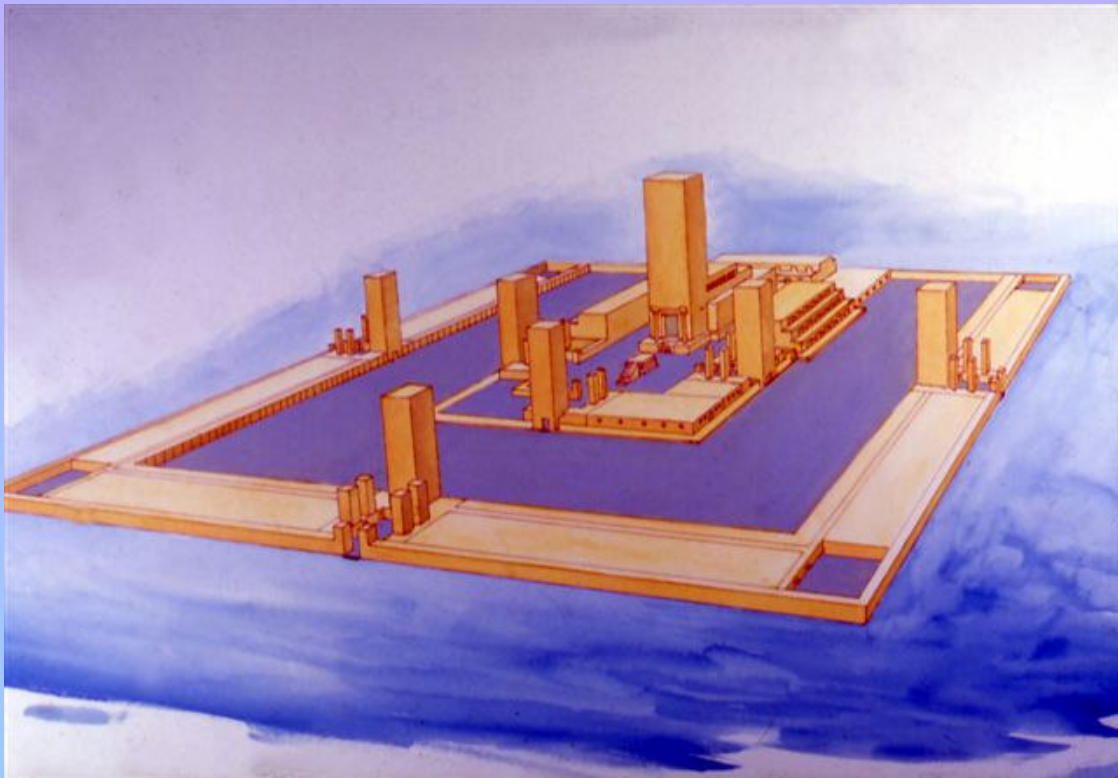


GOD'S TEMPLE

IN PROPHECY



By Leroy Neff

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CHAPTER I

A VISION OF THE WORLD TOMORROW

We live in an amazing and yet frightening age. These times are unlike any since man was put on the earth

In an age when mankind is in special need of God we find man has cut himself off from God. He is cut off from the only source that can tell him of things to come.

Without the correct knowledge of Bible prophecies, only uncertainty and doubt face the inquiring mind. To avoid the unpleasantness of thinking about events to come - of possible world annihilation, most people in the Western world have resorted to pleasure and material goods to gratify the desires of the flesh. Man wants to hide from the realities that lie immediately ahead.

The man who has put his trust in God looks on beyond this present evil and upset world. He looks past the soon-coming catastrophes to the world tomorrow. That new world will bring peace and happiness for the whole world. It will bring abundance and prosperity to all mankind.

The Pillars in God's Temple

Just as Daniel wrote (Daniel 12:4), knowledge has been increased in this time of the end. Part of the knowledge which God has increased concerns the many prophecies of the Bible.

God has promised that the overcomer of the Philadelphia era of God's Church will become a "pillar" in the temple of God (Rev. 3:12).

This is speaking symbolically of a position of authority in the headquarters of the world, which will be at a new Temple to be built in Jerusalem. Do you know where the pillars are located in God's temple? Most people know that there are two large pillars that stand in front of the temple, but are they the physical types of the offices to which Christ refers?

The saints of this era who do overcome and endure to the end will be right at this temple of God. They will be here for the one thousand year period, and even on through the following one hundred year period (Is. 65:17-25). If you are one of God's faithful saints in this age, you will be assigned at the temple for this whole period. Here is an opportunity for you to have described, right now from your own Bible the description of that wonderful place, God's Temple in prophecy.

A Pattern of Things in Heaven

The book of Hebrews reveals that the tabernacle in the wilderness (which was of the same general pattern as the temple), was built after the pattern of things in the heavens (Heb. 8:5,

9:23-24). The former temple and the one to come are constructed by men as a special dwelling place for God on this earth. These buildings made with hands are "figures (or copies, RSV), of the true (which is in heaven)."

When we therefore come to fully understand the details of the physical temple we also can better understand the temple and dwelling place of God in heaven. Many of the prophecies in the Bible are pictured from God's throne in the heavens. In the book of Revelation there are several places where God's temple in heaven is specifically mentioned.

In a sense, then, we are privileged not only to understand physical things by this study, but we are also able in the "mind's eye" to see dimly into the very throne and temple of God in heaven.

Christ spoke through His disciples on several occasions concerning this house (the Temple) of His Father. On one occasion He referred to the house as having many rooms (incorrectly translated "mansions") (John 14:2). In this particular place He was referring more specifically to the spiritual offices that He will give to the saints at His coming.

Because of His allusion here to the Temple of God during the millennium, it certainly ought to be interesting to the Christian to know how many rooms there will be in that temple. What will be their size and location? What is their purpose? Christ here was emphasizing the fact that there were many offices to be filled, and not a few.

The Bible describes the many and various kinds of rooms or chambers in the temple. It also numbers them and gives their specific locations. Do you know how many there are, or where they are located? This book will show just how many there are, where they are located, and just where they are described in the Bible.

Ezekiel saw the World Tomorrow

The prophet Ezekiel was projected forward in time through many centuries to the soon-coming world tomorrow (Ezekiel, chapters 40 to 48). In this particular vision he even saw God's temple from which Christ will rule the whole earth! He saw the coming King of Kings and Lord of Lords in His new kingdom, the Kingdom of God. He saw the glory of Christ which will then fill the whole earth. Ezekiel was inspired of God to write of that world tomorrow. It was recorded and handed down to us today so that we might understand the details of the marvelous temple of God in prophecy.

Many scriptures in the Bible show us that all nations will come to Jerusalem to worship God (Zech. 14). They will come to the very temple that Ezekiel describes. In that day, the nations of the earth will come to see the glory of Christ and the beauty of His Temple.

God has preserved a description of this temple for us to understand. It has not been placed in the Bible in vain. It is there for God's people to view and understand. It is this particular temple described by Ezekiel which is here described and explained in detail in this book.

But in order to understand correctly the details of this particular temple, it will be necessary

to come to understand little-known details of Solomon's temple, since both are designed after the same pattern.

We will also have a better idea of what the tabernacle in the wilderness was like. It was also patterned after the same manner, except for smaller dimensions.

Is the Temple a Part of the Gospel?

God has commissioned His Church go into all the world and preach the gospel. God's Church is doing just that. Do the details of God's Temple have any connection with the gospel?

To answer this question, we must first understand what the gospel is. It is, in simple language, good news. What is this good news about? It is the good news concerning the coming Kingdom of God. It is the advance news concerning the soon-coming government of God on this earth.

Jesus Christ is coming again, but this time He will come to rule the world. He will rule from Mount Zion, from His Holy Temple. Since Christ will rule from His Temple in the soon-coming kingdom, then any information about this temple is a part of the good news concerning Christ's soon-coming kingdom. This particular part of the good news concerning the coming Kingdom of God is probably the least understood.

Why is this?

Scriptures Regarding the Temple Neglected

The sections in the Bible concerning the temple are the parts that are so often skipped. Since it is not easy to understand, and since it concerns primarily physical things, it is of little interest to many people.

One man has aptly described the situation in the following way. "Most people skip over the part concerning the temple since it is hard to understand, just like they skip portions concerning the genealogies of who 'begat who.'"

Since the portions of the Bible concerning the temple are sometimes relegated to a similar category with the genealogies they are among the parts least understood.

On the other hand, some of the Biblical scholars have spent years, and even decades of their lives trying to understand this one small phase of the Bible. We must have a right balance. The parts in the Bible concerning God's Temple are comparatively very small, but nevertheless include many chapters.

The scholars who have studied on this particular subject have often not permitted the Bible to correct and reprove them. Many have leaned to their own understanding on this subject, and therefore they have not been able to come to the correct answers. There are no drawings or photographs of what God's Temples have been like. The only reliable record we have is in the

Bible. For clarification of what the Bible says it is necessary to write the description in modern easy-to-understand English and convert that information to a drawing or picture to convey what is meant. It is not quite as easy as it may sound however, since the Bible account of the temple has purposely been clouded and difficult to understand.

Even though it is difficult to understand in some places, there is no need to skip this portion of the Bible in our private Bible study. The Apostle Paul said that all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine (II Timothy 3:16). Therefore, this particular portion of the Bible can be profitable for us today. God has included it in the Bible for us to understand.

God Inspired Many Chapters About the Temple

The tabernacle in the wilderness, the houses where God has dwelt here on this earth, and will dwell during the coming age take up many chapters in the Bible. Even though this is not one of the most important things during this time, it is important enough that God has devoted considerable portions of the Bible to it.

Several chapters in the book of Exodus are devoted exclusively to the description of the tabernacle. When Solomon built a house for God to dwell in, we find again that several chapters were necessary to give adequate description.

Following the captivity, Joshua and Zerubbabel built another temple. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah, which were written a little later gave information about this temple, the wall, and the city of Jerusalem. In fact, much of the book of Ezra rehearses the details of the rebuilding of the temple. It is even further mentioned in the books of Haggai and Zechariah. In fact, the whole book of Haggai concerns this subject.

When it comes to the description of Herod's temple, very little is said in scripture. And yet, there are many allusions or comments concerning it by Christ and the apostles.

For the millennium to come God has inspired several chapters in the book of Ezekiel to the description of His Holy Temple.

In summary then, there are more than seven chapters in the Bible which deal solely with the description of God's Temple. There are other chapters dealing with the tabernacle. Many other chapters have been inspired which give us the history concerning the building of these various temples.

In addition, there are many prophecies concerning various aspects of the temple. And there are many incidental verses in the Bible concerning the tabernacle in the wilderness and these temples.

In all, there are approximately thirty or forty chapters in the Bible which concern the description of the temple, its history and prophecy. If they were all compiled in one place, there would be a book which might possibly be as large as the book of Deuteronomy.

We Can Understand

Since God has left so much information in His Word about this subject, it certainly is one that we should understand. It will help us in our own personal study of the Bible if we understand God's Temples, whenever we read the various scriptures concerning them. With this information we will be better able to understand certain historical and prophetic texts in the Bible which refer to the temple.

Many religious scholars do not understand God's temple in most of its important details. There is no work available which always follows the Bible description to my knowledge. In this particular work, the Bible will be the basis for understanding, not the various ideas of men.

Chapter II will give many more details regarding this particular point.

The apostle Paul stated, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (II Tim. 3:16). That includes these various scriptures concerning God's Temple.

Do You Love the Gates to the Temple?

God has given the descendents of Jacob the choicest of the lands of this earth as promised to Abraham. He has blessed them with every conceivable blessing both individually and nationally. He has given us such beauties in nature as the Grand Canyon, Carlsbad Caverns, the Rocky Mountains, the Alps, the Fjords. He has given us many of the most beautiful coastlines in the world. These all are prophetically a part of the "dwellings of Jacob."

Since God has given us such a choice heritage, it would be easy to think that God would regard these beautiful sights with great love. Even though these places are so often beautiful beyond description, they do not compare at all to the love that God has for even the gates to His Temple.

"The Lord loveth the gates of Zion (at the Temple) more than all the dwellings of Jacob" (Psalms 87:2).

Since God loves even the gates to His Temple, we also ought to know more about it, and to begin to love what God has planned and designed to be His capital in the world tomorrow. He calls this temple His Holy Temple in many places in scripture. If it is a holy place then we should learn to reverence and respect it, just as we should reverence and respect all those things that are holy to God.

David looked forward to the coming world tomorrow to the time when he again would be king over Israel. In that time to come, he will be at Jerusalem, at the very Temple of God. He was inspired to write of this time in the Psalms 84:11.

"For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand; I had rather stand at the

threshold of the house of my God, Than to dwell in the tents of wickedness"

Just what are the courts of God like? How many are there, what is their shape, their dimension? Are there buildings in the courts, or is it just open ground? Is there a wall around the exterior? How high is the wall? How many gates are there and where are they located? What are the gates like? These are just physical aspects of the temple which may help us picture what beauty God has designed for His people.

God Will be There

Even though these physical aspects are important, the most important part, the part that makes the Temple of God so grand and glorious is that Jesus Christ, in all of His glory will be there.

"Afterward he brought me to the gate that looketh toward the east; and, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east; and His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth did shine with his glory. . . And the glory of the Lord came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east. And a spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house. And I heard one speaking unto me out of the house; and a man stood by me. And He said unto me: "Son of man, this is the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever" (Ezekiel 43:1-7).

Do you understand the physical aspects of the preceding scripture? Where is the east gate? What is it like? What is the inner court and where is it located?

Do you know what the pillars named Jachin and Boaz are like? They are not what some lodges thinks they are, nor are they like the scholars picture them to be.

Where will this millennial temple be located? Will it be where the former temples were located? The answer is almost stranger than fiction, and yet the Bible gives the answer plainly and clearly, when you come to see it in the Bible.

Do you know the differences between the various temples that have been built, and the one to come? Was Zerubbabel's temple the same as Solomon's? These and many other questions will be answered right out of the pages of your own Bible.

But before we can understand what the temple is really going to be like, we must first determine why there is so much confusion in the many works on this subject that have already been written. We also must establish a sure and firm foundation as a basis for this work. It is not just another work based on unsure facts, which will not stand, because it will be based on the Bible. The next chapter will show the error of these other works and establish the basis for this present work.

CHAPTER II

WHY SUCH CONFUSION?

Many religious scholars do not really know what God's temples were like. They are divided in their conclusions. Each man has his own opinion. Even in major points they sometimes disagree completely.

By comparing the usual drawings and models of Solomon's temple, it is immediately noted that no two of them are alike. Some of them are so different in appearance that you would not have any idea that they apparently came from the same description. These differences are sometimes so great that they are opposite extremes in design.

If you described to one architect a house you wanted built, giving the basic dimensions, and then presented the same information to another architect, you would expect both of them to make similar plans and drawings. When it comes to the scholars' and architects' drawing plans for the temples described in the Bible, this is not so.

With such a wide variation as now exists, the interested person is completely confused. Which author is correct, or is any one correct? What is the basis used in making these drawings and models?

If you examine the writings of most researchers in the light of the Bible, you will soon notice that there are in every case major and minor differences that are contrary to the Bible.

Before we answer the question of why so many differences, it is necessary to understand certain basic problems about this subject.

There are only three Basic Sources

In researching this subject, you would naturally look to the Bible for most of your information. Then you might check a Bible Commentary or Bible Dictionary, or possibly an Encyclopedia. In checking these obvious sources, you would also notice what their sources of information were.

Many of their sources will be certain authorities who have made extensive studies on the subject. Some of these men have spent most of their lives on this one subject. One famed authority spent thirty-five years of his life to draw and describe Solomon's temple. Yet, his particular drawings, very beautifully and skillfully done, appear in no point like any of the other authorities. The style of architecture is entirely different from all the others, in fact, it is probably one which is furthest from the truth.

But where did these authorities get their information? The surprising answer is that there are only three original sources that all of this information has come from!

When it gets down to the basis of it all, there are only these three main sources for information, the Bible, Josephus, and the Mishna.

On reading these basic sources it is immediately apparent that neither Josephus nor the Mishna give very much information. They are very brief, giving only certain points. The Bible gives essential information only, and appears purposefully brief.

Bible Inspired

To start with, we must approach this from the point of view that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God" (II Tim. 3:16). Since there have been translations of the original Hebrew into various languages, we must refer to the Hebrew if there is any question.

God has preserved His oracles (Old Testament scriptures) through the Jews (Rom. 3:2), and not through the Greeks, or Romans. Therefore, in the case of a question, the Scriptures as preserved by the Jews for the Old Testament will be the final authority.

