiel contradicts many details of the system used in the Solomonic Temple.

2. A Blueprint of the 2nd (Post-Exilic) Temple

According to this view, Ezekiel provided a blueprint for the rebuilding of the Temple after the return from Babylon. However, if that was the case, it was never followed. Even Ezekiel would have known that his measurements would never have fit the Temple Mount of that day.

3. The Historical View

This is similar to the previous view, except the claim is that this passage only presents Ezekiel's personal hope for the kind of temple that would be built after the return from the Babylonian Captivity. If so, Ezekiel's hope was never realized, rendering these chapters meaningless. What did happen did not follow Ezekiel at all. Furthermore, Ezekiel would have known that the measurements of his Temple would not have fit the Temple Mount of his day.

4. A Symbol of the Eternal State

This view connects Ezekiel with Rev 21-22 and teaches that this Temple is only a symbolic depiction of what things will be like in heaven. However, the measurements of the Ezekiel Temple, and that of the New Jerusalem in Revelation, are radically different. Rev 21:22 states that the New Jerusalem will not have a temple in it, yet what Ezekiel describes is declared to be a temple.

5. A Symbol of the Christian Church

Using extreme allegory, this view states that Ezekiel is giving a depiction of the Christian church, symbolizing its origin, development, influence, and completion. Not only does this view require extreme allegorization of the text of Ezekiel, it must also ignore all the details of the text, including the geographical notations as well as the people involved. Further, it renders all the details of the text meaningless and irrelevant, while ignoring the fact that the angel warns Ezekiel to record all the minute details of the structures that will make up the Millennial Temple compound. This is a view that begins with the presupposition that the church is the New Israel.

6. A Symbol of Worship

This view rejects that these chapters are either prophetic, apocalyptic, or practical. It states that they only symbolize the fact that worship was the center of life in the confusion of world events of that day, and so the temple in the heart of the Ezekiel vision was a symbol that worship was the heart of world culture. This view also requires that the details of the text be ignored and derives a meaning from the passage that is simply not there, but must be imposed on the text.

7. A Symbol of a Spiritual, Eschatological Kingdom

This view recognizes the apocalyptic nature of these chapters, but claims that the symbols found in the text are merely idealized pictures of spiritual truths that will be relevant in the coming kingdom. It makes no attempt to define the actual form of worship described by Ezekiel. This view must ignore all the details of the text and interpret the apocalyptic form as only a literary device in a way that goes beyond the normal use of the apocalyptic method. It is clear that the passage does provide the actual form of the type and means of worship in a very literal kingdom (Ezek 43:11).

8. The Literal Description of the Literal Temple in the Millennium

This view contains the literal description of the Fourth Temple. Like the book of Revelation, this passage is apocalyptic and therefore contains symbolic imagery, but it is also prophetic in that it describes literal future events. In his commentary on Ezekiel, Lamar Eugene Cooper describes this view as follows:

The prophetic-apocalyptic view of the passage regards the chapters as an essentially literal description of a real future kingdom. This restored kingdom is not the Church but Israel. But while describing literal features of a restored kingdom, Ezekiel also conveys spiritual truth. The very objects he describes, such as a literal temple, priesthood, and sacrifices also function as symbols of the character of the kingdom and its King.

As the above list shows, only one view accepts the text as literal (8) and all other views (1-7) approach it allegorically. However, they are in total disagreement among themselves as to what the allegory means. This shows just how subjective the allegorical method really is, and it proves the advantage of the literal approach since one is then bound by the meaning of the words of the text in context and therefore is much more objective. What follows is a defense of the literal approach:

1. All theologians use a literal approach to hermeneutics for at least parts of the Bible. However, only dispensationalists use the method consistently.

2. The Millennial Temple and sacrifices are mentioned by many other prophets, in a non-apocalyptic context. The Millennial Temple is spoken of in Is 2:3; 60:13, Dan 9:24; Joel 3:18; Haggai 2:7,9. The millennial sacrifices are mentioned in Is 56:6-7; 60:7; 66:18-23; Jer 33:18; Mal 3:3-4; Zech 14:16-21 (the last passage speaks of the observance of the Feast of Tabernacles in the messianic kingdom, but it required special sacrifices as part of its observance). Therefore, more than one passage, and more than one prophet, would have to be allegorized if there is no Millennial Temple or sacrifices.
3. In Ezek 8-11, Ezekiel describes the departure of the *Shekinah* Glory from the First Temple. All agree that his description of the Temple and the events are very literal. In Ezek 40-48, Ezekiel describes the future return of the *Shekinah* Glory into the Fourth Temple. If what he said about the First Temple was literal, then what he says about the Fourth Temple should also be taken literally.
4. Ezekiel provides a tremendous amount of detail, including specific measurements and types of sacrifices. All accept the details of the sacrifices of the Law of Moses to be very literal. All accept the detailed measurements of the Tabernacle and the First Temple to be very literal. Thus, there is no good reason not to accept the details of the Fourth Temple to be equally literal. If they are not, and all are symbolic, then why does Ezekiel not explain the meanings of these symbols? Why have those who take these passages as allegorical and symbolic not been able to give explanations for what the symbols mean? This is not to deny that the Millennial Temple and sacrifices are not symbolic of spiritual truths. Just as the Tabernacle and the Mosaic sacrifices were symbolic and typological of spiritual truths while very literal themselves, by the same token, the Millennial Temple and sacrifices can be literal while also being symbolic of spiritual truths. The very fact that Ezekiel was ordered to write down all the details and declare them to Israel would be meaningless if such details did not mean what they said. Literal interpretation of this passage stands, especially when one considers the fact that critics cannot explain, based upon a textual interpretation, what Ezekiel does mean if not taken literally.

Ezekiel 40-48: The Millennial Temple

Ezekiel's description of the Millennial Temple is highly detailed (not simply symbolic). All nations will worship there, offerings and sacrifices will be resumed, and it will open only on the Sabbath day and new moons.

At the time of Christ's second coming the land will undergo tremendous geographical and topographical changes. One will be the rise of a mountain, which will become the world's highest mountain (Millennial Mountain, see note on Is 2:2). The Millennial Temple and the Millennial Jerusalem will stand atop this mountain. Several passages speak of this

Millennial Mountain of Jehovah's House: Is 2:2-4; 27:13; 56:6-8; 66:20; Micah 4:1-2. These passages point out that this Mountain will become the center of both Jewish and Gentile attention and worship.

Ezekiel received the most extensive revelation about the Mountain of Jehovah's House (17:22-24; 20:40-41; 40:1-4; 45:1-8; 48:8-22). This holy mountain, referred to as the holy oblation, will have a 50-mile square plateau on top, which will have three subsections. The northern section will be 20 miles by 50 miles, having in its center the Millennial Temple, which will be one mile square in size. The rest of the northern section will be reserved for certain priests, the descendants of Zadok. They will officiate the sacrificial system. The central section will also measure 20 miles by 50 miles. It will be reserved for other Levites, the non-Zadoikites, who will be the Temple's caretakers. Jerusalem (which will measure 10 miles by 10 miles) will be in the very center of the 10-mile by 50-mile southern section. The two remaining portions of the southern section, east and west of Jerusalem (each measuring 10 miles by 20 miles) will grow food for the city's inhabitants. Jerusalem will not belong to any particular tribe, but members of all Israel's 12 tribes will inhabit it.

Ezekiel 40

(7) Restored Temple (Ezek 40:1—48:35)

(A) Temple (Ezek 40:1—43:27)

In 40:1-4, the prophet is transported to a high mountain, where he encounters an angelic figure who serves as his guide, taking him through the Temple area with a builder's measuring rod.

In 40:5-16, Ezekiel observes one of the gates leading into the Outer Court close up. Then, in 40:17-19, before entering the Outer Court, the guide shows Ezekiel chambers facing inward onto the pavement around the outer wall.

In 40:20-27, they proceed to examine two more gateways leading from the Outer Court into the Inner Court.

From 40:28-37, Ezekiel is led to the gateway providing access to the Inner Court, where only the priests are allowed. Within this area, three gates appear on the north, east, and south sides, while the Temple itself is situated on the west side, where there is no gate. After a brief description of sacrificial equipment and priestly chambers (40:38-47), Ezekiel is given a detailed tour of the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies (40:48—41:26). Ezek 42 concludes with a final survey of the Temple area from the outside.

In 43:1-12, Ezekiel witnesses the return of the *Shekinah* Glory to the Temple, and he is instructed on how to handle this significant revelation. The measurements and uses of the sacrificial altar are detailed in 43:13-27.

(a) Introduction (40:1-4)

(i) Date (40:1)

1 In the **twenty-fifth year of our exile**, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth of the month, in the **fourteenth year after the city was taken**, on this very day the hand of the LORD was upon me and He brought me there.

1 In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was taken, on that same day the hand of the LORD was upon me and He brought me there.

1 At the beginning of year 25 of our captivity, on the tenth day of the fourteenth year after the destruction of Jerusalem—on that very day—the LORD grabbed me in his hand and took me there.

1 In the five and twentieth year of our captivity, in the beginning of the year, in the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after that the city was smitten, in the selfsame day the hand of the LORD was upon me, and brought me thither.

- "...twenty-fifth year of our exile" - corresponds with 573/572 BC

- "...the beginning of the year" - *Rosh Hashanah*, the biblical calendar starts in Nisan (March/April), modern Israel celebrates *Rosh Hashanah* on the Feast of Trumpets, the first of the Fall festivals (Cf. Lev 23:24-25; Num 29:1-6).

- "...the tenth of the month" - when the temple in Jerusalem still stood, this day (10th of Nisan) was significant as it was the day the Passover lamb was set aside for examination, to ensure it was without blemish.

— As a priest, Ezekiel would've obviously understood the significance of this day.

- "...the fourteenth year after the city was taken" - this detail informs us that the temple was no longer standing in Jerusalem. It had been destroyed ~14 years ago during Nebuchadnezzar's third siege of Jerusalem. The entire city of Jerusalem was destroyed at that time as well.

- "...on this very day" - 10th of Nisan, 573 BC corresponds to April 28, 573 BC.

— Chronologically, this temple vision (Ezek 40-48) was not Ezekiel's final revelation. In 29:17, a subsequent vision in the 27th year (571/570 BC) is described. However, Ezekiel chose to place this vision of the future temple at the conclusion of his book.

(ii) Setting (40:2)

2 In the **visions** of God He brought me into the land of Israel and set me on a very **high mountain**, and on it to the south *there was something* like a structure of **acity**.

2 In the visions of God He brought me into the land of Israel and set me on a very high mountain, and on it to the south *there was* a structure like a city.

2 God brought me in a series of visions to the land of Israel and placed me on top of a very high mountain, where to the south there was something that looked like the outline of a city.

2 In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Israel, and set me upon a very high mountain, by which was as the frame of a city on the south.

- "...visions" - *mar'ah*, refers to some form of supernatural sight. As was the case in 1:1 and 8:3, Ezekiel was not transported to this site physically, it was a visionary journey. He was transported in spirit, enabling him to witness events destined for the future in a location beyond where he was physically present.

- "...high mountain" - the "Millennial Mountain," described elsewhere as the highest mountain in the world (Cf. Is 2:2; Micah 4:1).