There are certain variations and discrepancies between these three sources regarding particular points.

We need to understand right now what some of these differences are, so that we will have a right perspective regarding the sources and basis for information.

Josephus a Secondary Source

The next most important source to the Bible, is that of Josephus. All of the scholars seem agreed on this point.

Josephus was a Jewish priest and ruler who was born near the time of Christ. He was a leader among the Jews and wrote his work some years after the destruction of Jerusalem which occurred in 70 A.D. His work is very thorough and detailed, giving the history of Israel and Judah from Old Testament times to his own time.

His work is the most exhaustive and complete on this subject that is available today, and is by far the most reliable. In spite of his reliability in many points, he still has some points that do not agree with scripture.

We must keep certain factors in mind when we refer to Josephus regarding the temple. He wrote about 600 years after the destruction of Solomon's temple. So, he did not see Solomon's temple personally. All he had for his sources of information were the Holy Scriptures and tradition.

He did see Herod's temple but wrote about it several years after it had been destroyed. We should expect him to have more reliable information about Herod's temple than that of Solomon. We might also guess that he would confuse certain aspects of Herod's temple and ascribe them to Solomon. Therefore, we must be wary lest we fall into any such error.

Even though Josephus is reliable in many of the points concerning Solomon's temple, there are certain points which are in error, and it is needful that we understand some of them now.

Only the points of disagreement will be mentioned. We are not now concerned with the points of agreement. There are many more points of agreement than of disagreement.

Here are some of the points of disagreement as found in Antiquities XIII, III, etc.

Josephus states that there were thirty side chambers for each floor, or ninety in all. The Bible states that there were thirty-three in each floor, a total of ninety-nine.

He gives the height of these side chambers as 20 cubits while the Bible states that they were five cubits (I Kings 6:10). He states that the porch was 12 cubits in breadth, however, the Bible states that it was 10 cubits (I Kings 6:3).

The doors of the house were said to be of cedar, while the Bible account states that the entrance doors to the holy place was of Cypress wood (I Kings 6:34) and the entrance to the holy of holies was olive wood (I Kings 6:31, 32). He gives the height of the Cherubim as 5 cubits, while the Bible states that they were 10 cubits high (I Kings 6:23, 25, 26).

Since there are these differences, it is apparent that we cannot take Josephus before the Bible account. The Bible, since it is inspired by God is our primary source of information.

The Mishna of Little Help

The next possible source of information is the Mishna. This is a part of the collection of Jewish traditions known as the Talmud which were handed down by the elders and were later put in writing for preservation. The particular part which refers to the temple, is said to have been written about a hundred years after the destruction of A.D. 70. Several rabbis visited and examined the spot of the former temple and talked with various people in the area. From this information they compiled the particular section referring to Herod's temple

In the first place it should be pointed out that this reference is to Herod's temple and not Solomon's. By reading the comments in the Mishna if they are correct, it becomes plain that Herod did not follow the same plan that Solomon did. The two main rooms of the temple, the holy place and the holy of holies were of the same form and dimension, however, the rest of the building, especially the porch was entirely different. The courts were not the same either, even though there may have been certain similarities.

Since the Mishna refers to Herod's temple instead of Solomon's there is little help that we can receive from it. We are therefore left with the previous conclusion that basically the Bible is the main source for information.

Septuagint is Faulty

One other source should be mentioned at this time. It is the Septuagint version of the Old Testament.

This particular translation is reported to have been made at Alexandria Egypt by seventy Jewish scholars about 284-247 B.C. It was a translation from the Hebrew into Greek. It departs from the Hebrew or Masoretic Text in many points. The translators were prone to follow "reason" rather than to produce a careful and literal translation. In many points regarding the temple, there are great differences. Each time the Hebrew text is hard to understand, they translated incorrectly so that the difficulties seem to "disappear". Because of this many very important points are either left out entirely, or incorrectly rendered. Some very important dimensions are altered because they do not fit with the understanding that these translators had. Certain of these points will be dealt with in their proper places.

It will not be used as a basis for this work. Since it is referred to many times by most authorities on this subject it is necessary to at least mention why it will not be used.

We will use an English translation of the Hebrew text, since God has preserved His oracles through the Jewish elders, who were formerly in "Moses seat" at Jerusalem, instead of Grecianized Jews from Egypt (Matt. 23:2).

Three Reasons for Error!

The first main reason why there are differences between the scholars is because of the variation in the source material. This is a reason for variation in the design as drawn by various scholars. These scholars have been unable to rightly divide the word of truth since they often reject the Bible statement and accept the other sources. When there is a difference, there must be a basis as to which is right, and which is wrong.

Here is the second important reason why some "authorities" come up with different conclusions. They have used "human reason" to decide what is right. Here is an example. A particularly famed scholar who spent his whole life on the subject, discussed various dimensions as given by these sources. He stated that one particular height given was a "false height." On a width measurement given, he quotes certain measurements and states that they are "false widths." But what is the correct width, or the correct height of a certain measurement? What is his basis to determine what is right? The Bible, Josephus, or the Mishna? In this case it is none of these, but the "reasonable judgment," or "guess" of the author.

With such a basis for decision, one man's guess is as bad as the next! No wonder there are such differences.

A third reason for differences is that many have concluded that the text has many corruptions. With this basis, you can never be sure of what is correct and what is "corrupt." Whatever "seems" contradictory, or cannot be quickly understood is classed as being "corrupt" and in need of being "restored." The trouble is that each authority "restores" the text differently! Because of this concept, many of the "authorities" have come up with very different opinions, again based on what they thought was right.

Is the Text in Error?

Here is a prime example of how many have erred on just one point. This particular point is one that is very important, as it alone changes entirely the exterior appearance of the temple drastically.

The temple "porch" is the prominent front part of the temple and is the part that is seen most easily from all four directions. The Bible states that it is one hundred and twenty cubits high (I Chronicles 3:4). The authorities have almost completely rejected this important point. Here is a typical example of how simple Bible statements are rejected. This is a measure which is "so entirely out of proportion to the other dimensions of the porch and the general height of the building, that it is commonly supposed there is some error in the text." (Imperial Bible Dictionary, Article, Temple.)

As will be proved later this is a correct rendering. There is no corruption in the text at this point! There is no variation in reliable texts. Even Josephus repeats several times, not just once, this very same dimension.

From these comments it becomes plain why there has been such a variation in the scholars description and models of the temple. These men have not known what to use as a basis for their work, since there are some variations between the three basic sources of information. They have followed each other "into the ditch" in many cases, and copied a particular point which seemed reasonable or right but which was wrong. They have also used human reasoning to decide points contrary to either or all of these basic sources. They have rejected the Biblical account, if or where this account differed with their own judgment.

We Must Not Follow Error

The roads that these men have trod in trying to learn what the temple was really like has only led to confusion. Nothing is certain, there is only variation and uncertainty.

We must not follow their error!

To start with we must lay a strong and firm foundation for this present work. What will be the basis? What will decide, if there is a difference between these various basic sources?

What will the approach be when certain points appear unlikely, incorrect or wrong? Is reason to be the deciding factor? Are the "authorities" to be the deciding factor? Is the Bible? Josephus, or the Mishna?

The Scriptures are the only sure Guide

The Bible states that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God" (II Tim. 3:16). If this fact is so, then we have here the words of Almighty God, the One who created all things, who personally designed this temple (I Chronicles 28:12), and who has recorded the details for us to understand. Jesus Christ is our "foundation" (I Cor. 3:11), He is the Author of scripture. He has been able to preserve this record for us. We are to hold His word in reverence and awe, in fact to "tremble" before it (Isaiah 66:2). God has preserved this information for us so that we can know!

There need not be question or doubt on this subject.

Nowhere does Josephus claim his writings to be "scripture" or inspired of God. His writings are a secondary source only! He will be used only to supplement, and not to replace the Bible.

The Mishna is from the writings of the Jewish Rabbis. It has been preserved by them, and considered of great authority by them but is not inspired scripture.

As will be proved later, the Mishna is completely unreasonable in certain points regarding the temple, it contradicts itself and the Bible on certain other points, and therefore will only be used in this work to add to certain points where the Bible does not give complete details, and where those details are (1) in accord with the Bible statement (2) supplying information needed, (3) rational and reasonable.

"Here a Little--There a Little"

It will be proved many times in this work that the Bible account is reasonable, when you really understand what it says.

There are no known remains now of any part of the temple buildings that have been built in the past. All has been destroyed or taken away. There is nothing left to measure or use as a basis for information.

An important point which must be mentioned next concerns the various texts in the Bible referring to the subject of the temple.

We are primarily concerned with what is commonly called "Ezekiel's temple," or by some, the "Millennial Temple." Those who have studied the account in Ezekiel have soon learned that it is not complete! There are major and important parts that are completely left out of the description by Ezekiel.

In summarizing Ezekiel we find that there is a description of the gates and the two courts including many buildings in the courts. We also find that a floor plan is given of the main temple building. However, there are no vertical dimensions given for the main temple building.

When we study Solomon's temple, as recorded in Kings and Chronicles a similar problem is presented. The texts concerning this particular temple do not tell us the thickness of the walls, nothing is said about the courts except for one brief sentence. An important dimension of the side chambers is left out completely. Many other points are completely lacking.

Even in comparing Kings and Chronicles we find that there are only certain aspects mentioned in each book that may or may not be even referred to in the other book. For example: The many side chambers to the temple are mentioned in Kings, but are not even referred to in Chronicles.

If we take the account in Kings, we are left completely in the dark regarding other important aspects. If we take the account in Chronicles we are still lacking totally in many points. Alone

they are incomplete. Even put together these two sources are still lacking.

Just what is the answer to this enigma?

God has inspired His word to be written in a way that makes it is necessary to search through the whole Bible on a subject before it can be correctly understood. He has not put all of the information concerning a particular subject in one place only.

God is the One who designed and planned this temple. He designed Solomon's, and He designed Ezekiel's. Since He designed both, and since they are for much the same purpose, it is only reasonable that he would use the same basic plan for both. That is what God has done!

You cannot understand Ezekiel's temple unless you understand Solomon's. You cannot understand Solomon's temple unless you understand Ezekiel's. How simple and plain this will become as we start through this subject and start comparing the various sections in the Bible which refer to both of these temples.

Therefore, in our search for the truth of this subject we will be referring to all scripture so that we might understand the individual points necessary to have an overall understanding.

How Long is a Cubit?

Now it is about time to start our study of the actual temple. But before we can even begin to understand the temple there is one more important point which must be settled. The measurement used for the temple is the cubit. We cannot have any idea how large any part of the temple is unless we first understand in modern terminology the correct length of the cubit in inches. The scholars are mostly divided on this subject. There are many different cubits known, ranging in size from about 11 inches to over 25 inches. Which of these cubits did God use? Since the inch and the foot as units of measurements were unknown in Bible times, we must first determine this important aspect.

The next chapter will cover this very important and basic question. It is exciting to learn that God has preserved the necessary keys in the Bible so that we can know without doubt.

CHAPTER III

HOW LONG IS THE TEMPLE CUBIT?

It seems that almost no one really knows the correct length of the temple cubit. This most important problem must now be solved. All the measurements of the temple are directly related to this unit of measurement.

Some of the authorities have said that the exact length is not known now. Others have various theories or ideas and have come to conclusions which are unproved.

Most scholars have come to accept the 18 inch cubit as being the one which is correct. However, there are still others who insist on cubits ranging in length from 10.8 inches to 25.2 inches. Which, if any, of these are correct? Just how long is this temple cubit?

This is a question we must solve and prove without doubt, or it will be impossible to view this magnificent building in its true perspective and grandeur.

Three Different Cubits?

One scholar in his work on the temple, insists that there were actually three different cubits relating to the temple. There was one cubit which was used for interior furnishings of 10.8" (inches), another for building measurements of 14.4", and a third cubit of 18.0" for land measurements.

Using this particular author's conclusions we are left with some difficult problems. Here is one. The side chambers are 5 cubits high (I Kings 6:10).

"And he built the stories of the side-structure against all the house, each five cubits high; and they rested on the house with timber of cedar"

Please note that scriptural texts will be from *The Holy Scriptures*, The Jewish Publication Society of America, unless otherwise noted.

These chambers are for various offices and were referred to by Christ (John 14:2). They were a physical type of the spiritual offices or positions of the saints during the time of the millennium. These rooms would only be six feet in height according to this authority. Such a conclusion is immediately seen as unsatisfactory.

Another such problem would concern the stairways leading to the second and third floors of these side chambers. The place God has left for these stairways are five cubits square (Ezekiel 41:11). They are also stated to be winding stairs (I Kings 6:8). With exactly six feet only, you would have a difficult job to construct a circular stairway that would be in any sense of the word adequate. The conclusion therefore of a 14.4" cubit is obviously impractical.

This is an example of reasoning by some men who have disregarded certain keys that have been left in the scriptures to determine the correct length of the Temple cubit! God has not left this important question unanswerable. The solution and the proof is indeed amazing.

The common basis for the cubit is considered to be the forearm. There is a problem with this in that everyone has a different sized forearm. And another thing, the length of the arm may have changed (on an overall average) since ancient times.

If you are going to use this basis, only an uncertain figure can result. That is just what the conclusions have been--uncertain.

Because of the universal confusion which exists, many have had less understanding on this subject after studying into it than when they started. But investigate it we must, so that this can be proved once and for all.

Bible Shows Change of the Cubit

To start with, we must first investigate the scriptural record. There is no record in the scriptures that plainly links the cubit to modern measurements, as our measurements were not in use then. But there are a few measurements given in scripture that lead us to the answer.

We read that there were a "thousand cubits on the wall unto the dung gate," from the "valley gate" (Nehemiah. 3:13). But who can prove where the "valley gate" and the "dung gate" of Nehemiah were located for sure? Here the authorities are uncertain and divided. For the time being this appears to be a blind alley.

Another measurement of four hundred cubits between two other gates is also given (II Kings 14:13), but again, for the same reason, the answer is not evident. The two points cannot now be located with certainty.

Ezekiel also gives certain measurements of land that could be of help in this matter. They do not give the answer to the problem, however, they do help to prove the answer once it is found. Those details will be given in proper time.

Except for these possible points, no exact measurement is given in scripture that can now be proven.

The measurements of the temple as recorded in the book of Kings are given without any mention regarding the length of the cubit, or what cubit was used. When we come to the book of Chronicles, a new element is added. Here we find that the cubit measurements of the temple were according to the "ancient measure" (II Chronicles 3:3, Jewish translation). Why this distinction between Chronicles and Kings?

In the book of Ezekiel where the temple is also described, we find that the inspired writer emphasizes two times that this particular cubit was "a cubit and an hand breadth" (Ezek. 40:5 and 43:13).

From these scriptures it becomes plain that there was at one time a change in the length of the cubit. The book of Kings was compiled before the captivity. Ezekiel was written during the captivity. Chronicles was compiled after the captivity. From these facts it becomes plain that there was a cubit, which was standard and well known before the captivity, which was different than the Babylonian cubit, or the one in common use during and after the captivity by the Jews. But that is getting a little ahead of the story. We will come back to it later.

The Encyclopedia Britannica (Eleventh Edition) has an extensive article on the subject of the cubit. It is found under the article regarding "Weights and Measures." At least eleven different basic cubit lengths are given, with many variations of these particular basic lengths.

From this article it is apparent that the cubit has varied with different ancient nations and time. That does not solve our problem but instead complicates it. We need to know the length of the cubit used for the temple, and not the length of the other cubits.

Even when it comes to Israel, the Encyclopedia lists at least four different lengths. Which of these is the correct one?

One cubit that is discussed by this authority is the cubit of 18.23". Here in part is information on this particular cubit.

"This cubit or one nearly equal, was used in Judea in the times of the Kings, as the Siloam inscription names a distance of 1728' as roundly 1200 cubits, showing a cubit of about 17.6" (Encyclopedia Britannica, Volume 28, page 483).

In the Siloam conduit it is difficult to be exact in length. Other authorities mention the fact that this particular tunnel is crooked, and therefore it is difficult to get an exact measurement to use as a basis. Even then it does not prove one way or another the length of the temple cubit.

There is another general cubit length that is referred to by the Jews frequently. It is 21.6" in length.