— Ezekiel described this mountain earlier (17:22; 20:40) as a future center of attention for both Jews and Gentiles.

— Ezekiel's vision will go on to provide a comprehensive description of this mountain, including the system of millennial worship that will take place at its summit.

- "...a city" - the text will later clarify that this city is the millennial Jerusalem

Millennial Mountain

Ezekiel received the most extensive revelation about this mountain:

- It will be a place of lush greenery and vegetation (17:22-24)
- It will serve as the center of Jewish worship in the Kingdom, after Israel's regeneration and regathering (20:40-41)
- It will have a skyline of a city on its southern side; this city is millennial Jerusalem (40:1-4)
- Ezek 45:1-8 provides the most detail of the Mountain; it will have a 50-mile square plateau on top, which will house the Temple and the city of Jerusalem. It will be subdivided into three sections:
 - Northern Section (v2-4) will be 20 miles by 50 miles with the millennial Temple at its center. The Temple will be one mile square, and the rest of the area will be reserved for a certain group of priests to live in.
 - Middle Section (v5) will be 20 miles by 50 miles and will be reserved for the Tribe of Levi.
 - Southern Section (v6-8) will be 10 miles by 50 miles and contain millennial Jerusalem, which will measure 10 miles by 10 miles, at its center. There will be areas of fields on either side of the city, each measuring 10 miles by 20 miles. These areas will be controlled by the prince, the resurrected David, who will apportion the Land according to tribe.
- Ezek 48:8-22: the Mountain will be 50 miles square (48:8). He then provides additional details about the three sections:

- Northern Section (v9-12): will be inhabited by priests, who are the descendants of Zadok; they will occupy the area around the Temple, because that segment of the Tribe of Levi remained faithful while the rest went astray.
- Middle Section (v13-14): this area will be reserved for the rest of the Tribe of Levi, those Levites who did not belong to the line of Zadok.
- Southern Section (v15-19): the adjacent area beside Millennial Jerusalem will be for the purpose of growing food for the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Jerusalem will not belong to any particular tribe, but will be inhabited by members of all 12 tribes.
- The Millennial Mountain will become the center of Jewish worship (Is 27:13)
 - But not Jews only, as Isaiah points out that the Mountain will become a place of prayer for all people, Jews and Gentiles alike (Is 56:6-8)
- Gentile nations will conduct the regathered people of Israel to the Millennial Mountain (Is 66:20)
- It will be a place where Jesus Himself will teach us about His ways (Micah 4:1-2)
- In similar verbiage to Micah 4:1-2, Is 2:2-4 adds that this is where Jesus will judge between the nations, where He will rule with a rod of iron.

(iii) Angel (40:3)

3 So **He** brought me **there**; and behold, there was a **man** whose appearance was like the appearance of **bronze**, with a **thread of flax** and a **measuring rod** in his hand; and **he was standing in the gateway**.

3 So He brought me there; and behold, there was a man whose appearance was like the appearance of bronze, with a line of flax and a measuring rod in his hand; and he was standing in the gateway.

3 That's where he took me. All of a sudden, there was a man whose appearance resembled glowing bronze! He had a measuring reed and line in his hand as he stood in the city gate.

3 And he brought me thither, and, behold, there was a man, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, with a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed; and he stood in the gate

- "...He" - the hand of the Lord (v1)

- "...there" - Millennial Mountain (v2)

- "...man" - *ish*, may also be translated "individual"; this figure appeared to be human, but it is likely that he is an angel. No ordinary human would have an appearance like bronze.

When angels reveal themselves to human beings, they typically take on the form of a man.

— Some like to refer to this "man" as the Angel of God (a preincarnate appearance of Jesus) because later (44:2,5) God will speak to Ezekiel directly rather than through an intermediary.

- However, it's more likely that this was a significant angelic being entrusted with revelations for Ezekiel, possibly the same angel who provided visions to Daniel (Dan 9:21; 10:18) and John (Rev 11:1-2; 18:1-2).
- Every time in Scripture that we find a man with a measuring rod—it generally is an angel. It means that God is getting ready to move again in dealing with His earthly people.
- "...bronze" - often a symbol of strength in the OT (Cf. 1 Kings 4:13; Job 40:18; Micah 4:13), unwavering steadfastness (Is 48:4; Jer 1:18; 15:20), and judgment (Lev 26:19; Deut 28:23).
- These characteristics show that this angel was a unique and powerful being. His role will be to guide Ezekiel on a detailed visionary tour of the Millennial Temple.
- The angel held two different measuring tools in his hand:
 - "...a thread of flax" - for long measurements; similar to a tape measure today
 - "...a measuring rod" - for shorter measurements; similar to a yard stick. It measured 126 inches long (10.5 feet) or 3.2 meters (Cf. v5).
- The short/standard cubit was 18 inches or 45 centimeters. The long/royal cubit was 21 inches or 53 centimeters. As noted in 41:8; 43:13, Ezekiel used the long/royal cubit for all of his measurements.
- A figure holding a measuring tool appears three other times in prophetic passages: Zech 2:1; Rev 11:1, 21:5. Each time, including here, the instruments serve to measure something of particular prophetic importance.
- "...he was standing in the gateway" - v6 will clarify that this angel was standing at the eastern gate of the Millennial Temple. This will mark the beginning point of Ezekiel's tour of the Temple complex, as well as the endpoint (Cf. 42:15).

(iv) Instructions (40:4)

- 4 And the man said to me, "Son of man, see with your eyes, hear with your ears, and pay attention to all that I am going to show you; for you have been brought here in order to show *it* to you. Declare to the house of Israel all that you see."
- 4 The man said to me, "Son of man, see with your eyes, hear with your ears, and give attention to all that I am going to show you; for you have been brought here in order to show *it* to you. Declare to the house of Israel all that you see."
- 4 This is what the man told me: "Son of Man, watch carefully, listen closely, and remember everything I'm going to be showing you, because you've been brought here to be shown what you're about to see. Be sure that you tell the house of Israel everything that you observe."
- 4 And the man said unto me, Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart upon all that I shall shew thee; for to the intent that I might shew them unto thee art thou brought hither: declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel.

- Ezekiel receives instructions from the angel prior to embarking on their tour. He was instructed to conduct a meticulous visual survey of all that will be shown to him while also giving the same level of attention to the angel's verbal instructions.
- He was told to dedicate himself fully to observing all that was about to be revealed, as the details required the utmost scrutiny. Without a literal interpretation of this passage, the angel's instructions and the intricate details of what Ezekiel saw and heard would be rendered meaningless.
- Ezekiel had been brought to this mountain in a vision in order to learn the details of the millennial system of worship, including sacrifices and rituals. He was told to document all that he saw and heard so that he could accurately communicate it to the house of Israel.

Ezek 40:5—43:27 describes the Millennial Temple as the largest and most beautiful temple ever given to Israel. The detail is as extensive and exacting as was given for constructing the Tabernacle and the first Temple. Is it possible to make any sense of this passage through allegory? Certainly the historical books become meaningless if one does not take the details literally. The same thing has to be said about this prophetic passage. To allegorize the details is to render the whole passage meaningless and irrelevant.

(b) Outer court (40:5-27)

(i) Wall (40:5)

5 And behold, there was a wall on the outside of the temple all around, and in the man's hand was **a measuring rod of six cubits**, each of which was **a cubit and a hand width**. So he measured **the thickness of the wall, one rod**; and **the height, one rod**.

5 And behold, there was a wall on the outside of the temple all around, and in the man's hand was a measuring rod of six cubits, *each of which was* a cubit and a handbreadth. So he measured the thickness of the wall, one rod; and the height, one rod.

5 All of a sudden, we were at the exterior wall that completely surrounded the Temple. The man whom I had observed held a measuring reed that was six cubits long as measured in cubits that were a cubit and a handbreadth long. As he measured the thickness of the wall, he measured out one reed. Its height was also one reed.

5 And behold a wall on the outside of the house round about, and in the man's hand a measuring reed of six cubits long by the cubit and an hand breadth: so he measured the breadth of the building, one reed; and the height, one reed.

- Apparently the angel and Ezekiel were approaching the Temple complex from the outside because the first structural element that Ezekiel documented was the outer wall.

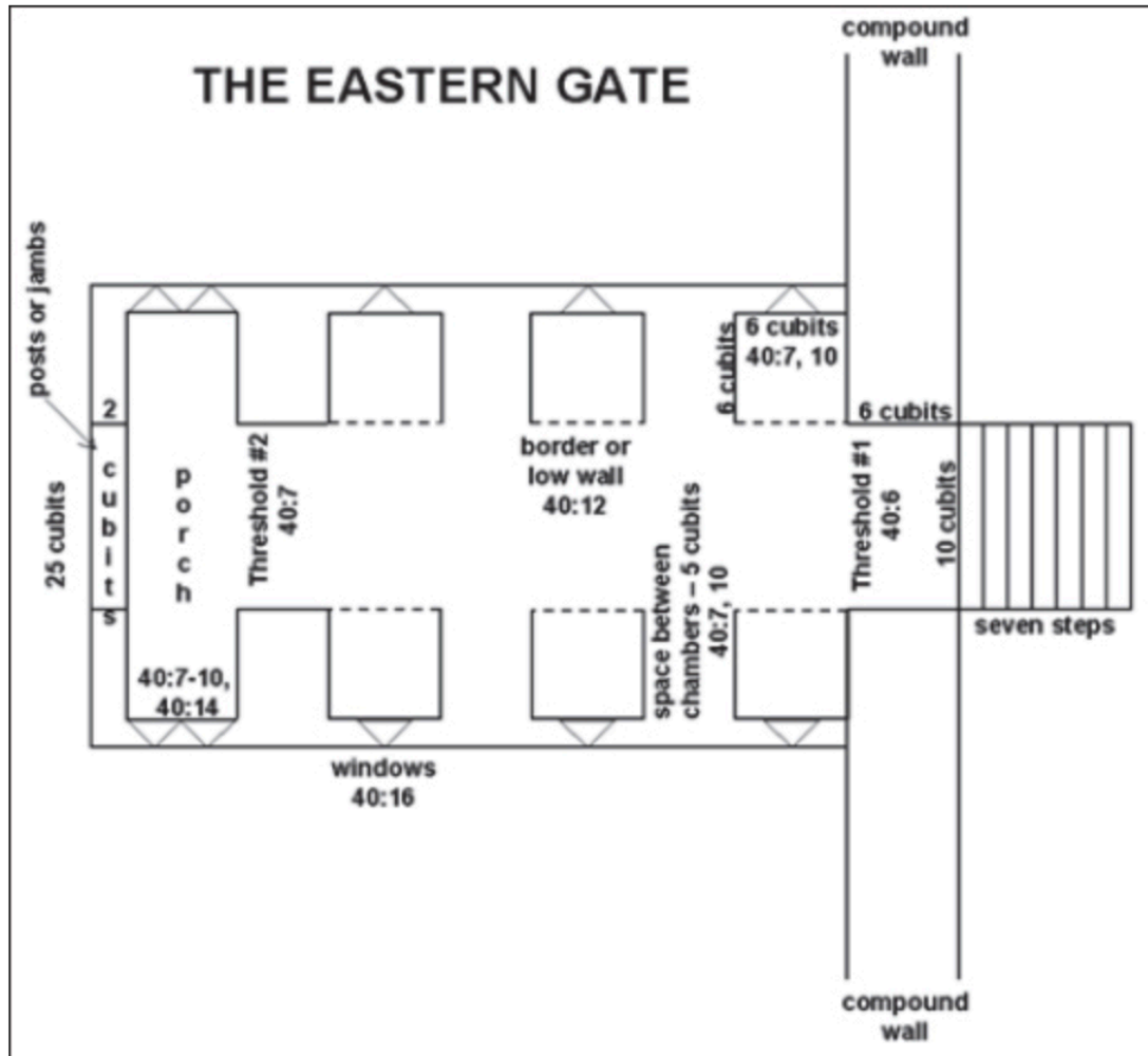
- The outer wall encircled the entire temple complex ("all around")

- "...a measuring rod of six cubits" - the measuring rod that the angel was carrying measured six cubits or 126 inches or 10.5 feet long (3.2 meter).

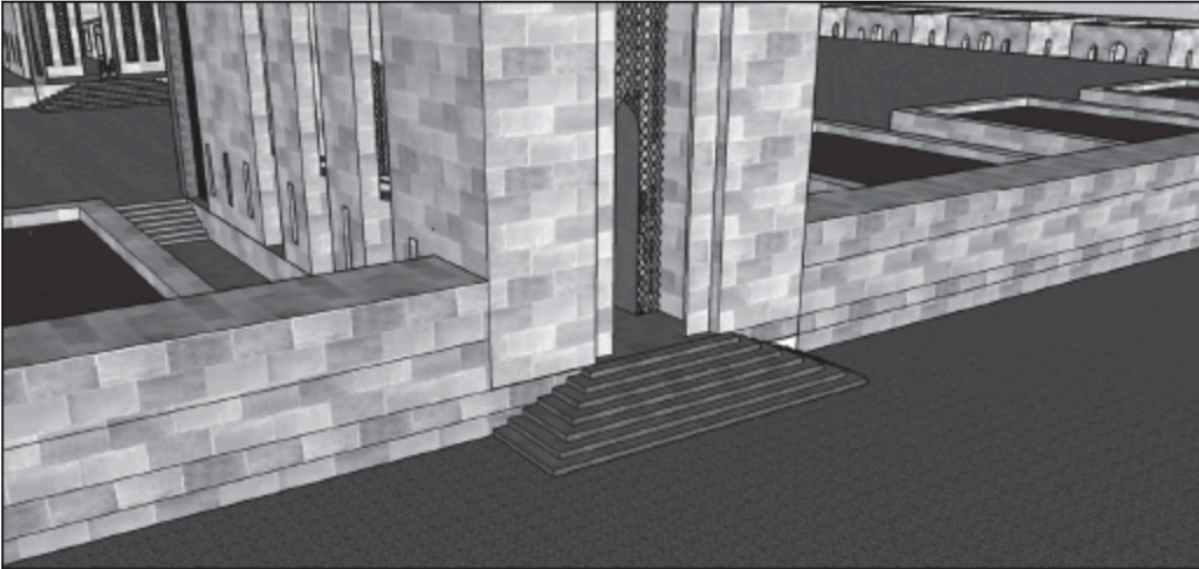
- "...a cubit and a hand width" - all measurements described by Ezekiel are long/royal cubit, which is 21 inches / 53 cm.
- "...the thickness of the wall, one rod" - the wall was 10.5 feet / 3.2 meters thick
- "...the height, one rod" - the wall was 10.5 feet / 3.2 meters high
- The measurement of the height and width formed a square cross-section. The width of the wall, at 10.5 feet, was fairly thick, but the height of the wall (only 10.5 feet) was proportionally low.
- Such a short/low wall would be insufficient for physical protection from enemies, but in the millennial kingdom, no such defense will be necessary. The wall's purpose is just to establish a separation between the holy and the common, as well as to add beauty to the structure.
- A low wall would also be more aesthetically pleasing as it would afford a much better view of the Temple buildings. Ezekiel will later provide complete measurements of this wall (42:15-20), revealing its full circumference. Here the focus is only on its height and width.

(ii) East outer gate (40:6-16)

- 6 Then he went to **the gate which faced east, went up its steps**, and measured **the threshold of the gate**, one rod in width; and **the other threshold** was one rod in width.
- 6 Then he went to the gate which faced east, went up its steps and measured the threshold of the gate, one rod in width; and the other threshold was one rod in width.
- 6 Then he went over to the gate that faced toward the east, ascended its steps, and measured its thresholds. One threshold measured one reed and the other one measured one reed.
- 6 Then came he unto the gate which looketh toward the east, and went up the stairs thereof, and measured the threshold of the gate, which was one reed broad; and the other threshold of the gate, which was one reed broad.
- Ezekiel now moves from the wall that surrounds the entire Temple complex to a description of the Outer Court. He enters through the Main (Eastern) Gate.
 - "...the gate which faced east" - since the Millennial Temple will face east, just as all previous Jewish temples did, the Eastern Gate is the Outer Wall will serve as the main entrance to the Temple complex.
 - The East Gate was to be especially sacred: it was through it the *Shekinah* Glory of God had departed (11:23), and through it the Glory would return (43:1-2).
 - "...went up its steps" - from the outside, leading up to the entryway of this gate was a series of steps.
 - "...the threshold of the gate" - located inline with the Outer Wall, just after the steps.
 - "...the other threshold" - located near the Porch as you approach the Gate (behind the Gate when you're in the Temple Complex); also measured 10.5 feet / 3.2 meters.



The Eastern Gate that Ezekiel saw was far more than a simple large door...it was a massive gateway. It was an elaborate structure designed to provide access and maintain the sanctity of the Temple complex. Upon entering the gate, one would see a corridor with guardrooms on each side and a porch opening into the Outer Court, with a direct view toward the gate leading into the Inner Court.



7 The **guardroom** was one rod long and one rod wide; and *there were* five cubits between the guardrooms. And **the threshold of the gate by the porch** of the gate facing inward was one rod.

7 The guardroom was one rod long and one rod wide; and *there were* five cubits between the guardrooms. And the threshold of the gate by the porch of the gate facing inward was one rod.

7 Each guardhouse measured one reed long and one reed wide, and the distance between each guardhouse was five cubits. The threshold of the gate near the vestibule facing away from the Temple entrance measured one reed.

7 And every little chamber was one reed long, and one reed broad; and between the little chambers were five cubits; and the threshold of the gate by the porch of the gate within was one reed.

- "...guardroom" - *ta*, can be translated as chamber, room, or cell. These chambers/rooms measured 10.5 feet / 3.2 meters square, and likely will serve as accommodations for ministering priests.

— The space between the chambers was five cubits (8 feet 9 inches / 2.7 meters). This was the thickness of the walls that separated one from another.

— Verse 10 says that there were six chambers total, three on the north side and three on the south side, forming a corridor between them.

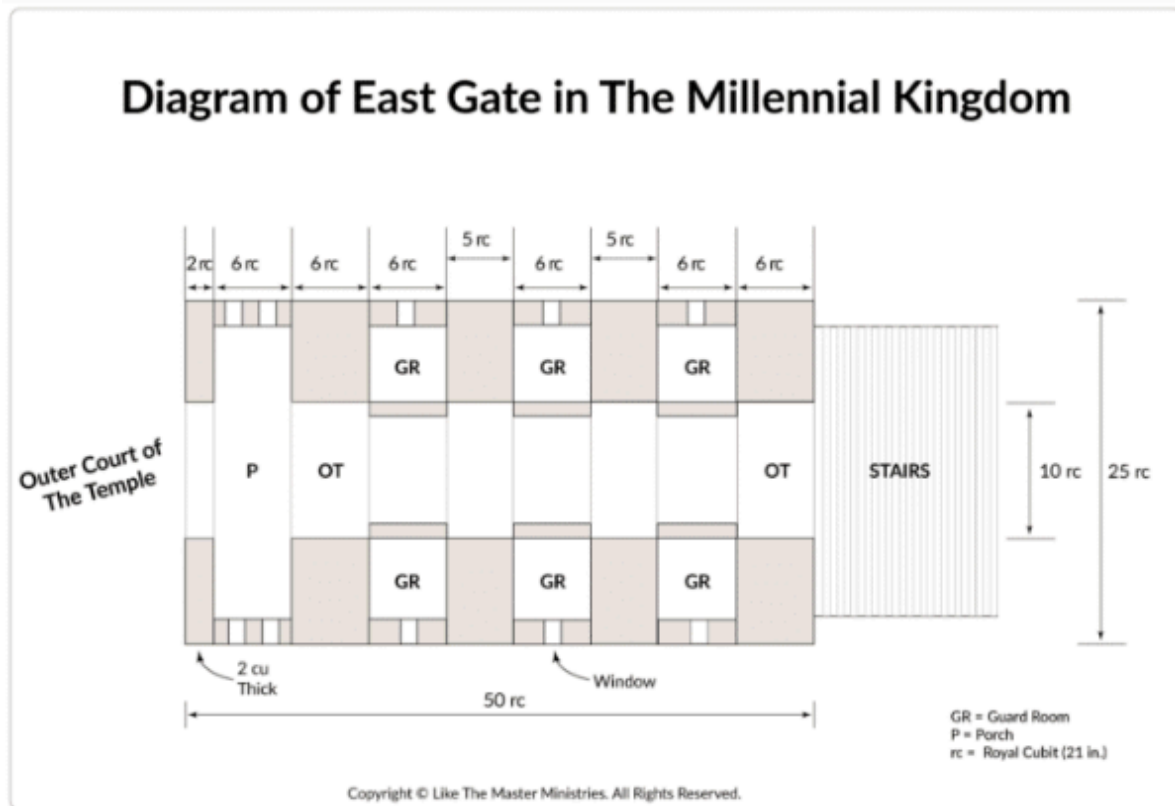
- The gate was actually something of a tower, with rooms and compartments (chambers or "guardrooms").

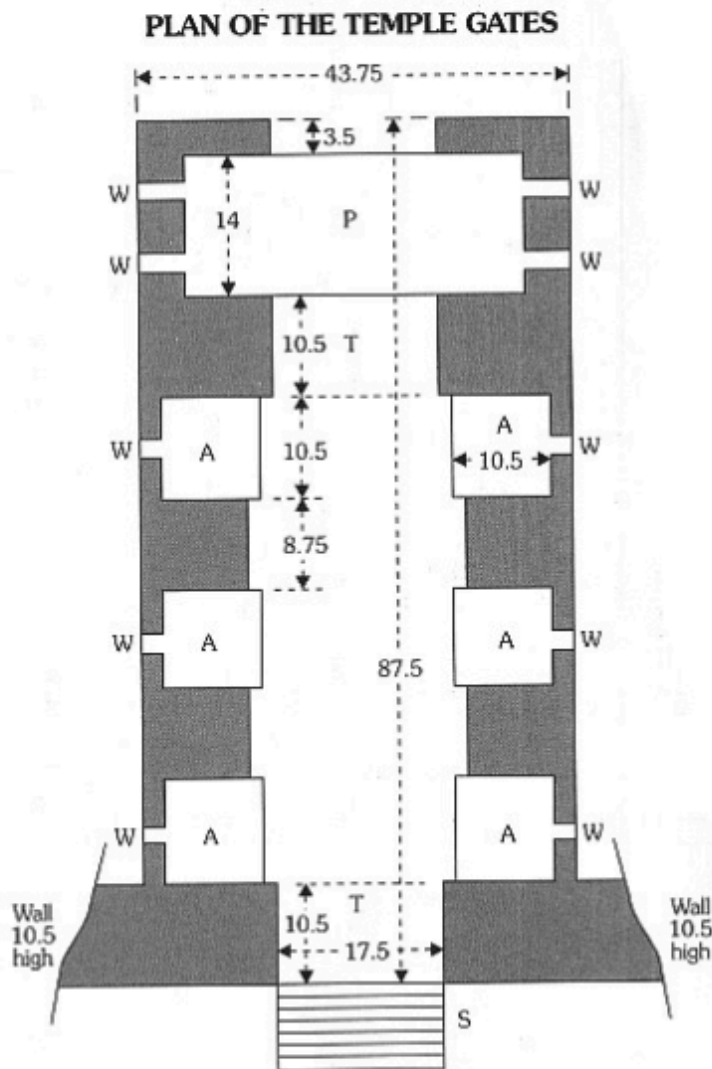
- "...the threshold of the gate by the porch" - "the other threshold" of v6; noted by the "OT" next to the Porch (P) in the diagram below.