"This cubit was also much used by the Jews, and is so often referred to that it has eclipsed the 25.1" cubit in most writers. The Gemara names three Jewish cubits of 5, 6, 7 palms, and as Oppert shows that 25.2" was reckoned 7 palms, 21.6 being 6 palms, we may reasonably apply this scale to the Gemara list, and read it as 18, 21.6 and 25.2 inches. There is also a great amount of medieval and other data showing this cubit of 21.6 to have been familiar to the Jews after their captivity; but there is no evidence for its earlier date" (Encyclopedia Britannica, Volume 28, page 484).

Three Jewish Cubits

Here at last is a clue to our problem. The Jews had more than one length in their method of calculating the cubit. These three different cubits used by the Jews were all based on the palm or handbreadth and not the forearm! We have already seen something about the two shorter lengths of approximately 18" and 21.6", but what about the longer length of 25.1".

"It appears that Josephus using the Greek or Roman Cubit, gives half as many more to each dimension of the Temple than does the Talmud; this shows the cubit used in the Talmud for the temple measures to be certainly not under 25 inches. Evidence of the early period is given, moreover, by the statement in I Kings (vii. 26) that the brazen sea held 2000 baths; the bath being about 2300 cub. in., this would show a cubit of 25 in. ... If a lesser cubit of 21.6" be taken, the result for the size of the bath would be impossibly small" (Encyclopedia Britannica, Volume 28, p. 483).

Certainly these two important points demand a longer cubit of some 25 inches to be the one used in the time of Solomon, in the building of the temple.

We need to go back now and continue a previous quotation taken from this same work regarding the 21.6" cubit. To make the sense clear it is necessary to quote a portion over again.

"There is also a great amount of medieval and other data showing this cubit of 21.6 to have been familiar to the Jews after their captivity; but there is no evidence for its earlier date, as there is for the 25 in. cubit (from the brazen sea)" (Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 28, p. 483--Italics ours).

Here again is evidence of a change. A change from a longer cubit to a shorter one. This same point is brought out by another source.

"The cubit in very early times is said to have been 25.19 inches and after the Exile the legal cubits of the Talmudists were 21.85 in." (Peloubet, Bible Dictionary, p. 788, footnote).

As stated earlier, Ezekiel said that the cubit he had reference to was one handbreadth longer. With the comments quoted previously it will now become clear why he referred to the handbreadth. It was the basis for the cubit, and not the arm. The Babylonian cubit, and the one to which the Jews changed during and after the captivity was obviously one handbreadth shorter than the original one.

Now it is clear why there was no problem regarding the cubit in the Book of Kings. It was compiled before the captivity, and the cubit was of established length. Ezekiel wrote during the captivity and he had to clarify that the cubit for the temple was not the Babylonian cubit, or one to which the Jews had changed. It was one handbreadth longer than the new cubit. Chronicles was compiled after the captivity so it was necessary to state that the cubit was according to the ancient measure--the one used prior to the captivity.

This fact is further acknowledged by Adam Clarke in his Bible Commentary, volume 2, page 638 (on II Chron. 3:3)

"First measure of Moses (ancient measure, Jewish) contrary to Babylonian cubit of 1 palm less." The palm and handbreadth are the same thing, just different terminology.

To have an exact figure of this long cubit, since 25.1", 25.19" and 25.2" are mentioned, the round figure of 25.2" will be used as the basis from here on. The small distance of .01" is so negligible that it need not be of great concern in such measures.

Now we have seen that the basis of the Bible cubit is the palm or handbreadth and not the forearm. With that in mind notice that the original cubit was seven palms. That is the number of completeness!

Judah went into captivity and adopted the Babylonian cubit of six (the number of a man) palms! That is a natural a thing to do. Man has always spurned the ways that God has given and turned to the ways of man instead.

A shorter cubit such as one of five or six palms was apparently used in reference to Og, King of Bashan.

"For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of the Rephaim; behold, his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; is it not in Rabbah of the children of Ammon? nine cubits was the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man" (Deut. 3:11).

Notice that this cubit was "after the cubit of a man," and not after or according to the Bible cubit God uses.

In examining the various length cubits mentioned, notice that they all fit closely into the basis of a palm or handbreadth of 3.6". Three palms or 10.8". Four palms or 14.4". Five palms or 18.0". Six palms or 21.6". Seven palms or 25.2". This should make it evident that the Bible cubit and the former Jewish cubits were based on the palm instead of the forearm.

Think what the length of this cubit means. It means that the temple of God will be 252 feet high! That is about the height of a modern 25 story building!

It means that the so-called "little side chambers" are not so little after all. These offices are about 10 feet from floor to ceiling. The five cubits left for the circular stairway is about 10 feet, which is ample for such a stairway.

Using this cubit we now can see that Noah's Ark was over 600 feet long and 100 feet wide. It was over 60 feet high, the height of a modern six story building.

Now we can have a better perspective of the lofty height and impressiveness of God's Temple.

CHAPTER IV

HERE IS THE TEMPLE

The Holy Temple which the Creator God has designed and planned for the millennium to come, is one of splendor and magnificence. It is almost impossible for us to visualize the beauty and grandeur that God has planned in this building and its courts and other structures. To view this properly we must now piece together many parts of this "jigsaw puzzle." We cannot at first view the complete picture. Since there is no photograph or drawing to go by we must go to the written description as inspired by God. He has caused the important details to be written down and preserved for us.

It is somewhat like understanding the plan of salvation God has for mankind. Only after painstaking study, research, and thought can we view the overall plan. At first the inquiring student can only see the "twigs" on the tree. Later as each "piece" or "twig" is put in proper place, the tree in its entirety begins to appear.

In order to see God's Temple we must inspect carefully each "twig," each "limb" and then the "trunk." Only then can we view this most magnificent building in all its future beauty and glory.

God is the Architect

Keep in mind that David, Solomon, or Ezekiel, were not the architects or designers of God's Temple. God, the Creator of heaven and earth designed it.

Theologians and scholars refer to Solomon as the designer, and believe that he "copied" the architectural style after the pagan architecture of his day. They believe that he derived ideas for certain sections of the temple after the Egyptians, and other parts from the Assyrians or other near eastern races of people and their architecture. That is exactly contrary to the inspired word of God.

"Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch (of the temple), and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper rooms thereof, and of the inner chambers thereof, and of the place of the ark-cover; and the pattern of all that he had by the spirit, for the courts of the house of the Lord, and for all the chambers round about, for the treasuries of the house of God, and for the treasuries of the hallowed things" (I Chronicles 28:11-12, Jewish translation).

Here is plain scripture that proves God to be the Author and Architect. He showed David "by the spirit" the "pattern" of all these things. No wonder the students of the temple have come up with such wrong conclusions. They are looking to the architecture of ancient men for the details instead of to the Word of God.

The Five Basic Sections

There are five basic sections to the Temple building proper. The Holy of Holies, the Holy Place, the porch, the side chambers, and the upper chambers.

The main entrance to the temple is on the east. Upon entering the Temple, the porch is first traversed, then the Holy Place, then the Holy of Holies. Only appointed priests were allowed in any of these rooms, or for that matter in the immediate court that surrounded the temple. Only the High Priest was permitted in the Holy of Holies, and then only once a year on the Day of Atonement.

The side chambers are not technically a part of the Temple, and the entrances to them are on the north and south sides of the building. We might also say that even the porch is not technically a part of the "house," since it was placed "before the house" or in front of it.

The *Ulam* - or Porch

To start our description it is only logical to start with that portion which is first entered, the porch. As you will see very soon, the porch is not at all what we today call a porch, but is rather a slender and graceful tower on the front of the temple. It is here that the Biblical account as given in Kings commences. The translation of the Holy Scriptures by the Jewish Publication Society of America will be used unless otherwise stated.

"And the porch before the temple of the house, twenty cubits was the length thereof, according to the breadth of the house; and ten cubits was the breadth thereof before the house" (I Kings 6:3).

Notice that only the basic floor dimensions of the Porch are given in this place. The height is not given--there is no description of the walls--no details of the ceiling, windows, or exterior. That will be found in other places. Here is one of the first examples to show that no scripture can be understood by itself. We must look in all the other places where the temple is described to get the details.

The text does state that it is the same width (twenty cubits) as the breadth of the "house," and is ten cubits in depth. It must be understood now that these dimensions are inside room dimensions. Outside dimensions are given elsewhere.

So far we have a rectangle described of about twenty by thirty feet. But how high is this Porch? The preceding verse states that the house, not the Porch, is thirty cubits. Such a proportion if continued out over the porch would certainly be symmetrical. But such a conclusion is the one usually accepted but it is wrong.

The height for this porch is the first major mistake almost all the "scholars" have made. The Bible is clear and plain.

"And the porch that was before (the house), the length of it, according to the breadth of the house, was twenty cubits, and the height a hundred and twenty; and he overlaid it

within with pure gold" (II Chronicles 3:4).

This has been universally rejected this as being a "corruption" of the text, as the proportions would be completely wrong. Man's reasoning decrees that this is architecturally unsound, or that it is out of proportion, or that it would impossible to build. Here is one such example.

"The proportions, 20, 10, 120 are impossible on both aesthetic and statical grounds. There is certainly a corruption of the text, or we have another example--a gross one here--of the love of exaggeration to which the Chronicler is prone when describing the sanctuary and its worship" (Dictionary of the Bible, James Hastings, editor, article "Temple").

Men have decided that this is unreasonable. They have decided such a structure would be a "chimney," rather than a porch--that it would be structurally unreasonable.

Has God been proved to be a faulty architect not knowing what is proper from aesthetical and statical grounds? Has He been unable to preserve His word on such vital points regarding His own House?

The authorities do not really find the text corrupted at this point, as it is not. They only show that they themselves are "corrupted" in their thinking, and unwilling to accept what they think to be unreasonable.

What then becomes the basis of deciding the height of this porch? Human reason! The problem is that every man's reasoning is different. Chaos is the result. They cannot decide for sure the height of the Porch, so each has his own idea.

If you have never seen a rabbit and have only a limited description of it, you may differ with others on what it really looks like. But that does not change the appearance of the rabbit.

In like manner men may guess about God's Temple, but they do not change the facts.

In order to dispel any questions about this simple and very important dimension, let us turn to Josephus on this point. He is the famous Jewish historian who wrote in the first century. Some like to use his description of the temple ahead of the Bible except on this one point.

"The entire altitude of the temple was a hundred and twenty cubits" (Ant. VIII, III, 2).

Notice that he refers to this as the extreme or "entire" altitude of the temple. He gives another height for the other sections of the temple. That makes two places where this same height is given. The Bible and Josephus. But to go further, there are still other places where this dimension is also stated clearly.

When Herod desired to rebuild the temple, he was compelled by circumstances to obtain the confidence of the Jews. In order to do this, and have their help and approbation, it was necessary for him to describe his plans before they would permit his starting. Here, from Josephus is a

Temple East Side



portion of his speech.

"Our fathers, indeed, when they were returned from Babylon, built this temple (Zerubbabel's) to God Almighty, yet does it want sixty cubits of its largeness and altitude; for so much did that first temple which Solomon built exceed this temple" (Ant. XV, XI, I).

Zerubbabel's temple was "threescore cubits" (sixty) high (Ezra 6:3).

"In the first year of Cyrus the king, Cyrus the king made a decree: Concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, let the house be builded, the place where they offer sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; the height thereof threescore cubits and the breadth thereof threescore cubits."

Herod stated that it was sixty cubits lower than Solomon's one hundred and twenty cubits.

Josephus continues in the same place. "Cyrus and Darius. . .determined the measures for its rebuilding." And also, "They had not the opportunity to follow the original model of this pious edifice nor could raise it to its ancient altitude."

Anyone who still refuses to accept the plain Bible statement must also now reject Josephus and Herod as authorities on the subject.

This measurement is not unreasonable when you understand the overall plan that God had in mind designing this temple. God does not use human carnal reasoning in the things that he does. His ways are as high above the ways of man as the heavens are high above the earth (Isaiah 55:8, 9). His temple is in like manner physically "higher" than what men would like to make it!

As already mentioned, some of the dimensions are inside measurements. In this particular place a different Hebrew word is used in reference to the height than is usually used. This particular word is literally defined "loftiness" by Young, and refers to the exterior height, not the interior dimension.

Now we have the basic picture of the porch. It is exceedingly tall, being 252 feet in height. It is narrow from the front view and slender or graceful from the side view.

There are several other aspects of the porch which will be discussed in later sections. These will include the floors, the upper chambers, and the front decorations.

The *Hekal* - or Holy Place

The next portion of the building is the *hekal*. Here is a strange word since it is not usually used except in regard to this important part of the Temple. The *hekal* is the Hebrew word meaning "Holy Place." Instead of using the English terminology of Holy Place, we will usually

refer to it as the *hekal*. Most of the authorities or reference works that you may read on the subject will probably use this same word.

This *hekal* is the largest room in the temple. It is located immediately behind the Porch, to the west.

"And the house, that is the temple (*hekal*) before (the Sanctuary) was forty cubits long" (I Kings 6:17).

We have seen how the porch and the temple (house) was twenty cubits broad. Therefore, we have now described a room twenty cubits broad by forty cubits long. Such a room is about forty feet wide by eighty feet long. The walls of this room were lined with boards of cedar while the floor was of cypress (I Kings 6:15).

"And he built the walls of the house within with boards of cedar; from the floor of the house unto the joists of the ceiling, he covered them on the inside with wood; and he covered the floor of the house with boards of cypress."

These wallboards were engraved or carved with knops (knops are gourds) and open flowers, palm trees and cherubim.

"And the cedar on the house within was carved with knops and open flowers; all was cedar; there was no stone seen" (I Kings 6:18).

Further description is also given in this same chapter regarding this intricate and detailed work.

"And he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved figures of cherubim and palm-trees and open flowers, within and without" (I Kings 6:29).

To further add to this splendor these walls were overlaid with pure gold!

"And the floor of the house he overlaid with gold, within and without" (I Kings 6:30).

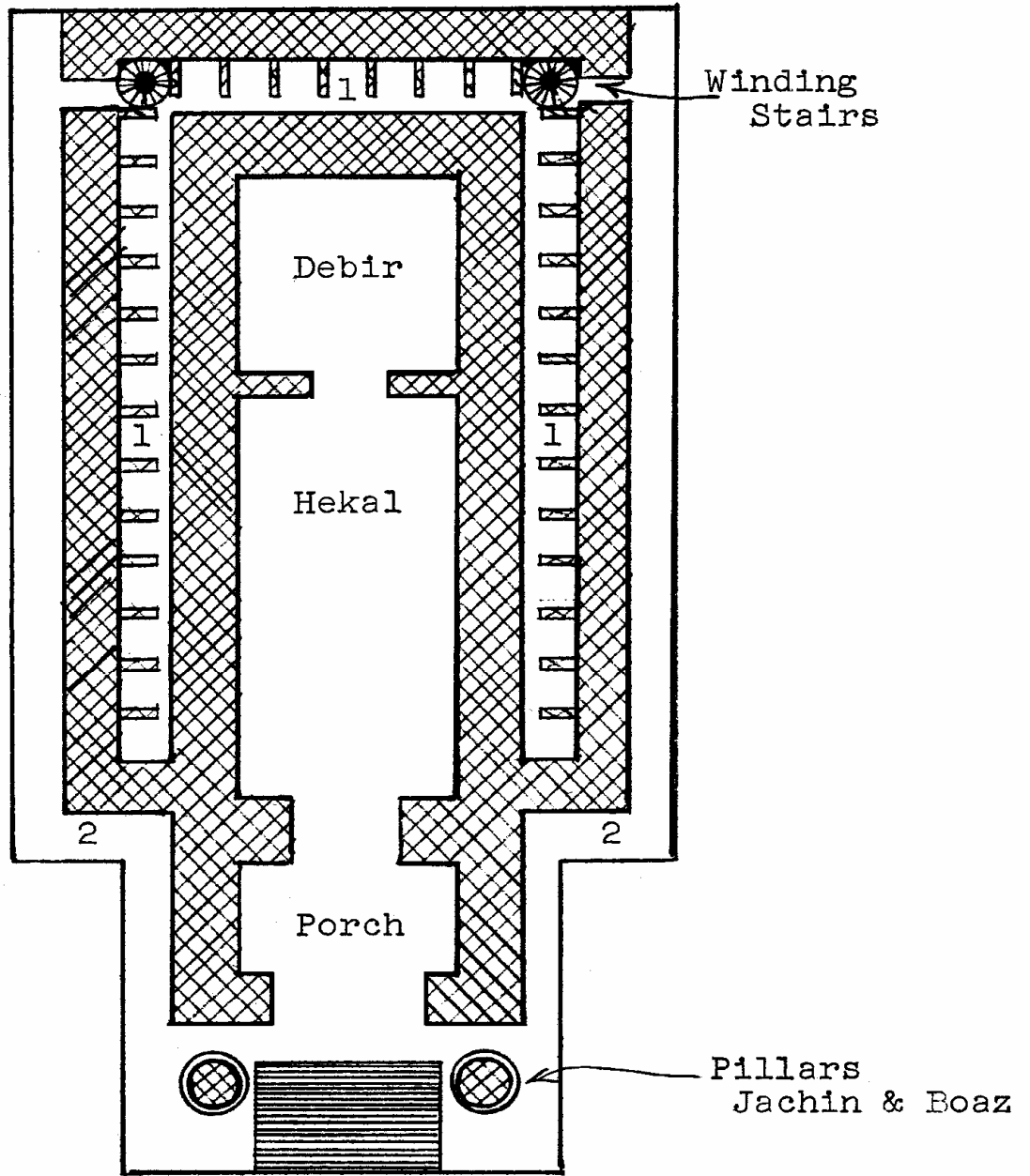
The expression "within and without" refers to the floors within the *hekal*, and without, in the porch. Both were covered with gold and had carvings or engravings on the walls.

There were windows near the ceiling in the *hekal*. They would have to be over twenty cubits above the floor level as the exterior wall was surrounded to approximately that height on the outside by the side chambers.

These particular windows were unusual in their design. They were set in very thick walls of six cubits thickness. They were broad on the inside and narrow on the outside. On the outside they appeared rectangular in shape with the longest dimension being vertical.

"And for the house he made windows broad within, and narrow without" (I Kings 6:4).

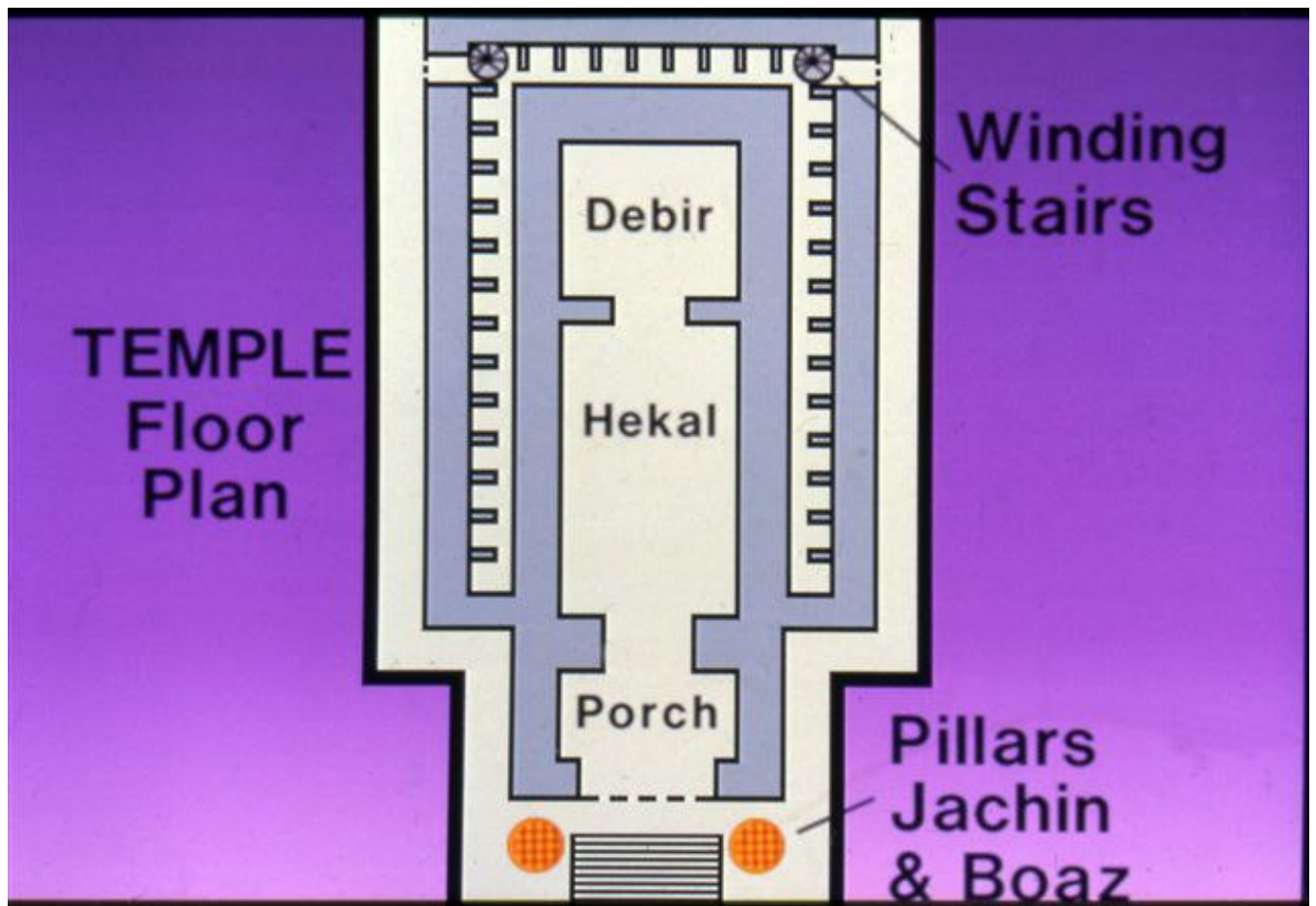
TEMPLE
Floor Plan



1. Side chambers

2. Raised basement

Temple Floor Plan



The *Debir* - or Holy of Holies

The *debir* is better known as the Holy of Holies. It consists of a smaller room of exactly twenty cubits in all dimensions.

"And he prepared the Sanctuary in the midst of the house within, to set there the ark of the covenant of the Lord. And before the Sanctuary which was twenty cubits in length, and twenty cubits in breadth, and twenty cubits in the height thereof. . ." (I Kings 6:19-20).

Originally this room contained the ark of the covenant and the two cherubim of olive wood. Into this inner sanctuary the high priest was alone permitted to enter, and then only once a year on the day of atonement.

"And he built twenty cubits on the hinder part of the house with boards of cedar from the floor unto the joists; he even built them for himself within, for a Sanctuary (*debir*) even for the most holy place" (I Kings 6:16).

This *debir* was covered with gold, just as the *hekal*. In fact the entire interior of the temple was overlaid with gold. Some have confused this fact and thought that the exterior was also overlaid with gold, however, there is no basis for this.

"So Solomon overlaid the house within with pure gold; and he drew chains of gold across the wall before the sanctuary; and he overlaid it with gold. And the whole house he overlaid with gold until all the house was finished. . ." (I Kings 6:21-22).

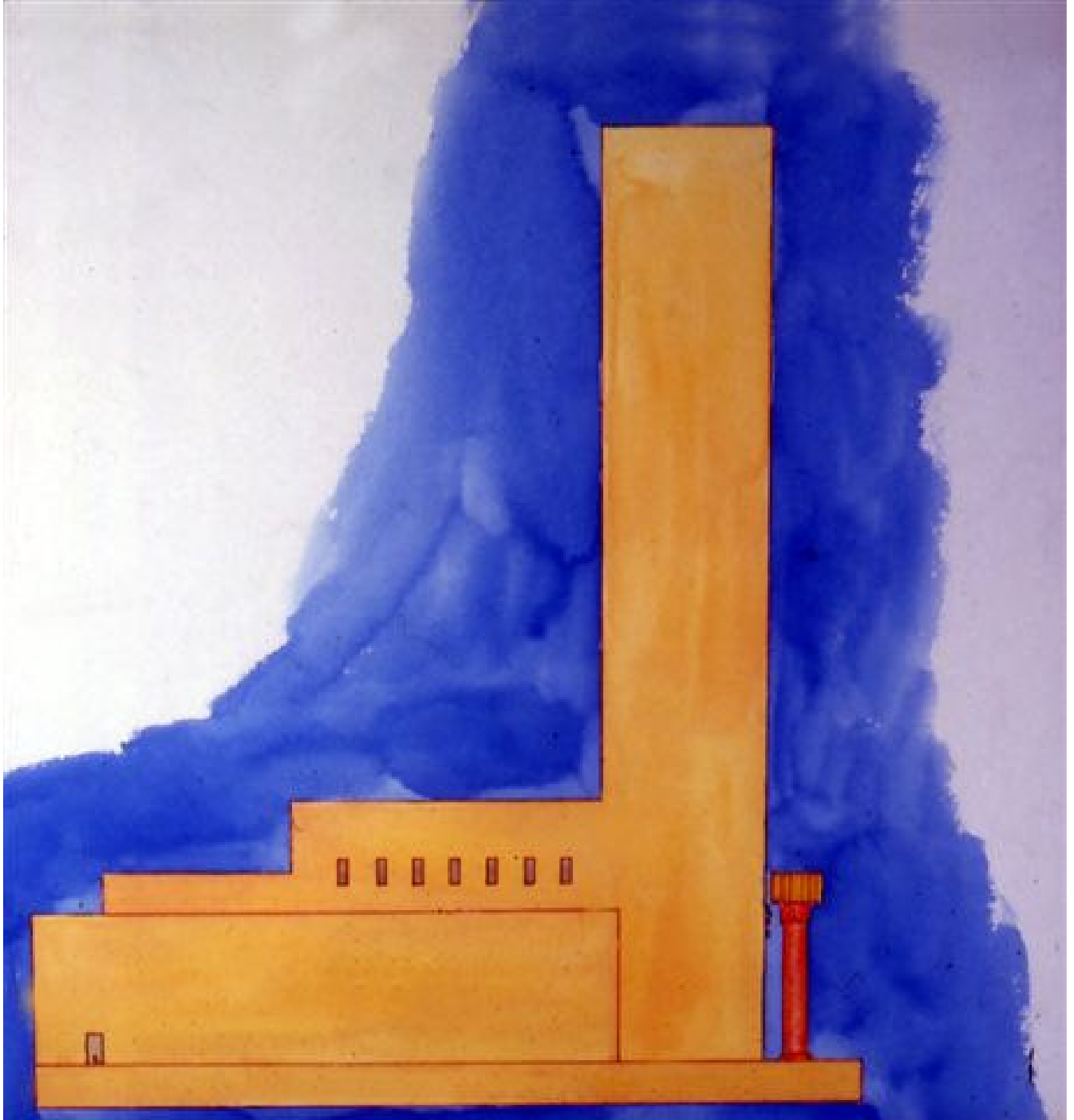
The *debir* had no windows. None are mentioned and there could be none because the exterior side chambers would cover them up. Solomon said at the dedication of the temple that the Lord would dwell in "thick darkness" (I Kings 8:12). He apparently was referring in part to the fact that there was no light from physical sources in the *debir* or Holy of Holies where the Lord dwelt.

In the *debir* of the new temple, yet to be built, the coming Lord of the whole universe will take up residence and will rule the world. He will be the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Jesus Christ the Messiah. At that time His glory will shine forth so brightly that there will be no need of artificial light in the Holy of Holies.

Some have thought that the *debir* was elevated above the floor of the *hekal* since it is ten cubits less in vertical dimension. There is no mention in scripture, in Josephus, or in the Mishna of such a possibility.

No steps are mentioned as being inside the temple building. There are steps mentioned at the gates to the inner and outer court and on the outside of the porch (Ezek. 40:22, 49). If there were steps into the *debir*, it would be mentioned.

South Side of the Temple



So far we have had described three different sections to the temple. For the time being, imagine them as three wooden blocks, all of the same width but with varying heights and depths.

The porch twenty by ten, by one hundred and twenty.

The *hekal* twenty by forty by thirty.

The *debir*, twenty by twenty by twenty.

That should give you a rough idea of the proportions of the principal parts of the temple. Later we will discuss the matter of walls, which will slightly change these proportions.

The Side Chambers

Most authorities come to about the same conclusions when it comes to the floor plan of the main part of the temple. But when it comes to the height of the porch they are almost all in error. Now we must examine the side chambers, and here again most of the researchers have departed from the Biblical description.

As previously mentioned, these side chambers are arranged around the outside of the main part of the temple building on three sides, the North, West and South. Most authorities have decided that there were thirty such rooms to each floor and use as their basis the comment of Josephus which states that there were thirty for each story. This seems a logical amount since it is a "round" number and easily divided. As previously quoted, the Mishna stated that there were thirty-eight in all for Herod's temple.

Remember that we are now dealing with Solomon's temple. Josephus had seen Herod's temple. He may have based his account on what he remembered from Herod's temple, prior to its destruction in 70 A.D.

Here is an example of how the scholars have rejected the plain statement as given in the original Hebrew text and instead used their own reasoning.

"On every side of the house except the east, Ezekiel's temple, like Solomon's had side chambers. The MT (Masoretic Text, or original Hebrew) gives the number of them as 33, and Smend displays much ingenuity in justifying the text which in this connexion is by universal confession very corrupt" (Dictionary of the Bible, Edited by James Hastings, article "Temple," emphasis ours).

The "universal confession" here should be that the scholars just do not believe the scripture account.

They have almost universally accepted the statement of Josephus and the corrupt Septuagint Greek version. The text plainly shows that there were stories of chambers "one over another," or three floors (compare I Kings 6:5-6). It also shows that the chambers were "thirty three times" for each floor.

"And the side-chambers were one over another, three and thirty times. . ." (Ezekiel 41:6).

The King James version along with most of the others have interpreted and not translated this particular point.

The translation by the Jewish Publication Society has faithfully transliterated the original Hebrew Scriptures at this point. It is literally as stated, "three and thirty times," or thirty-three.

Even though most of the translators have followed the idea of thirty chambers and have "interpreted" rather than translated this passage, there is at least one other which is correct.

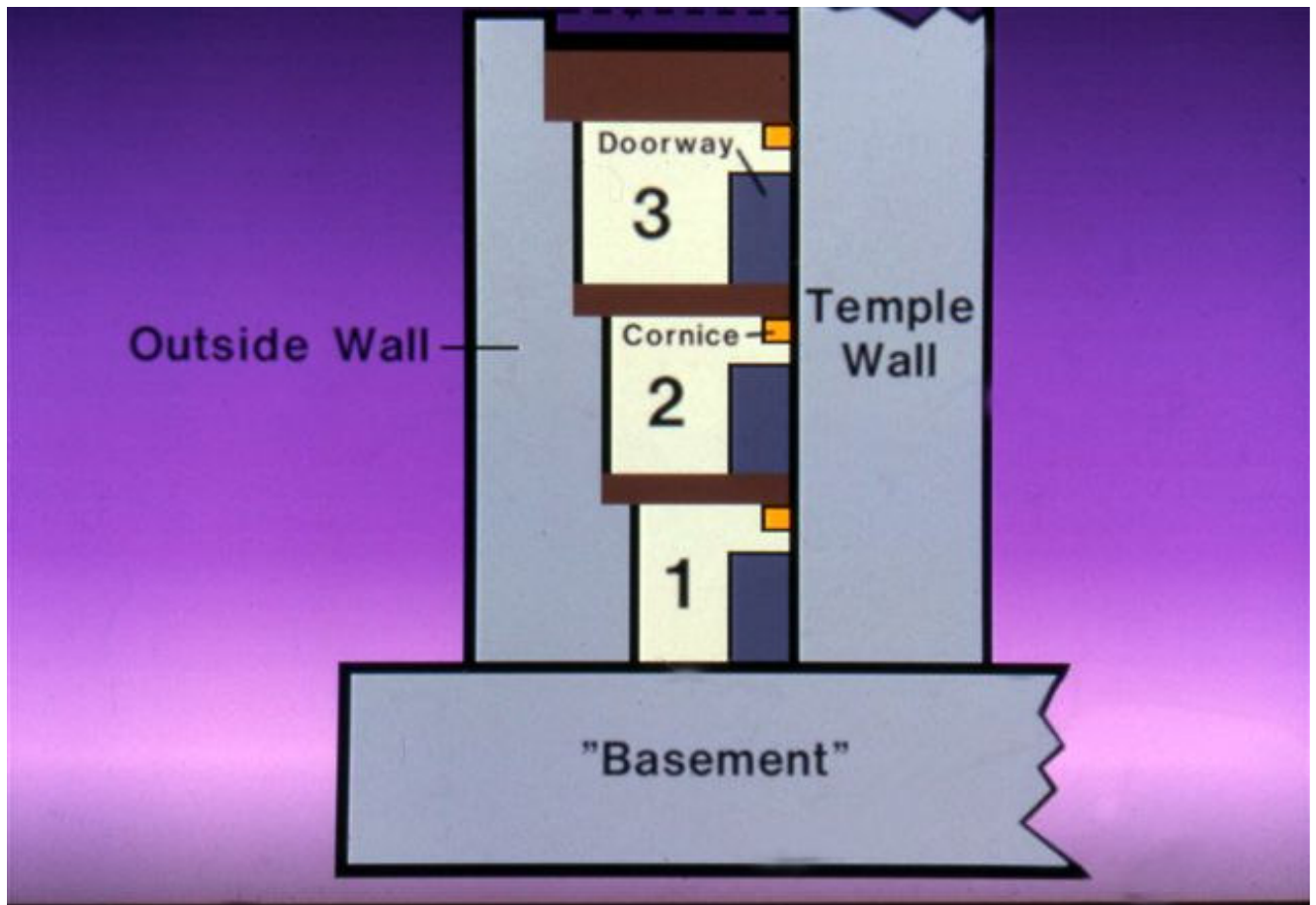
"And the side rooms were one over another thirty-three in order. . ." (The Holy Bible, translated by George Lamsa).