- "...porch" - *ulam*, often translated as "vestibule" or "hall"; also present in Solomon's Temple (1 Kings 7:8) although it wasn't outside the gate as this porch is. It was the

vestibule you would trespass to enter the Temple itself.

— The porch was an integral part of the larger structure. It served as a gathering place for worshippers and a preparatory area before priests proceeded into the more sacred sections of the Temple (Cf. 2 Chr 29:17; Joel 2:17).





Dimensions are in feet. 1.75 feet = 1 long cubit.

A = Alcoves, recesses for the guards (40:7a, 10, 12)

P = Portico, vestibule (40:8-9)

S = Steps (40:6a)

T = Thresholds (40:6b, 7b)

W = Windows (40:16)

Wall = Wall around temple area (40:5)

8 Then he measured the porch of the gate facing inward, one rod.

8 Then he measured the porch of the gate facing inward, one rod.

8 Next, he measured the vestibule of the gate facing away from the Temple entrance at one reed.

8 He measured also the porch of the gate within, one reed.

- It doesn't specify if it pertains to the thickness of the wall between the corridor and the porch, or the width or depth of the porch itself.

9 And he measured the porch of the gate, eight cubits; and its **side pillars**, two cubits. And the porch of the gate was **faced inward**.

9 He measured the porch of the gate, eight cubits; and its side pillars, two cubits. And the porch of the gate was faced inward.

9 He measured the vestibule of the gate inside at eight cubits and the doorjambs at two cubits. (The vestibule at the gate faced away from the Temple.)

9 Then measured he the porch of the gate, eight cubits; and the posts thereof, two cubits; and the porch of the gate was inward.

- The depth of the porch (east-west) was eight cubits (14 feet / 4.3 meters; one cubit = 21 inches).

- The length of the porch (north-south) is determined by the total width of the gate, including the chambers/guardrooms and their outer walls on either side of the corridor.

According to v13, this measured 25 cubits (43 feet 9 inches; 13.3 meters).

- "...side pillars" - *'êlîm*, refers to pillars or jambs (Cf. 41:1,3). These pillars, on which the actual gate was set, were two cubits (42 inches, 3.5 feet square).

- "...faced inward" - *mêhabbayit*, means "on the inside"; this describes the porch in relation to the side pillars, meaning it was on the inside or between the pillars.

10 The guardrooms of the gate toward the east *numbered* three on each side; the three of them had the same measurement. The side pillars also had the same measurement on each side.

10 The guardrooms of the gate toward the east *numbered* three on each side; the three of them had the same measurement. The side pillars also had the same measurement on each side.

10 Gate guardhouses stood facing east, numbering three on each side, each of them of equal size to the door jamb; that is, having the same measurement on each side.

10 And the little chambers of the gate eastward were three on this side, and three on that side; they three were of one measure: and the posts had one measure on this side and on that side.

- Ezekiel now revisits the chambers/guardrooms (v7). There are three of these chambers on each side of the corridor, three on the north side and three on the south, six total. Each chamber was the exact same size (10.5 square).

- The side pillars (v9) were also symmetrical, each measuring 3.5 feet (42 inches) in diameter.

11 And he measured the width of the gateway, ten cubits, *and* the length of the gate, thirteen cubits.

11 And he measured the width of the gateway, ten cubits, and the length of the gate, thirteen cubits.

11 He measured the width of the gateway at ten cubits, and the length of the gate at thirteen cubits.

11 And he measured the breadth of the entry of the gate, ten cubits; and the length of the gate, thirteen cubits.

- The angel returned to the gate and measured its breadth (10 cubits, 17 feet 6 inches), while the length of the gate was 13 cubits (22 feet 9 inches).

- Length typically refers to the east-west dimension, so not sure what dimension the length of the gate that measured 13 cubits refers to.

- The total length of the eastern gate is 50 cubits (87.5 feet, v15), so the 13 cubits likely refers to the height of the gate. It's possible that it refers to the width of the corridor at its widest point between the guardrooms where the posts of the recessed windows (v16) are set back one cubit behind the borders described in v12.

12 *There was a barrier wall one cubit wide* in front of the guardrooms on each side; and the guardrooms *were six cubits square* on each side.

12 *There was a barrier wall one cubit wide* in front of the guardrooms on each side; and the guardrooms *were six cubits square* on each side.

12 The retaining wall in front of the guardhouses measured one cubit wide. It stood one cubit from the wall to the guardhouses, which were six cubits square.

12 The space also before the little chambers was one cubit on this side, and the space was one cubit on that side: and the little chambers were six cubits on this side, and six cubits on that side.

- Ezekiel observed the low walls, each only 21 inches high, running along both sides of the corridor. These walls marked the boundaries of the chambers/guardrooms and served as partitions.

- This verse then reiterates the dimensions of the chambers/guardrooms (Cf. v7,10), which are six cubits (10.5 feet) square.

13 And he measured the gate from the roof of the one guardroom to the roof of the other, a width of **twenty-five cubits, from one door to the door opposite**.

13 He measured the gate from the roof of the one guardroom to the roof of the other, a width of twenty-five cubits from *one door to the door opposite*.

13 He measured the gate from the roof of the guardhouses to the roof of another at 25 cubits from doorway to opposite doorway.

13 He measured then the gate from the roof of one little chamber to the roof of another: the breadth was five and twenty cubits, door against door.

- "...twenty-five cubits" - equal to 43 feet 9 inches (13.3 meters); this measurement includes the following:

- the thickness of the outside wall on each side - one cubit, totaling two cubits
- Each guardroom measures six cubits, adding 12 cubits
- The corridor, with a one-cubit offset to accommodate the half-walls, accounts for 11 cubits

— Thus, a cross-section of the gateway from north to south would show the following measurements: one cubit for the wall, six cubits for the first guardroom, 11 cubits for the corridor space, six cubits for the second guardroom, and one cubit for the opposite wall. These elements combine for a total of 25 cubits.

- "...from *one* door to *the* door opposite" - appears to indicate that the guardrooms were not only open to the corridor but also featured doors that opened toward the Outer Court. Thus, the doors of the guardrooms on the north side of the corridor were positioned directly opposite the doors on the south side, creating a symmetrical alignment.

14 He made the **side pillars** sixty cubits *high*; the gate *extended* all around to the side pillar of the courtyard.

14 He made the side pillars sixty cubits *high*; the gate *extended* round about to the side pillar of the courtyard.

14 Then he measured the open air porch at 60 cubits from the doorjamb of the courtyard that encompassed the gate.

14 He made also posts of threescore cubits, even unto the post of the court round about the gate.

- "...side pillars" - mentioned earlier in v9; we're now given the height of these pillars: 60 cubits (105 feet, 32 meters)

15 And *from* the front of the entrance gate to the front of the inner porch of the gate *was* fifty cubits.

15 *From* the front of the entrance gate to the front of the inner porch of the gate *was* fifty cubits.

15 The distance from the front entrance gate to the vestibule of the inner gate measured 50 cubits.

15 And from the face of the gate of the entrance unto the face of the porch of the inner gate were fifty cubits.

- The full length of the Eastern Gate: from the front of the entrance gate to the front of the inner porch measured 50 cubits (87.5 feet).

16 And *there were* shuttered windows *looking* toward the guardrooms, and toward their side pillars within the gate all around, and likewise for the porches. And *there were* windows all around inside; and on *each* side pillar **were palm tree decorations**.

16 *There were* shuttered windows *looking* toward the guardrooms, and toward their side pillars within the gate all around, and likewise for the porches. And *there were* windows all around inside; and on *each* side pillar *were* palm tree ornaments.

16 Latticed windows faced the guardhouses, their side pillars within the gate all around, and also for the porches. Windows were placed all around inside, and the side pillars were engraved with palm trees.

16 And there were narrow windows to the little chambers, and to their posts within the gate round about, and likewise to the arches: and windows were round about inward: and upon each post were palm trees.

- The outside of the chambers/guardrooms will have shuttered windows looking both inside toward the corridor and outside toward the Outer Court.

- "...palm tree decorations" - *timorim*, refers to carved or sculpted designs similar to those found in the Solomonic Temple (Cf. 1 Kings 6:29,32,35; 7:36; 2 Chr 3:5).

- In Scripture, palm trees are symbolic of beauty (Song 7:7), righteousness and blessings (Ps 92:12-14; Rev 7:9), and are part of the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev 23:40; Neh 8:15), a Jewish festival that points to the millennial kingdom (Zech 14:16-19).

(iii) Chambers of the outer court (40:17-19)

17 Then he brought me into the outer courtyard, and behold, *there were* chambers and a **stone pavement** made for the courtyard all around; thirty chambers faced the pavement.

17 Then he brought me into the outer court, and behold, *there were* chambers and a pavement made for the court all around; thirty chambers faced the pavement.