These side chambers are mentioned in Kings and Ezekiel, but not in Chronicles. This is another example of how the Bible does not have all of the details in one place, but "here a little and there a little."

There is a very unusual arrangement for these rooms. They are arranged in three stories as we will soon see. However, their arrangement is not at all according to the common concept of architecture. Usually the second and third story of a building are either the same width or smaller. Many of the buildings have succeeding floors or groups of floors smaller than those below.

In the temple, each succeeding story is larger than the one beneath. God was the Designer of this temple and He does not use the same standards that man uses.

Side Chambers - Cut away end view



Here is the Bible description and measurements of these chambers.

“And against the wall of the house he built a side-structure round about, against the walls of the house round about, both of the temple and of the sanctuary; and he made side-chambers round about; the nethermost story of the side-structure was five cubits broad, and the middle was six cubits broad, and the third was seven cubits broad, for on the outside he made rebatements in the wall of the house round about, that the beams should not have hold in the walls of the house” (I Kings 6:5-6).

Notice that the first floor had chambers of five cubits broad, the second floor had chambers of six cubits broad, and the third floor had chambers of seven cubits.

Another unusual factor in the placement of these rooms concerns the outer wall of the main part of the temple. The temple wall which surrounds the *hekal* and *debir* was not permitted to be cut into. This wall, which encloses the inner rooms, apparently cannot be cut into because of its sacredness.

The two main rooms of the temple contained important items such as the ark and mercy seat, and were used for temple ceremonies. In the future it will be the personal dwelling place of Christ.

The side chambers were rooms for various offices of the priesthood. In the future there may be other uses as the following scripture implies.

"In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?" (John 14:2, R.S.V.).

Notice that there were "rebatements," "projections" (Moffatt) or "narrow ledges" (Young) in the temple wall to support the beams which hold up the successive floors and roof of the side chambers. This word is given as "cornice" in Ezekiel 41:6. These ledges or cornices are provided so that the beams will not project into the walls of the house, "Allowing space all around the outside wall so that the ends of the planks upholding the rows need not pierce the walls of the temple" (I Kings 6:6, Moffatt).

Further details are given at this point in Ezekiel. Notice his description.

". . .there were cornices in the wall which belonged to the house for the side-chambers round about, that they might have hold therein, and not have hold in the wall of the house. And the side-chambers were broader as they wound about higher and higher; for the winding about of the house went higher and higher round about the house; therefore the breadth of the house continued upward. . ." (Ezekiel 41:6-7).

Since there could be no cutting into the wall of the house, the increasing width of each story would of necessity cut into the outside wall of the chambers. In order to explain this more clearly, it is necessary at this point to refer to the previous illustration.

The statement "the breadth of the house continued upward" (verse 7), simply means that the width of the "house" is the same at the top as it is at the bottom. This completely discounts the possibility of there being ledges or steps in the wall of the house to hold up the floor joists.

In the drawing you will notice that the inside or temple wall is straight, having no indentations. There are projections below each floor to support the beams.

Nearly all who have made drawings of the temple show projections into the temple wall and into the outside chamber wall. A few have made the projection into the inside temple wall and made the outside wall straight. Almost none have followed the plain Bible statement.

So far we have only seen one measurement of the side chambers, that of the breadth, from the temple wall outward. We still do not have the height of these rooms.

"And he built the stories of the side-structure against all the house, each five cubits high; and they rested on the house with timber of cedar" (I Kings 6:10).

There is still a third dimension lacking. Kings and Chronicles are silent on this important point. We know two dimensions, and we know how many chambers there are. An approximate dimension could be arrived at, but we must have an exact figure. Again, we must look to Ezekiel for the answer.

". . .and the breadth of every side-chamber, four cubits, round about the house on every side" (Ezekiel 41:5).

In this place the measurement is given as the "breadth." Depending on which way you look at it, either measurement of the floor dimension could be considered the "breadth." Putting all these scriptures together it is plain that we now have all three dimensions of these side chambers. As we will see later this dimension will fit with the number of chambers on each floor, in the space allotted for the chambers.

Entrance to the Side-Chambers

Where are the entrances to these chambers? This is the next logical question to ask. Nearly all of the scholars have placed an entrance in the center of the southern side of the temple for Solomon's temple. In drawing Ezekiel's temple they have added a second one in the center of the northern side. Is that what the Bible states? It is not!

"The door for the lowest row of chambers was in the right side of the house and they went up by winding stairs into the middle row, and out of the middle into the third" (I Kings 6:8).

Notice these points from the preceding verse. (1) The door gave entrance to the first floor. (2) Entry to the second and third story was by a "winding stair." (3) The entrance was on the right side of the house.

It is universally accepted that the "right" side is referring to the south side, which is correct. The right side is determined or viewed from the inside of the house facing toward the entrance which is to the east.

So far we do not know exactly where, along the south side of the house, the entrance is to be located. The answer is again found in Ezekiel.

"And the doors of the side-chambers were toward the place that was left, one door toward the north, and another door toward the south; and the breadth of the place that was left was five cubits round about" (Ezekiel 41:11).

In this account it is stated that there are two entrances, one to the north and one to the south. This does not contradict Kings, since Ezekiel mentions doors on both south and north, while Kings only mentions one on the south. We have to put the various parts of the Bible together to get all the truth on a given subject.

Solomon's temple surely had two entrances also, one on the north and one on the south; however, the writer of Kings only mentions one of them.

We now have two entrances described, but where are they on the north and south side? The answer was given in verse eleven. Did you catch it? Both of the entrances were located in the "place that was left." That probably does not make sense yet. So a little explaining is necessary.

This "place that was left" is said to be five cubits round about or in both directions. This is the place left for the "winding stair."

Since all of the chambers are four cubits in breadth, they each take only four cubits of wall space on the outside of the inner temple wall. One could not fit properly in the corner since one chamber of four cubits breadth would have to match the other chambers length dimension of five cubits.

The side chambers must fit against the main wall, and not in the northwest and southwest corner. The corner is the "place that was left." No other logical conclusion can come from the scripture account. A five cubit square arbitrarily set somewhere along the north or south wall is not logically the "place that was left," and yet that is the wrong conclusion that most of the scholars have come to. When this is drawn out to scale you will be able to see more plainly just how this is the only logical conclusion that can be reached.

This five cubit space that was left can only be for one purpose--for the "winding stairs." But the learned scholars have the conception that man has been "evolving" to higher and higher ability and knowledge of building construction. They are not aware that God designed this building, not man. They refuse to accept the idea that there were winding stairs in the temple. There were only trap doors and ladders they say!

"From the lowest story one ascended to the others by the means of a ladder and

trap-door, and not, as used to be thought by means of a winding stair: of such winding stairs the ancient East was quite ignorant" (Dictionary of the Bible, edited by James Hasting, Article "Temple").

Using the available wall space, each chamber can be exactly four cubits in breadth, with one-cubit inner walls between each side-chamber. The exception to this is the west wall where the inner walls must be only 1/2 cubit (1 foot) in order to fit. Further details are shown in the drawings of the side chambers.

By using the space available it will be found that thirteen side-chambers fit on the south side, thirteen on the north, and seven on the west. The two winding stairs are located in the corners.

God has used the number seven from ancient times. To a lesser degree He has used the number thirteen, but it is still used many times. There were thirteen tribes (counting Levi). There were thirteen "original" apostles (including Matthias).

The next question is how entrance can be made to all of these many chambers from the main north and south entrance. The Bible is completely silent on this matter. No passageway, hallway or doors are described. No space is left in the description for such a passageway or hall. Where can we find the answer to this puzzling question?

We must look elsewhere for the answer. Remember our original basis for deciding such problems? Where the scripture is silent and gives no basis, the only sources left are the records of the Priest Josephus or, at times, the Mishna.

On this particular point, as well as nearly all others the Mishna is either absurd, unreasonable, or exactly contrary to the scriptural account. Of course it refers to Herod's temple instead of Solomon's. But Herod's was supposedly copied in the principal details after Solomon's. It rejects the idea of a winding stair as plainly stated in scripture, and states there were trap doors between each upper and lower chambers.

Josephus gives an answer which does agree completely with the scriptural account. He may on occasion be wrong on certain other points, but in this case he has the answer that is needed.

"He also built round about the temple, thirty small rooms which might include the whole temple, by their closeness one to another, and by their number and outward position round it. He also made passages through them that they might come into one through another" (Ant. VIII, III, 2).

From this it becomes plain, completely in accord with the scriptural account, that there was a passageway that went the entire length of the rooms to connect them together. It was of necessity a part of the space allotted to each chamber. By referring to the accompanying drawings it will be plain how this common passageway is arranged.

Since there are no windows mentioned for the chambers, none are shown on the enclosed drawings.

The Upper Chambers

When it comes to the details of upper chambers we are almost faced with an insurmountable problem. It is not quickly apparent as to where they are located or how large they are. But this problem can be solved! No easy answer is found to this part of our "jigsaw puzzle."

First, let us understand that so far, when speaking of the side-chambers, the Hebrew word was *tsela*. This word comes from a root signifying "ribs." These side chambers are arranged somewhat like ribs around the temple. Now we are ready to investigate a new and entirely different type of chamber.

". . .and he overlaid the upper chambers with gold" (II Chron. 3:9).

Clarke supposes this word to mean ceiling. This is absurd since the scripture says that the complete interior of the *hekal* and *debir* are covered with gold including the ceiling. This word has no reference to ceiling. The Hebrew word here is *aliyyah*, which has no connection with the side chambers (*tsela*). It is the same word used in II Kings 1:2 where it states that Ahaziah fell from his upper chamber. This could in no way have referred to the word "ceiling."

The side chambers could not in any way be referred to as upper chambers since one-third of them were "lower" or on the ground floor.

We have already seen at the beginning of the description of the temple how God had given the details to David of the temple including the upper chambers, or upper rooms as translated in the King James Version.

The Bible nowhere specifically describes these rooms or tells where they are located!

Many of the scholars, even Josephus, think that they were located above the *hekal* and the *debir*. But if so, what was their use, where was the entrance? Josephus only had faulty tradition to guide him.

Can you picture the most holy parts of the temple having chambers above them for storage or offices? Can you picture Jesus Christ the King of the earth seated on His throne during the millennium with men working above Him in the upper chambers? Remember the inner or main part of the house is so sacred that even the planks to hold up the floors of the side chambers could not penetrate into it. No--that is entirely unreasonable from God's point of view!

Young (Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible) gives the literal definition for this word as a loft, or upper chamber. Apparently referring to something high or lifted up. This same word is used to refer to the upper chamber of Uzziah (II Kings 1:2) and of the Kings (II Kings 23:12).

Just where can these chambers be?

There is only one logical place left! In the porch.

We skipped over the porch rather rapidly at first, but we must come back to it now. We left it in the description as a tall slender room of ten by twenty by one hundred and twenty cubits. Did you suppose that this was a hollow shell? If so, of what purpose was it made so high? Just for outside appearance, or for a practical purpose also?

We have already seen that the porch was overlaid in its interior with gold (II Chronicles 3:4), and yet the side chambers were not overlaid with gold. The upper chambers, since they are a part of the porch, are also naturally overlaid with gold (II Chronicles 3:9).

How many of these chambers are there? How large are they, how are they entered, and what is their purpose?

Since the Bible does not say, we need to go to Josephus. Remember his source is mainly unwritten tradition handed down over the period of six centuries. It involves a period of national captivity and many wars, spiritual rebellion and disobedience. But some of his statements, while not always completely correct, are based on fact that may have been slightly misunderstood.

Let's find out where the entrance to these rooms were, first of all.

"The king also had a fine contrivance for an ascent to the upper room over the temple, and that was by steps in the thickness of its wall; for it had no large door on the east end, as the lower house had, but the entrances were by the sides, through very small doors" (Ant. VIII, III, 2).

These rooms must have been "over the temple" in the porch, and not as Josephus supposed above the hekal and debir. But their entrance was through the small doors on the inside of the porch, through the walls of the porch, not of the main walls of the hekal.

That solves the problem regarding the entrances, but what about the number of rooms or stories in the porch? Again, please remember that the Bible does not tell us. God has seen fit to preserve the key for us, this time also in Josephus. In the same section from which the preceding passage was taken he mentions that each of the side chambers were twenty cubits high.

"Every one of these rooms had five cubits in breadth, and the same in length, but in height twenty." (Ant. VII, III, 2).

This could not possibly be referring to the side chambers, as the Bible plainly and specifically states they were five cubits high just as we have seen already. He further states that they were one over another, or in successive stories. It seems obvious that he confused two different kinds of rooms, and combined details of both into one description.

We have our key now! The chambers were twenty cubits high, one over another. In one hundred and twenty cubits there would be six separate chambers on separate floors.

The inner rooms, the *hekal* and *debir*, seem to be for the service of God only. The side-chambers, the porch and the upper chambers are for other purposes, in other words, for man! The number of a man has always been considered as six, the same number of the floors that this porch would have if divided into twenty cubit floors. The number six is used frequently in the design of the temple. The walls of the temple are six cubits thick. The reed of Ezekiel was six cubits long, a measurement used many times in the temple and its courts. There are six gates to the temple. Since the Bible does not say specifically, this seems to be the only logical solution to our problem.

There were other chambers in addition to the side chambers and the upper chambers, but they are located in other buildings in the inner or outer court. These other buildings and chambers were also considered to be "in the house of the Lord." However, details of that must come later.

The exact use of these upper chambers is not stated. There were treasuries in the house of God, and possibly that is what they were for, however, that is only conjecture.

Some have envisioned a "royal oratory" within the upper floors of the porch, with large window openings on the front. This was supposedly the place where the Kings could come and pray to God. It is mentioned in scriptures that they on occasion did come and appear before God in the temple. They could have done this at any of a number of different places or rooms within the inner or outer court. The description of Ezekiel eliminates the possibility of any such windows on the front or "face" of the porch.

The Walls

If we did not have Ezekiel's account of the temple, there would be no information regarding the thickness of the walls. The walls have a very important part in the overall design of the temple, since they are very thick in comparison with most architectural designs.

The book of Kings gives the dimensions of the various rooms, the doors, and the materials used. Chronicles gives the porch height, various details of the embellishments, the pillars of brass, plus the altar, the molten sea and the sacrificial implements. Ezekiel gives details of the ground floor plan, including the walls, the entrances, further details of the side-chambers, and the foundations. He also gives details of the exterior appearance of the porch. He alone describes the gates and the courts, and the additional buildings.

You should be able to see better now, why it is impossible to understand this subject without all three sources.

Since it is Ezekiel who gives the details of the walls, we must go there next for that information. In order to follow the scripture on this point it is almost necessary to have the plan drawn out first. Then by comparing the text to the plan it is clear and simple.

"Then 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 length of the porch was

twenty cubits, and the breadth eleven cubits. . ." (Ezek. 40:48-49).
That gives us the porch measurements, plus the five cubits for the front or eastern wall .

Did you notice that the last measurement was eleven cubits instead of ten cubits? The account of Solomon's temple listed this measurement as ten cubits. Here is just about the only stated difference between Solomon's temple and Ezekiel's temple. The reason for this difference is not readily apparent however, it might well have spiritual and prophetic significance. Even though there are ideas about this matter, the present work is not intended for the purpose of dealing with spiritual types, or with the service and purpose of the temple.