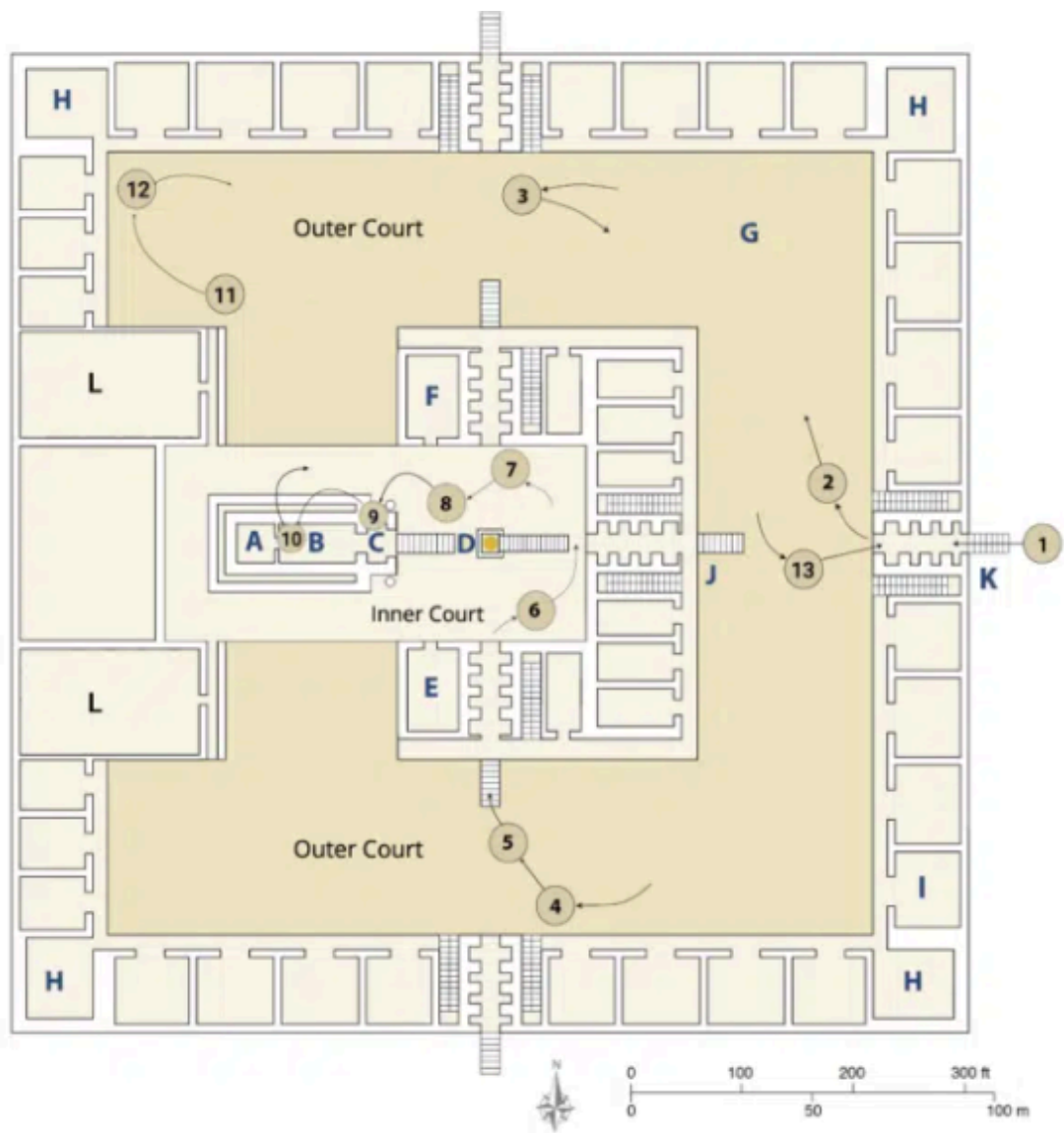
17 Next, he brought me into the outer court, where chambers and a paved area had been constructed all around the courtyard, with 30 chambers facing the pavement.

17 Then brought he me into the outward court, and, lo, there were chambers, and a pavement made for the court round about: thirty chambers were upon the pavement.

- In his tour of the Millennial Temple, Ezekiel now left the Eastern Gate and entered into the Outer Court.

- "...stone pavement" - resembles the pavement in Solomon's Temple (Cf. 2 Chr 7:3).

- Ezekiel also witnessed 30 chambers ringing the inside of the wall, facing the stone pavement of the courtyard. The purpose of these chambers is uncertain.



	Reference	Explanation
A	41:4	The "Most Holy Place."
B	41:3	The inner room of the temple.
C	42:2	The entrance to the temple.
D	43:13–17	The imposing altar; although the number of stairs is not given, the entire altar structure is about 16 feet (4.9 m) tall, so many steps would have been required. This area of the inner court was accessible only by priests—not even the prince was permitted entry.
E	40:46	Chamber for Zadokite priests.
F	40:45	Chamber for "priests who have charge of the temple."
G	40:17–19	The outer court, with its 30 chambers in the outer wall (40:17).
H	46:21–24	The temple "kitchens," one in each corner of the outer court.
I	40:17	The 30 outer chambers.
J	46:2	The "prince's gate": from its threshold he worships on each Sabbath while the priests bring the offerings into the inner court.
K	43:1	The main east gate, through which "the glory of the God of Israel" returns to his temple (cf. 10:19; 11:22–23).

18 And the pavement (*that is, the lower pavement*) was by the side of the gates, corresponding to the length of the gates.

18 The pavement (*that is, the lower pavement*) was by the side of the gates, corresponding to the length of the gates.

18 The pavement to the side of the gates corresponded to the length of the gates.

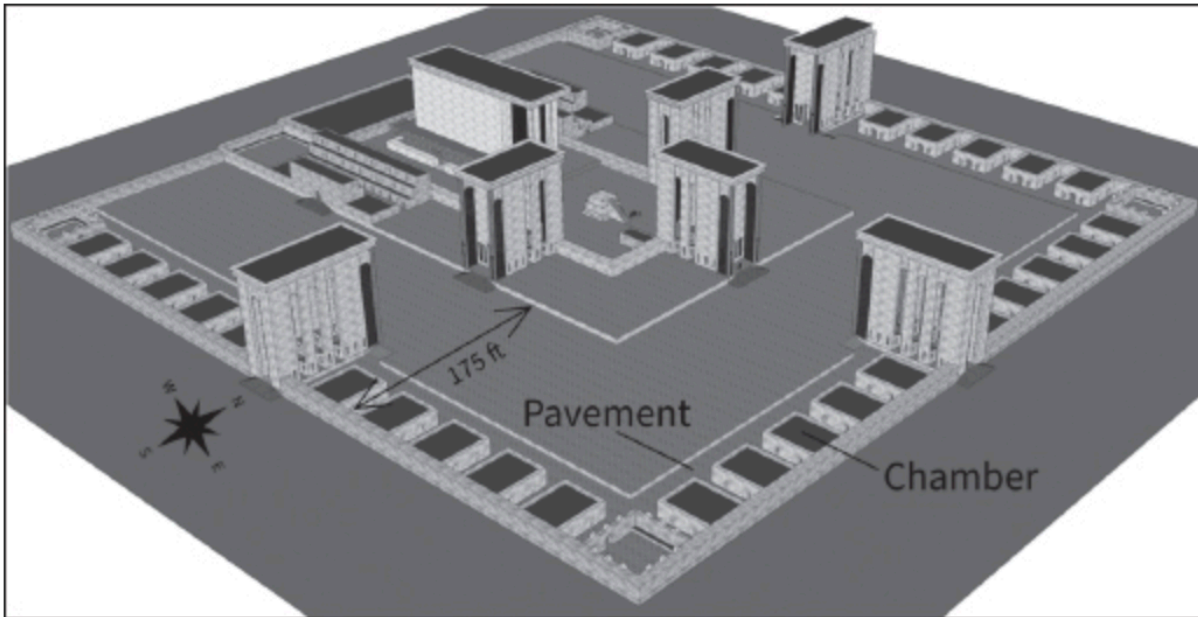
18 And the pavement by the side of the gates over against the length of the gates was the lower pavement.

- "...the lower pavement" - should be interpreted within the broader context of the entire Temple compound. To get to the Inner Court, you would have to go up another set of steps leading into that section of the precinct. Thus, the distinction between the lower and upper pavements lies in the differing elevation.

— The Inner Court was constructed at a higher level than the Outer Court, making the pavement of the Outer Court comparatively lower.

- "...by the side of the gates" - suggests that the mosaic flanked the walls on either side of all three gates. The fact that the pavement corresponds to the length of the gates indicates that, like the gates themselves, it extended 44 cubits into the courtyard.

— This measurement is derived by subtracting the six cubits accounted for by the outer wall from the total length of the gate, which is 50 cubits. Therefore, the total measurement comes to 44 cubits, or 77 feet (23.5 meters).



19 Then he measured the width from the front of the **lower gate** to the front of the exterior of the inner courtyard, a hundred cubits on the east and on the north.

19 Then he measured the width from the front of the lower gate to the front of the exterior of the inner court, a hundred cubits on the east and on the north.

19 He also measured the width from the front lower gate to the front of the exterior inner court at 100 cubits to the east and to the north.

19 Then he measured the breadth from the forefront of the lower gate unto the forefront of the inner court without, an hundred cubits eastward and northward.

- Ezekiel recorded the measurement of the distance between the outer and inner walls of the Temple compound

- "...lower gate" - the pavement (v18) was described as lower, thus all three gates in the Outer Court will be lower than those in the Inner Court.

- Since Ezekiel and the angel had just exited the eastern gate, it is reasonable to assume that the measurements were taken from there.

- The angel began at the inner face of this gate—the side facing the Outer Court. He then proceeded to the corresponding gate leading into the Inner Court and concluded the measurement at the outer face of that gate.

- The distance measured 100 cubits (175 feet, 53.3 meters). The measurement was consistent for the gates on the east and north sides, indicating a uniform distance of 175 feet between the outer and inner walls.

(iv) North outer gate (40:20-23)

20 And *as for* the gate of the outer courtyard which faced north, he measured its length and its width.

20 *As for* the gate of the outer court which faced the north, he measured its length and its width.

20 Next, he measured the length and width of the outer north-facing gate to the courtyard.

20 And the gate of the outward court that looked toward the north, he measured the length thereof, and the breadth thereof.

- The angel and Ezekiel then proceeded to the Northern Gate as the next stop on their tour. The measurements of the Northern Gate match the measurements given earlier of the Eastern Gate (v6-16).

21 It had three guardrooms on each side; and its side pillars and its porches had the same measurement as the first gate. Its length *was* fifty cubits, and the width twenty-five cubits.

21 It had three guardrooms on each side; and its side pillars and its porches had the same measurement as the first gate. Its length *was* fifty cubits and the width twenty-five cubits.

21 It was equipped with three guardhouses on each side. Its side pillars and porches had measurements identical to the first gate: 50 cubits long and 25 cubits wide.

21 And the little chambers thereof were three on this side and three on that side; and the posts thereof and the arches thereof were after the measure of the first gate: the length thereof was fifty cubits, and the breadth five and twenty cubits.

- Exact match of the Eastern Gate described earlier

22 Its windows, its porches, and its palm tree decorations *had* the same measurements as the gate which faced east; and it was reached by **seven steps**, and its porch *was* in front of them.

22 Its windows and its porches and its palm tree ornaments *had* the same measurements as the gate which faced toward the east; and it was reached by seven steps, and its porch *was* in front of them.

22 Its windows, porches, and palm tree ornaments had measurements identical to the east-facing gate. Reached by seven ascending steps, its porch lay to the front of the steps.

22 And their windows, and their arches, and their palm trees, were after the measure of the gate that looketh toward the east; and they went up unto it by seven steps; and the arches thereof were before them.

- "...seven steps" - the only difference in the description of the Northern Gate is that here we learn that there will be seven steps at the outside entrance to each of the Outer Gates.

— Steps were mentioned earlier (v6) in relation to the Eastern Gate, but the number of steps was not given.

23 The inner courtyard had a gate opposite the gate on the north as well as *the gate* on the east; and he measured a hundred cubits from gate to gate.

23 The inner court had a gate opposite the gate on the north as well as *the gate* on the east; and he measured a hundred cubits from gate to gate.

23 From a gate that stood opposite the northern gate he measured 100 cubits, as well as from the eastern gate.

23 And the gate of the inner court was over against the gate toward the north, and toward the east; and he measured from gate to gate an hundred cubits.

- The Northern and Eastern Gates of the Inner Court will be directly aligned with the corresponding Gates in the Outer Court.

(v) South outer gate (40:24-27)

24 Then he led me toward the south, and behold, there was a gate toward the south; and he measured its side pillars and its porches according to those same measurements.

24 Then he led me toward the south, and behold, there was a gate toward the south; and he measured its side pillars and its porches according to those same measurements.

24 Then he led me toward the south, where there was a gate with side pillar and porch measurements identical to the others.

24 After that he brought me toward the south, and behold a gate toward the south: and he measured the posts thereof and the arches thereof according to these measures.

- The dimensions of the Southern Gate will be identical to the measurements of the other two gates.

25 The gate and its porches had windows all around like those other windows; the length was fifty cubits and the width, twenty-five cubits.

25 The gate and its porches had windows all around like those other windows; the length was fifty cubits and the width twenty-five cubits.

25 The gate and its porches contained windows all around, identical to the other windows. The length of the porch was 50 cubits and its width was 25 cubits.

25 And there were windows in it and in the arches thereof round about, like those windows: the length was fifty cubits, and the breadth five and twenty cubits.

- These windows were describes earlier (v13,15). Just as in the Eastern Gate, the windows will be located in the chambers/guardrooms and the porch. The measurements of the windows are identical to the other gates.

26 *There were* seven steps going up to it, and its porches *were* in front of them; and it had palm tree decorations on its side pillars, one on each side.

26 *There were* seven steps going up to it, and its porches *were* in front of them; and it had palm tree ornaments on its side pillars, one on each side.

26 Seven steps led up to it, with a porch in front of them. Palm tree ornaments were engraved on its side pillars, one on each side.

26 And there were seven steps to go up to it, and the arches thereof were before them: and it had palm trees, one on this side, and another on that side, upon the posts thereof.

- These details and measurements mirror those stated earlier (v16).

27 The inner courtyard had a gate toward the south; and he measured from gate to gate toward the south, a hundred cubits.

27 The inner court had a gate toward the south; and he measured from gate to gate toward the south, a hundred cubits.

27 The inner court contained a south-facing gate measuring 100 cubits from gate to gate toward the south.

27 And there was a gate in the inner court toward the south: and he measured from gate to gate toward the south an hundred cubits.

- Just as with the other two gates described previously, the Southern Gate will have a corresponding Inner Gate in the Inner Wall directly opposite. The distance between these two gates is identical to the other two gates (175 feet, 53.3 meters).

(c) Inner Court (40:28-47)

(i) South inner gate (40:28-31)

28 Then he brought me to the inner courtyard by the south gate; and he measured the south gate according to those same measurements.

28 Then he brought me to the inner court by the south gate; and he measured the south gate according to those same measurements.

28 Next, he brought me to the inner courtyard by way of the south-facing gate. He measured the south-facing gate as having measurements identical to the others.

28 And he brought me to the inner court by the south gate: and he measured the south gate according to these measures;

- The angel now brings Ezekiel to the Southern Gate of the Inner Court.

- Nowhere in this passage does the text mention an "Inner Wall" but the presence of Inner Gates implies that there indeed is an Inner Wall surrounding the Inner Court.

29 Its guardrooms also, its side pillars, and its porches *were* according to those same measurements. And the gate and its porches had windows all around; it *was* fifty cubits

long and twenty-five cubits wide.

29 Its guardrooms also, its side pillars and its porches *were* according to those same measurements. And the gate and its porches had windows all around; it *was* fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide.

29 The measurements of its guardhouses, its side pillars, and its porches were identical to the others. The gate and its porches contained windows all around. The length of the porch was 50 cubits and its width was 25 cubits.

29 And the little chambers thereof, and the posts thereof, and the arches thereof, according to these measures: and there were windows in it and in the arches thereof round about: it was fifty cubits long, and five and twenty cubits broad.

30 *There were* porches all around, twenty-five cubits long and five cubits wide.

30 *There were* porches all around, twenty-five cubits long and five cubits wide.

30 Porches lay all around, measuring 25 cubits long and five cubits wide,

30 And the arches round about were five and twenty cubits long, and five cubits broad.

31 And **its porches were toward the outer courtyard**; and palm tree decorations *were* on its side pillars, and its stairway *had* eight steps.

31 Its porches *were* toward the outer court; and palm tree ornaments *were* on its side pillars, and its stairway *had* eight steps.

31 leading to the outer courtyard. Palm tree ornaments were engraved on its side pillars. The stairway leading to it contained eight steps.

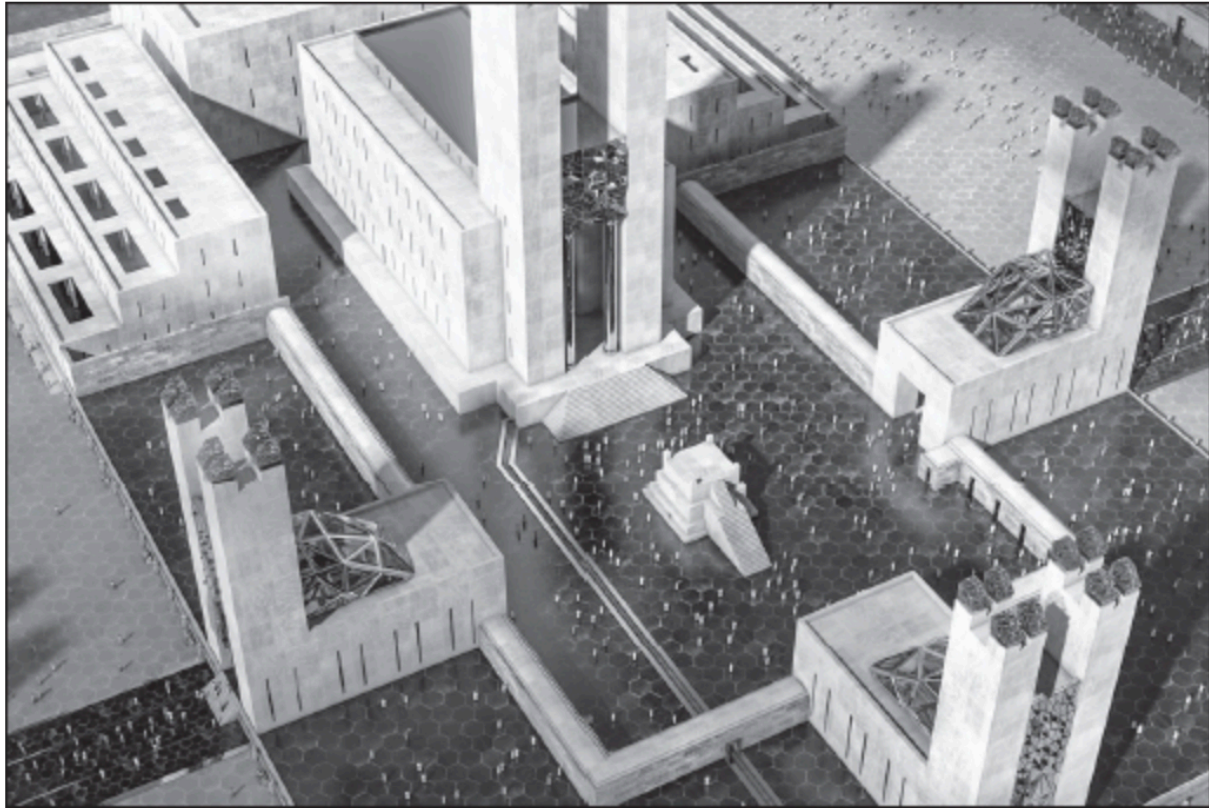
31 And the arches thereof were toward the utter court; and palm trees were upon the posts thereof: and the going up to it had eight steps.

- The design and measurements of the Inner Gates mirrored the Outer Gates, and they were directly opposite one another, separated by a distance of 175 feet (53.3 meters).

- "...its porches *were* toward the outer courtyard" - one significant structural difference between the Inner and Outer Gates will be the orientation of the porches. The porches in the Outer Gates faced inward, toward the Outer Court, while those in the Inner Gates faced outward (toward the Outer Court).

— If the porches of the Inner Gates had been oriented the same as those of the Outer Gates, they would face the Temple itself. Instead, they were situated at the other end of their respective gateways, facing the porches of the Outer Gates.

- "...eight steps" - another notable difference between the Outer Gates and the Inner Gates are the number of steps leading up to them. The Outer Gates will have seven steps (v22,26), while the Inner Gates will have eight steps.



(ii) East inner gate (40:32-34)

32 Then he brought me into the inner courtyard toward the east. And he measured the gate according to those same measurements.

32 He brought me into the inner court toward the east. And he measured the gate according to those same measurements.

32 Then he brought me into the inner east-facing courtyard, where he measured the gate, identical to the others.

32 And he brought me into the inner court toward the east: and he measured the gate according to these measures.

- The angel then brought Ezekiel from the Southern Gate of the Inner Court to the Eastern Gate of the Inner Court.

— The Eastern Gate of the Inner Court matched the dimensions of the Southern Gate of the Inner Court.

33 Its guardrooms also, its side pillars, and its porches *were* according to those same measurements. And the gate and its porches had windows all around; it *was* fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide.

33 Its guardrooms also, its side pillars and its porches *were* according to those same measurements. And the gate and its porches had windows all around; it *was* fifty cubits

long and twenty-five cubits wide.

33 The measurement of its guardhouses, side pillars, and porches was identical to the others. The gate and its porches contained windows all around. The length of the porch was 50 cubits and its width was 25 cubits,

33 And the little chambers thereof, and the posts thereof, and the arches thereof, were according to these measures: and there were windows therein and in the arches thereof round about: it was fifty cubits long, and five and twenty cubits broad.

- The windows and guardrooms, along with all dimensions and measurements match the Southern Gate of the Inner Court.

34 Its porches *were* toward the outer courtyard; and palm tree decorations *were* on its side pillars, on each side, and its stairway *had* eight steps.

34 Its porches *were* toward the outer court; and palm tree ornaments *were* on its side pillars, on each side, and its stairway *had* eight steps.

34 leading to the outer courtyard. Palm tree ornaments were engraved on its side pillars. The stairway leading to it contained eight steps.

34 And the arches thereof were toward the outward court; and palm trees were upon the posts thereof, on this side, and on that side: and the going up to it had eight steps.

- Both the dimensions and design of the Eastern Gate of the Inner Court mirrored the Southern Gate of the Inner Court.

(iii) North inner gate (40:35-37)

35 Then he brought me to the north gate; and he measured *it* according to those same measurements,

35 Then he brought me to the north gate; and he measured *it* according to those same measurements,

35 Next, he brought me to the north-facing gate, where he measured the gate, identical to the others.

35 And he brought me to the north gate, and measured it according to these measures;

- The Northern Gate of the Inner Court followed the same design and dimensions as the Eastern and Southern Gates of the Inner Wall.

36 *with* its guardrooms, its side pillars, and its porches. And the gate had windows all around; the length *was* fifty cubits and the width twenty-five cubits.