Now to enter the main part of the temple, the *hekal* is summarized.

"And he brought me to the temple, and measured the posts, six cubits broad on the one side, and six cubits broad on the other side, which was the breadth of the tent. And the breadth of the entrance was ten cubits; and the sides of the entrance were five cubits on the one side, and five cubits on the other side; and he measured the length thereof, forty cubits, and the breadth, twenty cubits" (Ezek. 41:1-2).

Next is the entrance to the *debir*.

"Then went he inward, and measured each post of the entrance, two cubits; and the entrance, six cubits; and the breadth of the entrance, seven cubits. And he measured the length thereof, twenty cubits, and the breadth, twenty cubits, before the temple; and he said unto me: "This is the most holy place"" (Ezek. 41:3-4).

And now for the thickness of the wall of the house, which just includes the walls around the *hekal* and *debir*.

"Then he measured the wall of the house, six cubits" (Ezek. 41:5).

There was still another outer wall which encompassed the side chambers.

"The breadth of the outer wall which belonged to the side-chambers was five cubits; and so that which was left by the structure of the side-chambers that belonged to the house" (Ezek. 41:9).

With all of this information we can almost make a floor plan of the whole building, but there is one thing lacking. We do not have the overall dimension of the house. It is given also by Ezekiel, so that there is no question in regard to the measurements.

"And he measured the house a hundred cubits long" (Ezekiel 41:13).

A Brief Summary

Here is a summary of the various dimensions from east to west.

1. Porch wall	5 cubits
2. Depth of porch	11 "
3. House wall	6 "
4. Hekal length	40 "
5. Inner wall	2 "
6. Debir length	20 "
7. House wall	6 "
8. Side-chambers	5 "
9. Outside wall	5 "

Total 100 cubits

Compare this now with the drawing on page 28. The figures are not given there however the drawing uses these dimensions.

Now for a summary from north to south.

1. Outside wall	5 cubits
2. Side-chambers	5 "
3. House wall	6 "
4. Interior width	20 "
5. House wall	6 "
6. Side-chamber	5 "
7. Outside wall	5 "

Total 52 cubits

Notice that this measurement is 52 cubits, an irregular figure. It might appear at first that something is wrong, and that this figure must be incorrect. A careful check will reveal that there is no mistake. Each one of the dimensions are given and cannot be changed. Before we find out why this dimension is unusual there are other aspects which must now be mentioned.

"...and between the chambers was a breadth of twenty cubits round about the house on every side" (Ezekiel 41:10).

Just what does this mean? What relation does it have to our last problem? It may not make good sense easily, as it may be confused with the section concerning the side chambers. We know from the size of the inner rooms and walls that they are separated by 32 cubits and not 20.

Part of the problem will be solved when we understand that there are different Hebrew words which are translated into the word "chambers" in our English versions.

In this particular place the word for chambers is *lishkah*. It refers to different chambers which are to the north, west, and south of the temple and are not a part of the main Temple building. They are 20 cubits distance from the temple building. By adding these two figures to our

previous 52 cubits we find that we have 92 cubits. We are 8 cubits short of the 100 cubits needed for the inner court width.

The Basement

There is still one factor missing. The basement. Nothing has been said about it so far.

"And I saw also that the house had a raised basement round about; the foundations of the side-chambers were a full reed of six cubits to the joining" (Ezekiel 41:8).

This basement, or foundation, is about 12 feet high from the inner court level to the floor level of the temple building and side chambers. The place of "joining" is where the basement ends and the house starts.

Now that we know there is a raised basement round about, we need one other dimension. We do not know how wide it is. Is it just as wide as the house? If so, how can a person enter the side door which gives entry to the side-chambers? There is no mention of any steps leading up to them, but there is mention of steps leading to the entrance of the temple (Ezekiel 40:49). The steps leading to the temple must be to climb above this "basement."

We are lacking only 8 cubits for the overall north-south dimension. Here is the only place that such a dimension could fit. All of the other dimensions are given so it must be this place where the lacking dimension belongs. Therefore, it is only logical to conclude that the raised basement is 4 cubits on either side of the house. This provides a walkway from the entrance steps to the side chamber entrance. It cannot continue clear around to the rear of the house as there is no room for it to the rear. This will be plain when we discuss the two courts in a later chapter.

The Doors

There is no door at the entrance of the porch but just a large opening. We have seen the dimensions of the opening, however, there is no mention anywhere of doors for it.

The entrance to the *hekal* does have doors. We say this in the plural, as there are two doors, of two leaves each.

"So also made he for the entrance of the temple door-posts of olive-wood, within a frame four-square; and two doors of cypress-wood; the two leaves of the other door were folding" (I Kings 6:33-34).

Notice that this door is square. From earlier dimensions given, it was found that the door opening is 10 cubits, since there are five cubits on each side of the door since the *hekal* is 20 cubits wide. The door is square so it is also 10 cubits high. These doors are made of cypress wood, and the door frame is of olive wood as the previous text states.

These doors are very unusual doors since they have two leaves each. You probably have seen similar folding doors. Occasionally an auditorium will be divided into two or more sections by

movable folding type doors. They can be folded up somewhat like an accordion and pushed aside, or they can be straightened out to make a wall.

These doors are somewhat like that. Two leaves fold to the one side, and the other two leaves fold to the other side. Since there are four leaves, and the distance is 10 cubits, each leaf is about 5 feet wide by 20 feet high. When open they will easily fold against the jambs of the door opening.

Further details are given on these doors in Ezekiel.

"And the temple and the sanctuary had two doors. And the doors had two leaves (apiece), two turning leaves; two leaves for the one door, and two leaves for the other. And there were made on them, on the doors of the temple, cherubim and palm-trees, like as were made upon the walls. . ." (Ezekiel 41:23-25).

The entrance to the debir also has doors. They also have four leaves, but are different in shape.

"And for the entrance of the sanctuary he made doors of olive-wood, the doorposts within the frame having five angles (I Kings 6:31).

This entrance has two doors, but the frame to the door has five angles. Instead of having a door opening with a straight and level top, this one has two angular frames projecting to the center point. When the doors are opened, they must be swung to the side, in order to accommodate the high center of the door

As seen from above all of these door jambs are squared, therefore, we cannot interpret the preceding text to mean that the jambs, as seen from above, appeared to have five angles.

"As for the temple, the jambs were squared" (Ezek. 41:21).

In this door, the frames and the door are of olive-wood.

In the case of both the door to the *hekal* and the *debir*, they are engraved with cherubim, palm trees and open flowers. Over this was an overlay of gold. In addition to the text quoted also note verse 35.

"And as for the two doors of olive-wood, he carved upon them carvings of cherubim and palm-trees and open flowers, and overlaid them with gold; and he spread the gold upon the cherubim, and upon the palm-trees" (I Kings 6:32).

The Engravings and Overlays

It has already been mentioned that the house was overlaid with gold which covered the engravings of cherubim, palm trees and flowers. Here is further information about these gold overlays.

"And the greater house he covered with cypress wood, which he overlaid with fine gold, and wrought thereon palm-trees and chains. And he garnished the house with precious stones for beauty; and the gold was gold of Parvaim. He overlaid also the house, the beams, the thresholds, and the walls thereof, and the doors thereof, with gold; and graved cherubim on the walls" (II Chron. 3:5-7).

The Porch "Face"

The front face of the porch is the most prominent part of the temple since it is the main part seen from in front. The description in the Bible is very brief, and presents certain difficulties.

"And there were thick beams of wood upon the face of the porch without. . .there were also the brackets of the house, and the thick beams" (Ezek. 41:25-26).

None of the source material available on the temple is of any help at this point. No one knows for sure just what is meant by this statement concerning the "thick beams of wood." As a consequence nothing is done about it in most drawings of the temple.

The Lexicons are of little help except to state that this is an architectural term which is not understood for certain. The Hebrew words for "thick beams of wood" are *ab ets*, and for "thick beams" the word *ob*. The *ob* and *ab* apparently are from the same root and indicate something thick or massive. The word *ets* just means wood.

Just what would be the purpose of thick beams on the front face of the porch? Certainly not for structural strength, as the building is made of stone. It must be for beauty or adornment.

Josephus says nothing about these thick beams but the Mishna, of the Babylonian Talmud does. Keep in mind that this quotation is in regard to Herod's temple, and not Solomon's. The dimensions of the porch were altered greatly by Herod from what they were in Solomon's temple.

"Mishna 7. The doorway of the porch was forty cubits high and its breadth was twenty cubits. Over it were five main beams of cedar. The lowest projected a cubit on each side beyond the doorway. The one above projected beyond this one a cubit on each side. Thus the topmost one was thirty cubits long. There was a layer of stones between each one and the next" (Mishna, Tract Middoth).

Herod's plan was to "improve" the former temple and make it more grand and glorious. He added to each side of the porch, making an overall view from above to appear as that of a lion, according to the Mishna. This is quite different from the porch that God designed.

Since he wanted to make this temple so much grander, he had to make the entrance much larger than was prescribed in the Bible as is evident in the previous quotation. The original plan called for an opening of 14 cubits, however, Herod's was 20 cubits.

With this in mind, notice that there were five separate beams above the entrance. This is the only description of any beams which might be similar to those of Ezekiel 41:26. They were obviously for decorative, rather than for structural reasons.

There is no other information available on this point, therefore we are left with no other choice than to accept this as an indication of what is meant.

The Bible does not say how many beams there were. Herod had five, but he wanted to "improve" and expand on God's plan. In this case, instead of Herod's five beams three such beams have been drawn on the face of the porch, just over the entrance. This will then fit the Bible description as given in Ezekiel.

There is one more problem relating to Ezekiel 41:25-26. It is mentioned that there were also "brackets" to the house. This is better translated "side-chambers" from the Hebrew word *tsela*, which is elsewhere translated side chambers. With this information, there is no problem in the text.

There are further details about the exterior appearance of the porch which were skipped previously.

"And there were narrow windows and palm-trees on the one side and on the other side, on the sides of the porch" (Ezekiel 41:26).

These must be on the exterior, since the text in question is referring to the things "without." On the north side and the south side of the porch are these windows and palm trees.

As mentioned earlier, there were also narrow windows in the *hekal*. They were by necessity very high, above the roof line of the side chambers which were around the building. Ezekiel states that these narrow windows are covered (Ezekiel 41:16) most probably with lattice work or screening. The veneering on the walls projected upward from the floor to these windows.

Nothing is said in the Bible about the roof of the temple, even though some commentators have imagined that certain texts refer to a roof. The design and style of the roof is something that men skilled in building can design without difficulty.

The roof would undoubtedly be nearly flat since that is the common type roof in this area. The top should be of durable material, probably stone, to last without necessary repairs or additions.

In the drawings enclosed, five cubits have been left for the ceiling, trusses and roofing. This should be ample for strong bridge-like trusses and the roofing materials. The edges of the walls should extend above the roof line to cover it and also to comply with the scripture requirement regarding roofs (Deut. 22:8). Since a roof is needed and no dimension is given, the number five cubits was chosen. This is a common number in the temple, especially for walls. In addition all the vertical dimensions given in the Bible for the temple are divisible by this number.

Construction Materials

When Solomon built the temple he constructed it of stone quarried nearby in the northern quarter of the old city. The quarries are still there today as huge caverns under the city.

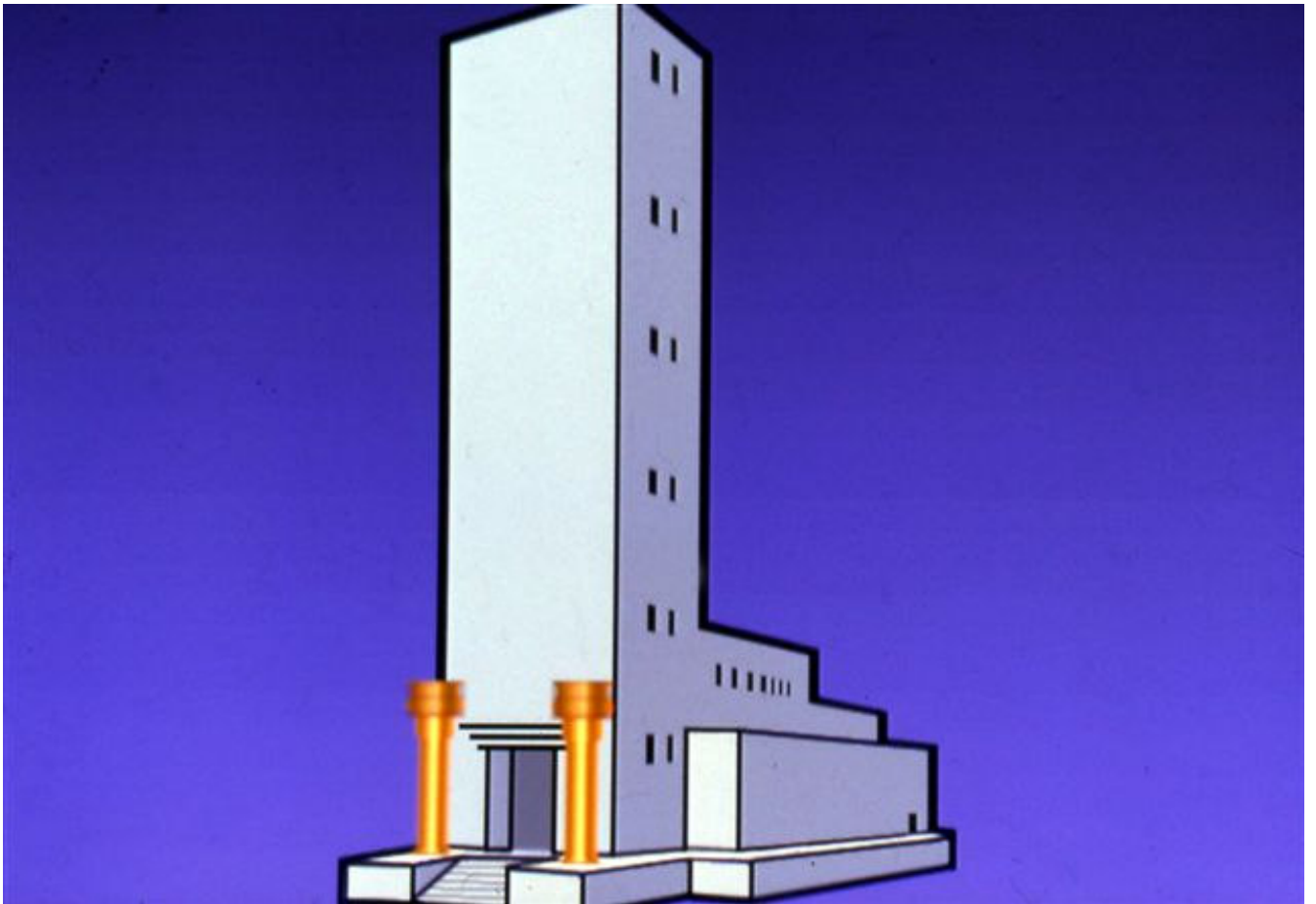
This stone was limestone and when exposed to the light it appeared almost like white marble. Thus, the exterior of the temple had a brilliant white appearance, almost like snow, as Josephus described it.

Before we leave this chapter it would be good to summarize the materials for the temple. The exterior was of stone. (I Kings 6:7). The walls of the *hekal* were covered with cypress (II Chronicles 3:5), and also the floor but the *debir* had walls of cedar (I Kings 6:15). The beams or joists for the support of the side chambers were of cedar (verse 10). The door of the *debir* and the door posts of the *hekal* were of olive wood, however, the doors of the *hekal* were of cypress. Covering all of these walls was precious stones and gold.

We have now seen a very brief description of the main temple building, and the main important points of construction. This is not intended to be an architect's plan.

There are other important aspects of the temple and its courts which must be considered in the remaining chapters.

Temple Perspective View



CHAPTER V

THE PILLARS JACHIN AND BOAZ

One of the least understood aspects of the temple is that of the two brazen pillars which were directly in front of the temple.

Much speculation has resulted from the Biblical description of these pillars. In fact, a major secret fraternal society has adapted as a part of its ceremony two pillars which are supposed to represent the pillars that Solomon had built for the temple. They have placed round balls on top of these pillars.

Is this a correct representation of the pillars that Solomon had? Just what were these pillars for? It seems that no one really knows. Were they for decoration, or did they support a part of the porch?