36 *with* its guardrooms, its side pillars and its porches. And the gate had windows all around; the length *was* fifty cubits and the width twenty-five cubits.

36 The measurement of its guardhouses, side pillars, and porches was identical to the others. The gate and its porches contained windows all around. The length of the porch

was 50 cubits and its width was 25 cubits,

36 The little chambers thereof, the posts thereof, and the arches thereof, and the windows to it round about: the length was fifty cubits, and the breadth five and twenty cubits.

37 And its side pillars *were* toward the outer courtyard; and palm tree decorations *were* on its side pillars, on each side, and its stairway had eight steps.

37 Its side pillars *were* toward the outer court; and palm tree ornaments *were* on its side pillars on each side, and its stairway had eight steps.

37 leading to the outer courtyard. Palm tree ornaments were engraved on its side pillars. The stairway leading to it contained eight steps.

37 And the posts thereof were toward the utter court; and palm trees were upon the posts thereof, on this side, and on that side: and the going up to it had eight steps.

The next section (v38-43) has caused a great deal of heartache among many Christian interpreters. They have a hard time understanding, and even a harder time believing, that the millennial kingdom will feature a temple with animal sacrifices as Ezekiel describes throughout this section (Ezek 40-48).

To overcome this barrier to belief and accurate interpretation of this passage, it is helpful to understand the nature and purpose of sacrifices. Paul Miles, Editor-in-Chief of *Pneumatikos*, a publication of Chafer Theological Seminary, writes:

It should not be forgotten that sacrifices were trans-dispensational. The Mosaic economy is not the only one that featured sacrifices. For example, sacrifices also occurred immediately after the fall (Gen 3:21), in the first generation after the fall in the dispensation of conscience (Gen 4:4), after the flood in the dispensation of human government (Gen 8:20), and in the dispensation of patriarchs (Job 1:5). If, as the dispensationalist supposes, there will be sacrifices in the future millennial kingdom, then the exceptional dispensation is not the Mosaic economy for having animal sacrifices but the Church Age for not featuring animal sacrifices...

Those who accuse a future temple of replacing Messiah's work are in danger of making a dangerous replacement themselves. This replacement is not only a replacement of Israel with the church but perhaps something a bit more subtle. The knee-jerk reaction that Messiah's work on the cross replaces animal sacrifices may be rooted in the assumption that the two sacrifices did the same job. Such a presumption would imply that the blood of animals removed sin and, as a result, that OT saints were saved by sacrifices. Hopefully, our critics are not claiming that sacrifices or other works saved the Old Testament saints. A Protestant hamartiology that recognizes a distinction between the blood of animals and the blood of the Lamb of God should

ease some of the suspicions that hinder our non-dispensationalist friends from accepting a future millennial temple.

It should be understood that even under the Mosaic Law, animal sacrifices were never meant to remove sin; only the Messiah's sacrifice could accomplish that (Heb 10:1-4,10). Even before the arrival of the Messiah, Israelites were saved by grace through faith, with sacrifices serving to restore their fellowship with God. After the church was established, Jewish believers continued to participate in Temple worship (Acts 2:46; 3:1; 5:42). As noted in Acts 21:26, they even offered sacrifices, treating these offerings as memorials of the Messiah's death.

The Levitical sacrificial system was designed to point forward to the coming Messiah. Once He came, this system was replaced by the Lord's Supper, which looks back to Messiah's death and anticipates His return (1 Cor 11:24,26). When Messiah returns and sets up His kingdom in Israel, the Lord's Supper will no longer be observed. Instead, animal sacrifices will take its place. According to Walvoord, these sacrifices will serve as memorials and vivid object lessons of the ultimate sacrifice made by the Lamb of God. During the Messianic Kingdom period, the sacrifices will not be identical to those of the Levitical system, although there will be some overlap. The purpose of sacrificing these animals will be to provide a poignant reminder of Messiah's suffering and death.

The following passages also make reference to a sacrificial system in the Messianic Age: Is 56:7; 66:20-23; Jer 33:18; Zech 14:16-21; Mal 3:3-4. In conclusion, the sacrifices described in Ezek 40-48 are not a revival of the Levitical system but the establishment of a new system focused on remembrance.

(iv) Tables for slaughter animals (40:38-43)

38 A chamber with its doorway was by the side pillars at the gates; there they rinse the burnt offering.

38 A chamber with its doorway was by the side pillars at the gates; there they rinse the burnt offering.

38 There was a chamber with a doorway by the side pillars next to the gate where they prepare the burnt offerings.

38 And the chambers and the entries thereof were by the posts of the gates, where they washed the burnt offering.

- The last gate discussed was the Northern Gate of the Inner Wall, so it's likely that the gate referred to here is that same gate.

— Since the Tabernacle's system required sacrifices to be slain on the north side of the altar (Lev 1:11), it is likely that this activity was exclusive to the Northern Gate.

- The chamber described here was designated for sacrificial worship within the Inner Court, specifically for the washing of the burnt offerings.

39 And in the porch of the gate *were* two tables on each side, on which to slaughter the burnt offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering.

39 In the porch of the gate *were* two tables on each side, on which to slaughter the burnt offering, the sin offering and the guilt offering.

39 In the porch leading in front of the gate there were two tables on either side for slaughtering burnt offerings, sin offerings, and guilt offerings,

39 And in the porch of the gate were two tables on this side, and two tables on that side, to slay thereon the burnt offering and the sin offering and the trespass offering.

- At the Northern Gate, Ezekiel saw four tables, two on each side of the porch. These tables were located on the inner side of the Northern Inner Gate.

— These tables were used for slaughtering the sacrificial animals in preparation for three types of offerings: burnt offerings, sin offerings, and trespass offerings.

40 On the outer side, as one went up to the gateway toward the north, *were* two tables; and on the other side of the porch of the gate *were* two tables.

40 On the outer side, as one went up to the gateway toward the north, *were* two tables; and on the other side of the porch of the gate *were* two tables.

40 and on the outer side, approaching the northern gateway, there were two tables, as well as two tables on the opposite side of the porch in front of the gate.

40 And at the side without, as one goeth up to the entry of the north gate, were two tables; and on the other side, which was at the porch of the gate, were two tables.

- Ezekiel then saw another set of four tables, two on each side; these tables were located on the outer side of the Northern Inner Gate.

41 Four tables *were* on each side next to the gate; eight tables on which they slaughter *sacrifices*.

41 Four tables *were* on each side next to the gate; *or*, eight tables on which they slaughter *sacrifices*.

41 In that way, there were four tables on each side in front of the gate, for a total of eight tables for use in slaughtering the offerings.

41 Four tables were on this side, and four tables on that side, by the side of the gate; eight tables, whereupon they slew their sacrifices.

42 For the burnt offering *there were* four tables of cut stone, a cubit and a half long, a cubit and a half wide, and one cubit high, on which they set the utensils with which they slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice.

42 For the burnt offering *there were* four tables of hewn stone, a cubit and a half long, a cubit and a half wide and one cubit high, on which they lay the instruments with which they slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice.

42 There were four tables carved from stone for the burnt offering, each one and a half cubits long, one and a half cubits wide, and one cubit high, on which the instruments are laid for slaughtering burnt offerings and sacrifices.

42 And the four tables were of hewn stone for the burnt offering, of a cubit and an half long, and a cubit and an half broad, and one cubit high: whereupon also they laid the instruments wherewith they slew the burnt offering and the sacrifice.

- Ezekiel then saw four additional tables not used for slaughter, but rather for holding the instruments used for the animal sacrifices.

- The dimensions of these tables were 31.5 inches (80 cm) square and 21 inches (53 cm) high.

43 And the double hooks, **one hand width *in length***, were installed in the house all around; and **on the tables was the flesh of the offering**.

43 The double hooks, one handbreadth in length, were installed in the house all around; and on the tables *was* the flesh of the offering.

43 Double hooks, a single handbreadth in length, were installed all around in this portion of the temple area.

43 And within were hooks, an hand broad, fastened round about: and upon the tables was the flesh of the offering.

- "...one hand width *in length*" - 3.5 inches long

- The hooks used in the preparation of the animal sacrifices were fastened around the tables.

- "...on the tables *was* the flesh of the offering" - Ezekiel saw the meat from the sacrifices placed on these tables

(v) Chambers for singers (40:44-46)

44 From the outside to the inner gate were chambers for the singers in the inner courtyard, *one of* which was at the side of the north gate, with its front toward the south, *and* one at the side of the south gate facing north.

44 From the outside to the inner gate were chambers for the singers in the inner court, *one of* which was at the side of the north gate, with its front toward the south, and one at the side of the south gate facing toward the north.

44 From outside leading into the inner gate there were chambers for the choir. One was beside the north gate facing the south, and another was at the south gate facing the north.

44 And without the inner gate were the chambers of the singers in the inner court, which was at the side of the north gate; and their prospect was toward the south: one at the side of the east gate having the prospect toward the north.

- Chambers were designated for the singers. These chambers were not located within the Northern Gate, but rather in the Inner Court, on either side of the gate. Their entrances faced south.

- These chambers were also present at the Southern Gate in the same orientation, following the overall symmetry of the Temple compound.

45 Then he said to me, "This is **the chamber which faces south, intended for the priests who are responsible for the temple**;

45 He said to me, "This is the chamber which faces toward the south, *intended* for the priests who keep charge of the temple;

45 The angel told me, "This south-facing chamber is for the priests who maintain the Temple,

45 And he said unto me, This chamber, whose prospect is toward the south, is for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the house.

- "...the chamber which faces south" - located on the north side of the Inner Court

- "...the priests who are responsible for the temple" - these priests were members of the tribe of Levi but were not descended from Zadok (Cf. 44:9-14). They were tasked with general maintenance of the Temple compound and its daily operations.

46 but the chamber which faces north is for the priests who are responsible for the altar. They are the sons of Zadok, who from the sons of Levi come near to the LORD to serve Him."

46 but the chamber which faces toward the north is for the priests who keep charge of the altar. These are the sons of Zadok, who from the sons of Levi come near to the LORD to minister to Him."

46 and the north-facing chamber is for the priests who maintain the altar. These are Zadok's descendants, who, as descendants of Levi approach the LORD to minister directly to him."

46 And the chamber whose prospect is toward the north is for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the altar: these are the sons of Zadok among the sons of Levi, which come near to the LORD to minister unto him.

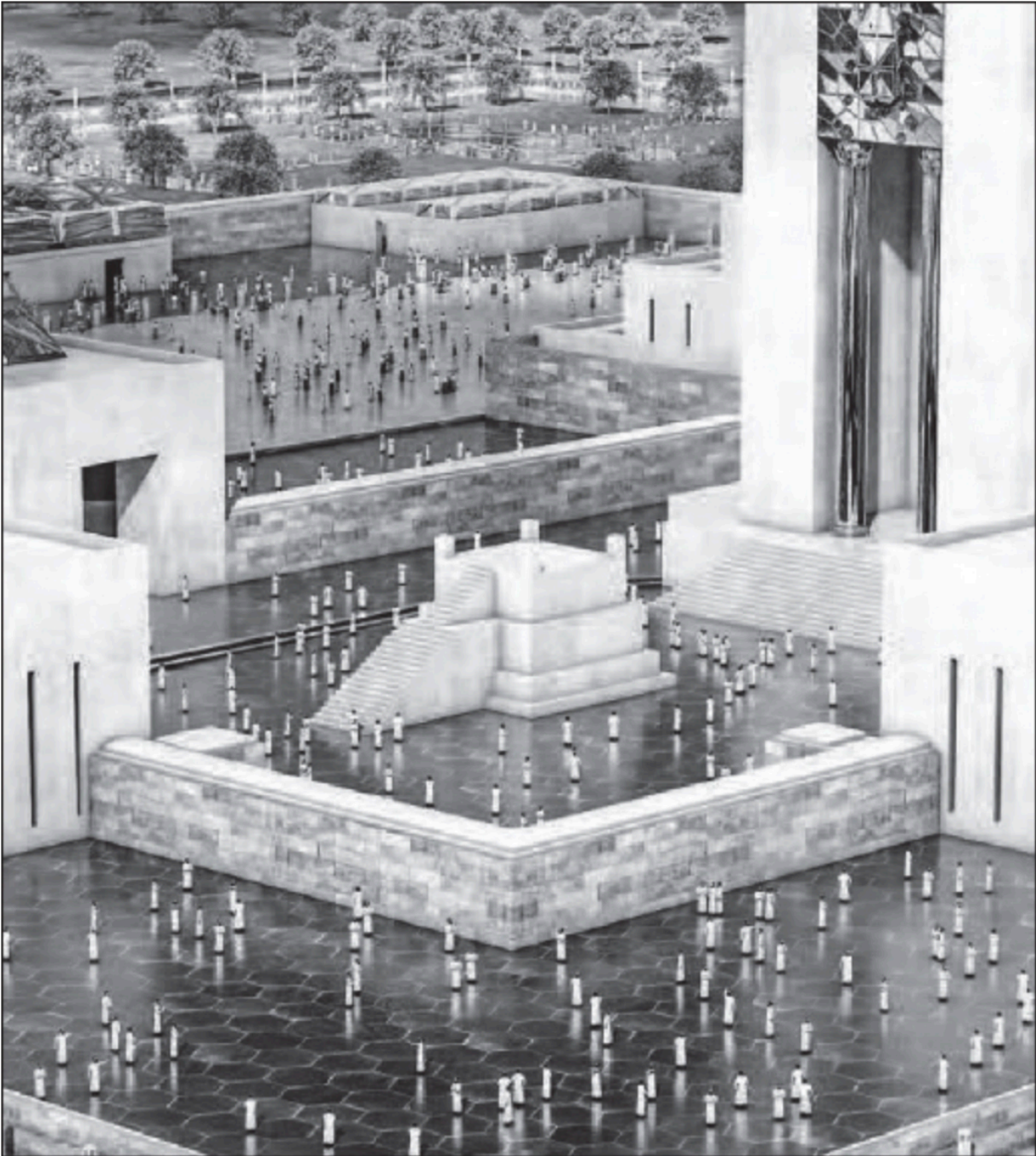
- The chamber located on the south side of the Inner Court, facing north, were for the Zadokite priests. These priests were the sons of Zadok, who were set apart for their loyalty and faithfulness to God.

- Zadok himself served as a priest during David's reign, supporting both David and Solomon during pivotal moments (1 Kings 1:8; 2:26). Because of Zadok's loyalty, his descendants replaced the house of Eli, whose priestly line was rejected due to disobedience (1 Sam 2:27-36).
- The Zadokite priests were entrusted with the sacrificial responsibilities of the altar. Only they could approach the altar and serve directly in the Temple (Cf. 43:19; 44:15; 48:11).

Ezekiel's vision underscores the distinction between two groups of priests in the Messianic Kingdom. Non-Zadokite Levites will oversee general Temple maintenance and non-sacrificial duties, while Zadokite priests will perform sacrifices and minister directly at the altar. Again, it is worth noting that this division highlights the unique dedication and loyalty of the sons of Zadok.

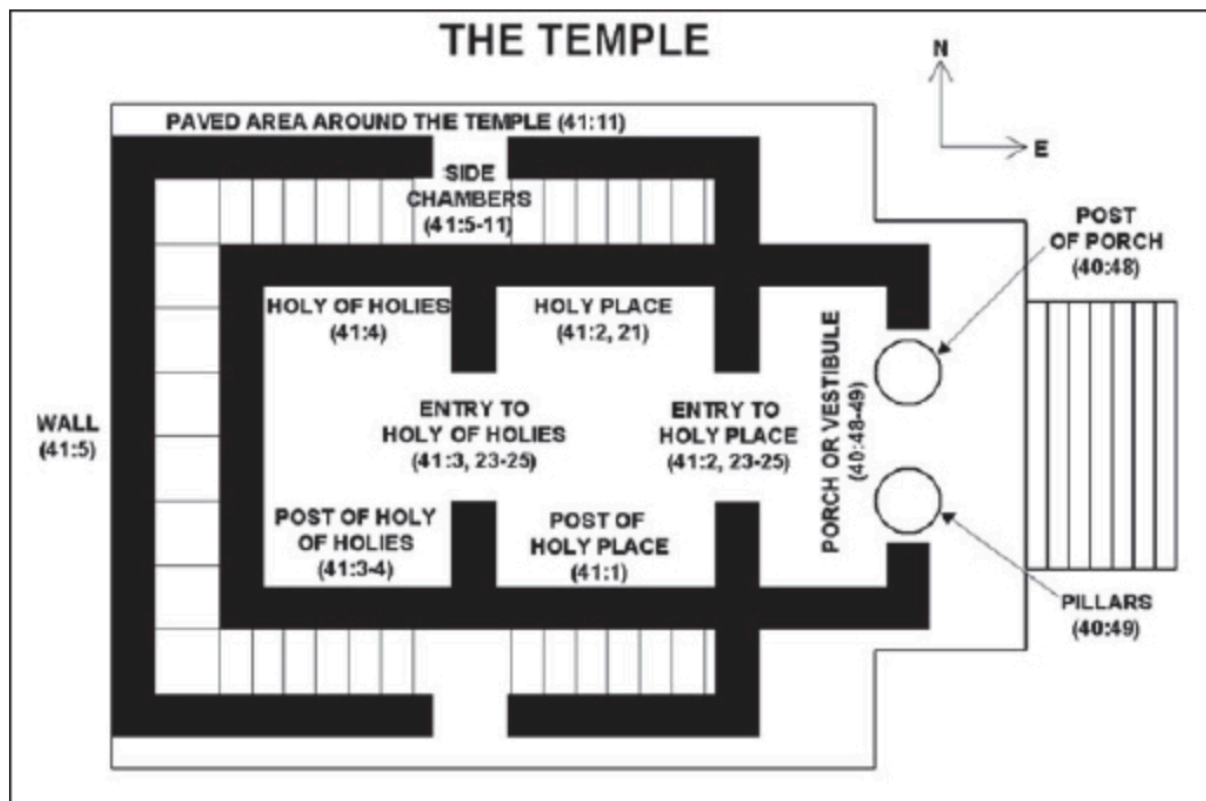
(vi) Inner Court (40:47)

- 47 He measured the courtyard, a *perfect* square, a hundred cubits long and a hundred cubits wide; and **the altar** was in front of the temple.
- 47 He measured the court, a *perfect* square, a hundred cubits long and a hundred cubits wide; and the altar was in front of the temple.
- 47 He measured the court in the form of a square at 100 cubits long and 100 cubits wide. The altar stood in front of the Temple.
- 47** So he measured the court, an hundred cubits long, and an hundred cubits broad, foursquare; and the altar that was before the house.
- The Inner Court measured 175 feet (53.3 meters) square.
- "...the altar" - introduction of the altar of sacrifice, which was centrally located within the Inner Court and stood directly in front of the Temple building.
- Additional details about the altar of sacrifice is found in 43:13-17.



(d) The temple structure itself (40:48—42:20)

With the descriptions of the Outer and Inner Courts complete, the focus now shifts to the Temple building itself (40:48—41:26).



(i) Porch (40:48-49)

48 Then he brought me to the porch of the temple and measured *each side pillar of the porch, five cubits on each side*; and *the width of the gate* was three cubits on each side.

48 Then he brought me to the porch of the temple and measured *each side pillar of the porch, five cubits on each side*; and the width of the gate was three cubits on each side.

48 Next, he brought me to the Temple porch and measured the side pillars at five cubits on each side. The width of the gate measured three cubits on each side.

48 And he brought me to the porch of the house, and measured each post of the porch, five cubits on this side, and five cubits on that side: and the breadth of the gate was three cubits on this side, and three cubits on that side.

- The angel continued his tour of the Millennial Temple by leading Ezekiel to the Temple building itself. Here, he brings Ezekiel to the porch.
- Ezekiel detailed four structural features of the porch:
 - "...side pillar of the porch" - these pillars (or posts) are different than the pillars described in v49
 - "...five cubits on each side" - these pillars were 8 feet 9 inches (2.7 meters) square.
 - "...the width of the gate" - the Septuagint [LXX] provides a variant reading: "The width of the gate-opening was (14 cubits, and the flanking wall of the gate was) 3 cubits on either side."

— This interpretation has been adopted by translations such as the NIV, ESV, Berean Standard Bible, and CSB, while the ASV, KJV, NKJV, and NASB95 adhere to the Masoretic Text.

— A plausible reconciliation of these traditions is to view the three cubits as referring to “side-walls” to the left and right of the porch entrance, totaling six cubits. Considering that the length of the porch is 20 cubits (v49), this would leave a central passageway measuring 14 cubits, equivalent to 24 feet 6 inches (7.5 meters).

49 The **length of the porch** *was* **twenty cubits**, and **the width eleven cubits**; and at **the stairway** by which it was ascended *were* **columns *belonging* to the side pillars**, one on each side.

49 The length of the porch *was* twenty cubits and the width eleven cubits; and at the stairway by which it was ascended *were* columns belonging to the side pillars, one on each side.

49 The porch was 20 cubits long and eleven cubits wide. The stairway by which it was ascended was equipped with columns attached to its side pillars, one on each side.”

49 The length of the porch was twenty cubits, and the breadth eleven cubits; and he brought me by the steps whereby they went up to it: and there were pillars by the posts, one on this side, and another on that side.

- "...length of the porch" - the third structural feature that Ezekiel noted

- "...twenty cubits" - in length, from north to south (35 feet, 10.7 meters)

- "...the width eleven cubits" - in width, from east to west (19 feet 3 inches, 5.8 meters)

— These dimensions resemble the porch of Solomon's Temple (Cf. 1 Kings 6:3)

- "...the stairway" - between the altar of sacrifice in the Inner Court and the porch of the Temple building provided access to the Temple, and makes it clear that the Temple was set on a terrace.

— This elevated position above the Inner Court continued the tiered elevation seen from the Outer Court to the Inner Court.

- "...columns *belonging* to the side pillars" - the fourth structural feature that Ezekiel noted. These pillars stood within the width of the gate (v48), that measured 24 feet 6 inches (7.5 meters).

— This also mirrors the construction of Solomon's Temple, where two prominent freestanding pillars named Jachin and Boaz stood before the Temple (1 Kings 7:15-22). The drawing below illustrates what the pillars of Solomon's Temple may have looked like, based on the text and relevant archaeological data.