These are questions that must now be solved and understood clearly as this is an important part of our subject. We must not start with any preconceived ideas such as the round balls used by some, because they will not fit the Bible description. Whatever conclusions are reached must fit all aspects of the Bible description.

In order to understand this subject we must take the account literally, checking point against point, and slowly proceeding until we fully understand each aspect.

This is not an easy problem to solve, in fact it is one of the most difficult problems relating to the temple. This is brought out by the following quotation.

"There are no features connected with the temple of Solomon which have given rise to so much controversy, or been so difficult to explain, as the form of the two pillars of brass which were set up in the porch of the house" (Smith Dictionary of the Bible, article Temple, page 3199).

Some have even come to the conclusion that these pillars were two torches, copied from pagan temples which had such torches before them.

A quick reading of the Biblical account will quickly demonstrate some of the problems relating to this subject. It just does not make sense at first glance. In fact, without considerable study and comparison it is difficult to get any sense out of the text.

There are various problems of apparent contradiction which must be noted and understood before a clear understanding can be obtained.

Lest anyone think that this is an unimportant part of our subject, it should be mentioned that

the description of these pillars and their capitals (this expression will be explained later) are mentioned in no less than four separate parts of the Bible!

They are also an important integral part of God's temple in prophecy as Ezekiel describes it. He does not give the details as other texts do, but merely mentions that they are there.

"And there were pillars by the posts, (the posts of the porch of the temple), one on this side, and another on that side" (Ezekiel 40:49).

They are described in I Kings, II Kings, II Chronicles and Jeremiah. God considered this subject important enough to mention in all of these separate places. And indeed it is necessary to study all of these places to put together the parts that will unlock the details of these pillars.

The Pillars

But now, let us begin to let the Bible reveal to us the details of these remarkable pillars and their capitals. They were very difficult to make, so Solomon had a man who was highly skilled in the art of casting brass to construct them.

"And king Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre. He was the son of a widow of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a worker in brass; and he was filled with wisdom and understanding and skill, to work all works in brass. And he came to king Solomon, and wrought all his work" (I Kings 7:13-14).

The description of the pillars starts with the following account:

"Thus he fashioned the two pillars of brass, of eighteen cubits high each; and a line of twelve cubits did compass it about; (and so) the other pillar" (I Kings 7:15).

This seems simple enough. They are simply cylindrical pillars almost 4 cubits in diameter and eighteen cubits high.

Two other accounts seem to agree with this description.

"The height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits" (II Kings 25:17).

"And as for the pillars, the height of one pillar was eighteen cubits; and a line of twelve cubits did compass it" (Jeremiah 52:21).

Chronicles apparently does not agree with these texts.

"Also he made before the house two pillars of thirty and five cubits high" (II Chron. 3:15).

How can this be? Three texts said that they were 18 cubits high and now one says that they were 35 cubits. Is this a contradiction? Has God permitted an error to creep into the text?

A careful check into the words used in the Hebrew language at this point will solve our problem. In the account of Chronicles the word for "high" is "*orek*" and is not the same word used in the other texts. This particular word means "long" and not high. The account in Chronicles then merely states that the two pillars are 35 cubits long. In other words, laid end to end they were 35 cubits long together. Each pillar was 17 1/2 cubits high. But that is a half cubit short of the 18 cubits as stated in the other texts. No details are mentioned about the bases for the pillars; therefore it becomes plain that the bases for the pillars are a half cubit high, making the pillars 18 cubits high in altitude when they are on their bases and in place.

"The united height of the pillars is here given; and though the exact dimensions would be 36 cubits, each column was only 17 1/2 cubits, a half cubit being taken up by the . . . base. They are probably described as they were lying together in the mould before they were set up" (Critical and Experimental Commentary, Jamieson, volume II, page 516).

Were these pillars solid brass, or were they hollow? If they are hollow, just how thick is the brass in the shell? We would have no way of knowing except for the fact that Jeremiah described these pillars.

". . .and the thickness (of the pillars) thereof was four fingers; it was hollow" (Jeremiah 52:21).

We should complete the description of the pillars by comparing the size in everyday units of measurement. These pillars were not small by any means. They were almost 8 feet in diameter and over 36 feet high. About the height of a modern telephone pole. It took a considerable amount of brass to make these pillars; however, we will see more about that later.

The Capitals

Our subject so far has been relatively simple, especially in view of the quotation about the problems of these pillars from the Smith Bible Dictionary, but now the problems begin.

Most of the description relating to these pillars concerns the capitals. This architectural term is a word foreign to the common vocabulary; therefore we need a definition of terms. This word is translated chapters in the King James Version; therefore, one description should suffice for both words. To make matters simple, we will refer to them as capitals and not chapters from now on.

"Capital, Archit, the head, or uppermost part, of a column, pillar, etc." (The American College Dictionary).

A check in a good dictionary will usually produce several examples of capitals. An encyclopedia may have several pages devoted to many different types of capitals, depending on period and location. These capitals are usually very ornate as will be noted in such sources. The capitals for the pillars at the temple are no exception. It is the one thing on the outside of the temple which is ornate.

The first thing we must understand about these capitals is their size.

"And he made two capitals of molten brass, to set upon the tops of the pillars; the height of the one capital was five cubits, and the height of the other capital was five cubits" (I Kings 7:16).

This account is also confirmed by Jeremiah (Jer. 52:22) and Chronicles (II Chron. 3:15). But, II Kings apparently does not agree.

"And a capital of brass was upon it; and the height of the capital was three cubits" (II Kings 25:17).

Just what is the answer to this problem? To reconcile these texts there are only about two possibilities. (1) There are two capitals on each pillar. (2) There are two parts to the capital. These two parts are referred to as one in the first texts, and separate in this last text.

This problem is partially solved in I Kings. But in order to make it plain it is necessary to skip over the description of the ornateness of the capitals. We will discuss those details later; now we are concerned about the overall plan of the capitals.

In I Kings 7:17-19 we have the description of the capital followed by the following statement.

"And there were capitals above also upon the two pillars" (verse 20).

Since a description of the capitals had just been made at this place it would indeed be redundant. This is not redundant as it merely describes two capitals for each pillar and not two parts to a single capital. As we go further along it will become increasingly plain that this is the only solution to this puzzle. Even some of the authorities recognize this point.

"There is however a good deal of confusion as to the ornamentation of the chapters (capitals). . . The apparent discrepancy as to its height is owing to the fact that the ornament emitting the shaft to the chapter is sometimes included in the reckoning and sometimes not." (Dictionary of the Bible, edited by James Hastings, volume I, page 308, article "Boaz.")

Now the question is just which capital is on top, the three cubit capital or the five cubit capital? Logic should answer the question. A capital is used to increase the area of support above a pillar to support a roof or beam. Therefore, it would seem logical that the shorter capital would be the one underneath, giving more supporting area for the upper capital to rest upon.

The Two Bowls

We need to explore this subject a little further and see if the scripture bears this out. Notice the following text which is a repetition of the last scripture plus an additional factor.

"And there were capitals above also upon the two pillars, close by the belly" (I Kings

7:20).

The lower capital, was close by a "belly." This seems to have no sense until we read more about this subject in a later part of the same chapter.

"So Hiram made an end of doing all the work that he wrought for King Solomon in the house of the Lord: the two pillars, and the two bowls of the capitals that were on the top of the pillars" (I Kings 7:41).

This is also mentioned in the account in Chronicles, however, we will quote that later.

Now we know that there were two bowls on top of the pillars. Obviously they could not be a part of the lower capital. They must be all or part of the upper capital. In order to get an overall picture of what must be intended here we need to turn to one of the prophecies where the same Hebrew word *quelah* (bowl) is used. This particular prophecy is full of symbolism and spiritual meaning; however, it is not the intent of this work to expound the spiritual significance of these matters.

"And the angel that spoke with me returned and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep. And he said unto me: 'What seest thou?' And I said; 'I have seen, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it" (Zech. 4:1-2).

Isn't this exactly what has been described so far in regard to the pillars Jachin and Boaz? There is a tall brass cylinder with a capital upon it supporting a bowl! A very enlarged version of what Zechariah saw. In Zechariah it was small and of gold. In the case of the pillars they are of brass which appear when polished quite similar to gold.

Pillar and Capitals



Now you can begin to get the picture of what these pillars really are. How different from the ideas of men who in their carnal reasoning, have tried to borrow the idea of these pillars and pervert them in their own way which is exactly contrary to God's perfect way.

We need to go back a little now to the scripture which stated that the lower capitals were "close by the belly." The lower or wider part of the bowl would be termed the "belly."

The dictionary defines "belly" as "a protuberant or bulging surface." Certainly the widened part of a bowl can be termed the belly. The lower capital is close to this bulge, apparently where the two joined together. In the attached drawing this point will be more apparent.

The Lily Work

It was previously stated that these capitals were very ornate. Here is the first comment about that particular point.

"And the capitals that were upon the top of the pillars in the porch were of lily-work, four cubits" (I Kings 7:19).

It says plainly that this "lily work" was on the capitals, not a part of the pillars. This particular section quoted is from the part which refers to the upper capitals or bowls. Since the upper capital or bowl is 5 cubits, then four cubits consists of intricately engraved or moulded lily work. The remaining cubit would probably be a part of the base of the bowl, and the lip, which would have no lily work.

The Nets of Checker-Work

The capitals involve even more than we have already seen. There is a network consisting of a sort of netting or lattice work which covers the bowls. Instead of a net of small strands, the strands are wide like a lattice. The space between the lattice material is the same size, giving an appearance of checkers. Imagine if you can a checker-board. All the red squares consist of the material and the black squares are the open spaces between.

With this in mind it will be easy to understand why it is referred to as a "network," also as "nets," as "checker work," and in other places "lattice."

To prove some of these points we must refer to the word which refers to this netting. The word nets is translated from the Hebrew word *sabak*. It is defined by Young as a net, or network. Another word closely related to it is *sebakah*. This word is sometimes translated lattice. In addition to being used several times in connection with the net covering the bowl, it also is used in II Kings 1:2, where it is stated that Ahaziah fell down through the lattice in his upper chamber. Since it is a lattice, it is easy to understand why it is sometimes referred to as checker work.

In this particular place we have discussed what is meant by the Bible account, before the account was given. The reason for this is so the reader will understand more clearly just what is

meant. When you compare the scriptures on this point they should now be plain.

"So Hiram made. . .the two networks to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were on the top of the pillars" (I Kings 7:40-41).

This is stated in a slightly different way in another place.

"He also made nets of checker-work" (I Kings 7:17).

This netting covered not only the top of the bowls but it also draped over the side to cover the side of the bowl, down to the "belly." We need to quote again another section and add this point.

"And there were capitals above also upon the two pillars, close by the belly which was beside the network" (I Kings 7:20).

The Pomegranates

There were further embellishments for the capital and the network which must be considered next. They are explained most clearly in the following text:

"So Hiram made. . .the four hundred pomegranates for the two networks, two rows of pomegranates for each network, to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were upon the tops of the pillars" (I Kings 7:40-42).

There were four hundred pomegranates in all, or a total of two hundred for each network. But there are two rows for each network, of one hundred in each row. We still are faced with one other problem relating to these pomegranates. Only Jeremiah will give the details of this important point.

"And a capital of brass was upon it; and the height of the one capital was five cubits, with network and pomegranates upon the capital round about, all of brass; and the second pillar also had like unto these, and pomegranates. And there were ninety and six pomegranates on the outside; all the pomegranates were a hundred upon the network round about" (Jeremiah 52:22-23).

This text proves that there were 96 on the exterior side of the network for each row and 4 on the inside.

The Chain Work

Just how were these pomegranates fastened to the network? There would be no way for knowing for sure except for the account in Chronicles.

"And he made chains. . .and put them on the tops (capitals) of the pillars; and he made a hundred pomegranates, and put them on the chains" (II Chronicles 3:16).

Now we know that the pomegranates were affixed to the chains. We need to know a little more about these chains and what their relationship is to the network.

"He also made. . .wreaths of chainwork, for the capitals which were upon the top of the pillars: seven for the one capital and seven for the other capital. And. . .there were two rows round about upon the one network to cover the capitals that were upon the top of the pomegranates; and so did he for the other capital" (I Kings 7:17-18).

It should be plain now that the pomegranates were affixed to the wreaths of chains and they in turn were fastened to the network in a fashion so they appeared to be in two rows around the lower edge of the network. The word used in the Hebrew for these chains is *sharsherah*, which is literally stated by Young as a "little chain or bracelet," and is the same word used to describe the chain on the ephod worn by the High Priest (Exodus 28:14).

This covers the main points relating to these two pillars and their capitals. For a sort of review and summation, here is a summary from Chronicles.

"And Hiram made the pots, and the shovels, and the basins. So Hiram made an end of doing the work that he wrought for king Solomon in the house of God: the two pillars, and the bowls, and the two capitals which were on the top of the pillars; and the two networks to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were on the top of the pillars; and the four hundred pomegranates for the two networks: two rows of pomegranates for each network, to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were upon the top of the pillars" (II Chron. 4:11-13).

Just exactly where are these pillars located? Some have placed them inside the doorway, others on the outside in front. In order to understand for sure we must check all of the scriptures relating to the subject.

Jeremiah says that they were "in the house of the Lord" (Jer. 52:17). But, they are said to be set at the porch in Kings (I Kings 7:21). There is no contradiction here since the temple and the courts are sometimes referred to collectively as the house of the Lord.

Chronicles resolves the question, with an answer that is compatible with the other texts. "And he made (put) before the house two pillars" (II Chron. 3:15). It is plain from this that they are placed in front of the temple, by the entrance, at the porch.

Before we leave this subject it would be good to picture the immensity of these pillars and their capitals. The pillars alone were about 36 feet high, with capitals of 3 and 5 cubits. In all a total of over 52 feet high. Since the bowl is over 10 feet high, it must at least be 10 feet wide. In other words, the bowl alone is as large as a room!

The sketches relating to the pillars and their capitals may not be an exact representation. The Bible does not give the exact shape of these parts.

Based on the correct size of the cubit there would be about 500 cubic feet of brass in each

pillar, with its capitals. That much brass would weigh about 133 tons. The two pillars were a total of about 266 tons. No wonder Nebuchadnezzar broke them up and carried the brass to Babylon (Jer. 52:17).

It is no wonder that Hiram, who made these things is termed a "master craftsman." He would have to be in order to make such huge pillars and capitals.

Any thorough student of the Bible must realize that there is very important spiritual significance to these pillars and their capitals, especially in the light of Zechariah's prophecy which has already been quoted.

They are a very important part to the unusual beauty and design of God's Temple.

CHAPTER VI

THE GATES

Bible references to God's house do not include the main temple building only. The two courts surrounding the temple building, with the six gates and many additional buildings, are included as an important part of God's house.

Entry to the inner and outer courts is through six different gates. Three gates lead to the outer court, and three gates to the inner. These gates are quite complex and involve much more than mere doors through a wall.

The gates are so important that almost one whole chapter in the Bible is given to explain them. They present several difficult problems--some more difficult to solve than the details of the main temple building.

Here, as in all other aspects, many students of the subject have erred greatly. They have rejected and torn out whole verses in the Bible that refer to these gates. The reason for this is that they are unable to put all of the factors in the proper place, and are not able to understand them.

The fortieth chapter of Ezekiel is the only place where these gates are described in detail. No mention of the gates, and no details of the courts are given in Kings or Chronicles. There were courts and gates in the former temples, however, none were apparently ever constructed just like the ones the prophet describes here. On this point all sources are agreed. The fact that this portion of prophecy has never been fulfilled is further evidence that it will be fulfilled during the millennial period.

In our description of the temple, we have started with the temple building proper, instead of the gates. That is the main point of interest to most people, therefore it has been described first.

Ezekiel does not follow this pattern but instead describes the eastern gate first. He gives much more detail about this particular gate than the others. But, he gives further details when describing the other gates that must be taken into consideration for the eastern gate.

One of the most difficult things to understand about the temple and the courts, is the section on the gates. In order to understand the various points in the text, it will be very helpful to refer frequently to the drawings of the floor plan, and the various side views that are included.

The exact dimensions are not included in the drawings. But, the exact measurements as given in the Bible are used in the illustrations.

The Wall

The temple is enclosed by a wall one reed thick and one reed high. That means that this wall is approximately 12 feet high by 12 feet thick.

"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, of a cubit and a handbreadth each; so he measured the breadth of the building, one reed, and the height, one reed" (Ezekiel 40:5).

This wall encloses an area of 500 cubits square. Later on we learn that an additional area beyond this is also enclosed by another wall. It is 500 reeds square, or over 6,000 feet square (Ezek. 42:15-20).

The Eastern Gate

This is the most important gate in the temple area, since it is the one where Christ will enter, and which will be closed to others.

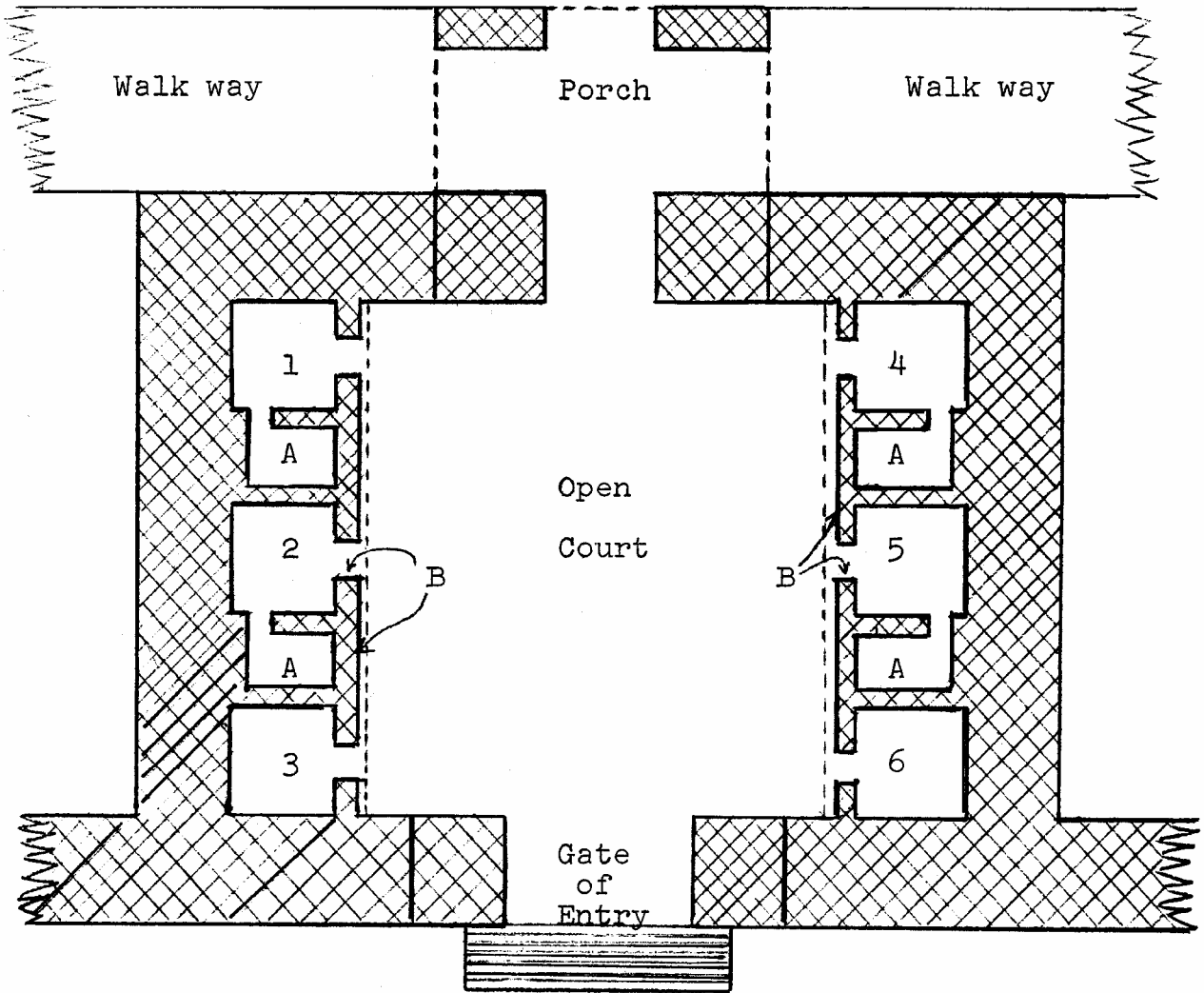
"Then he brought me back the way of the outer gate of the sanctuary, which looketh toward the east; and it was shut. And the Lord said unto me: 'This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, neither shall any man enter in by it, for the Lord, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it; therefore it shall be shut' (Ezekiel 44:1-2).

As Ezekiel entered this gate in his vision, he noticed that there were seven steps leading to it (Ezekiel 40:22).

He next measured the jambs of the gate, and found them to be one reed (six cubits) thick, just the same as the wall. A jamb is the side of an opening, or vertical piece forming the side of a doorway. These jambs form the openings in the outside wall.

"Then came he unto the gate which looketh toward the east, and went up the steps thereof; and he measured the jamb of the gate, one reed broad, and the other jamb, one reed broad" (Ezekiel 40:6).

GATE
Typical floor plan



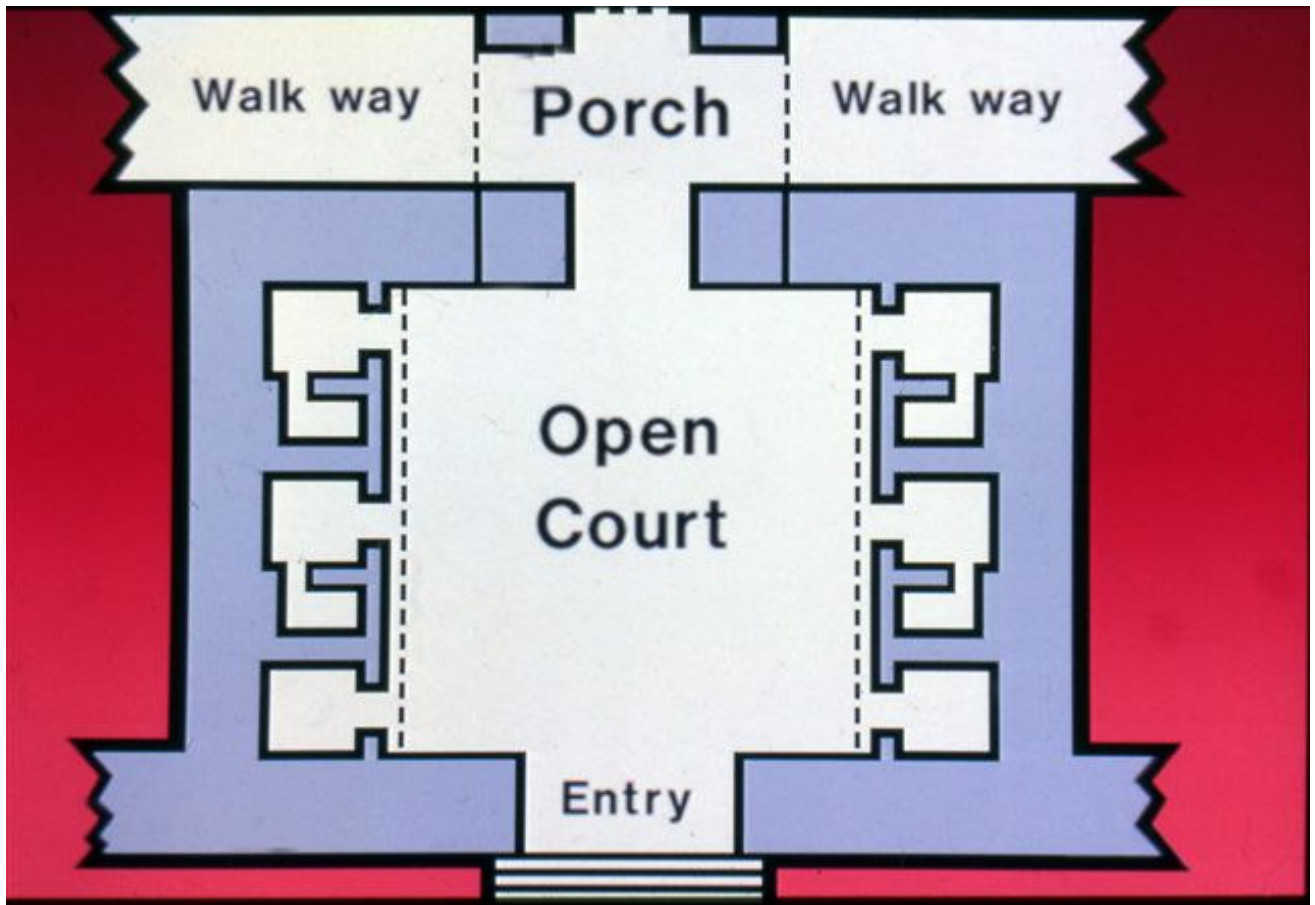
1 through 6 are chambers (Dotted lines are roof lines)

A. "Arches" (See text).

B. "Borders" " "

Scale: 10 cubits = 1 inch

Gate
Typical floor plan



So far we have seen that there are seven steps, a gate opening in the wall with jambs on either side of the opening. After measuring the jambs Ezekiel entered through this gateway into a sort of open courtyard with small rooms or cells on either side.

"And every cell was one reed long, and one reed broad" (Ezek. 40:7).

A few verses later we learn how many cells there are. They are on the north and south sides of this courtyard.

"And the cells of the gate eastward were three on this side, and three on that side; they three were of one measure" (verse 10).

Between each of the cells was a "space" of five cubits.

"And the space between the cells was five cubits" (verse 7).

Going further west there is another wall to the rear, or west of this small court. It is one reed of six cubits thick.

"And the jambs of the gate by the porch of the gate within were one reed" (verse 7).

Notice that this jamb is "by the porch of the gate within." Here is the first indication that there is a "porch" to these gates as well as to the main temple building. The same identical Hebrew word for porch is used here that is used in reference to the temple. Therefore, we should expect the porches of the gates to be something similar to the temple porch.

This will be further discussed when we consider the vertical details of the gates. Right now we are interested in understanding the floor plan of the gate.

The floor dimensions of the porch are given next. This porch is on the inner side of the gate. Notice first the width.

"He measured also the porch of the gate toward the house, one reed" (verse 8).

This portion of the gate was "toward the house," or main temple building. The next verse has been a puzzle to some of the scholars, and yet it need not be.

"Then measured he the porch of the gate eight cubits" (verse 9).

The wording of these two verses are almost identical. They both refer to the measurement of the porch, yet the measurement of both is different. Very obviously Ezekiel is just listing the two floor dimensions of the porch. So the porch is six by eight cubits.

There is another important part of this porch which is still left to be completed.

"And the posts thereof, two cubits" (verse 9).

A post is a vertical wall or pillar, which usually is associated with a door or opening. We often refer to the sides of a door as the door posts. Sometimes they are called "jambs." In the description of the temple, it seems that the sides of thick walls are referred to as jambs while the sides of narrow walls are posts. There were posts at the rear of the gate. This porch was said to be "toward the house," or in the court "within," as we have already seen. This point is now emphasized in a different way.

"And the porch of the gate was inward" (verse 9).

These "posts" were both of the same width on both sides of the porch. The one on the right (this side) was two cubits, and the one on the left (that side) was two cubits.

"And the posts had one measure on this side and on that side" (verse 10).

We now have a brief description of the floor plan of the gate. It consists of an enclosure with three chambers or cells on both the north and south side, an entrance to the east, and a porch on the west.

It would be easy to misunderstand a point or two in this brief description, so God has given us the overall measurement so we may be sure of the right dimensions.

"And from the forefront of the gate of the entrance unto the forefront of the inner porch of the gate were fifty cubits" (verse 15).

Now we should add up the various dimensions given. Here are the various items, going from east to west. Notice that they add up to exactly fifty cubits.

1. Jamb	6 cubits
2. Cell	6 "
3. Space	5 "
4. Cell	6 "
5. Space	5 "
6. Cell	6 "
7. Jamb	6 "
8. Porch	8 "
9. Post	2 "
Total	50 cubits

Entry of the Gate

There are two important aspects of the entry to the gate which have been bypassed. They must be understood next.

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

At the beginning of this chapter we read that the jambs in the opening of the outside wall, were both six cubits, but nothing was said as to how far apart they were spaced. Now we have the answer. It is ten cubits. But did you notice one other puzzling aspect to this verse? It says that the length of the gate was thirteen cubits. What does this mean? The word length usually refers to the longer of the dimensions. We already have the two necessary dimensions to the entry of the gate which is six by ten cubits.

Is this a contradiction? Most of the translators and scholars think so. It is left out of some of the translations because of this apparent contradiction. One source states that the "thirteen cubits is generally rejected."

"Ezekiel 40:11, the Hebrew reads, the length of the gate thirteen cubits, but this contradicts (verse 15, 21). Either this is a gloss or else the text should be slightly revised. . ." (Israel's Laws and Legal Testaments, C. F. Kent, page 163, footnote).

The reason that this is rejected is not because it is not in the original text, but rather because it appears to be contradictory. The meaning of the other verses mentioned is not understood.

Since we have two dimensions of the entry to the gate, a third dimension can mean only one thing, that it is in a different plane. The other dimensions are horizontal, or floor dimensions. This third dimension is the vertical dimension or height of the gate! How simple and plain the answer, and yet it has been a stumbling block to many scholars.

One thing that the researchers have been surprised about in Ezekiel's account of the temple, is that there are no vertical measurements. The reason they have assumed this is that they have rejected the plain Bible statements and they have not put it together with the account given in Kings and Chronicles.

A surprising thing is that there are at least four separate and distinct vertical dimensions of the gates given in Ezekiel! The men who have translated and interpreted this section have rejected every single one of them! No wonder they cannot understand!

This gate of the entry is ten cubits wide, six cubits long for the jambs, and thirteen cubits high.

More About the Cells

How far apart are the cells from north to south? This question must now be answered in a round about way, but it is plain when explained.

"And he measured the gate from the roof of the one cell to the roof of the other, a breadth of five and twenty cubits; door against door" (verse 13).

This tells us how far apart the roof to the cells are. It does not say how far apart the cells are. It is plain from this text that the cells have roofs, and that there is no roof in between. In other

words, there is a space of twenty-five cubits from north to south which has no roof. That is a sort of courtyard space enclosed by the cells on two sides, the entry of the gate on the east, and the porch on the west.

The preceding verse states that there is a border of one cubit toward this open space. The Bible refers to the larger walls as just that--"walls." But have you noticed how thick these walls are. They are about ten or twelve feet thick! With such thick walls, it is no wonder that in this place a mere one cubit wall of two feet be called a "border" instead of a wall.

"...and a border before the cells, one cubit (on this side), and a border, one cubit on that side; and the cells, six cubits on this side, and six cubits on that side" (verse 12).

Other Dimensions Given

We now know that there is a distance of twenty-five cubits between the roofs, one cubit for each inside wall of the cells, and six cubits for each cell. We have not yet noticed if there is an overhang to the roof. Another important measurement of our north-south dimension is still lacking. That is the overall dimension, and the dimension of the outside wall. They are not specifically stated in the Bible. Since they are not given, it must be obvious from other statements.

The walls to the side chambers of the temple are the same thickness as the "space" between the cells (verse 7). Therefore, let us use this same pattern for the outside walls since no dimension is given. Here are the measurements added together going from north to south.

- | | |
|---------------|----------|
| 1. Wall | 5 cubits |
| 2. Cell | 6 " |
| 3. Border | 1 " |
| 4. Open space | 25 " |
| 5. Border | 1 " |
| 6. Cell | 6 " |
| 7. Wall | 5 " |

Total 49 cubits

Notice how close this figure is to the overall dimension of the distance from east to west. Certainly there must be some relationship between the two. So many times in the temple and its courts a square is used. Certainly that must be what is intended here also.

One additional cubit is needed to make up the difference. Nothing has been stated about overhang to the roof. Let's make it one-half cubit on each side. That should be a reasonable amount. With that, we have a gate area of exactly fifty cubits in both directions. How simple! Here is a summary of our north-south measurements.

- | | |
|---------|----------|
| 1. Wall | 5 cubits |
| 2. Cell | 6 " |

3. Border (wall)	1 "
4. Roof overhang	1/2 "
5. Open space	25 "
6. Roof overhang	1/2 "
7. Border	1 "
8. Cell	6 "
9. Wall	5 "

Total 50 cubits

The Porch is Sixty Cubits High

Our next problem is again one where most stumble. It is a vertical dimension. It can plainly be only a vertical dimension or height. Since it is so large, it does not fit with the ideas of some, so they have almost universally rejected it.

"He made also posts of threescore cubits; even unto the posts of the court in the gates round about" (verse 14).

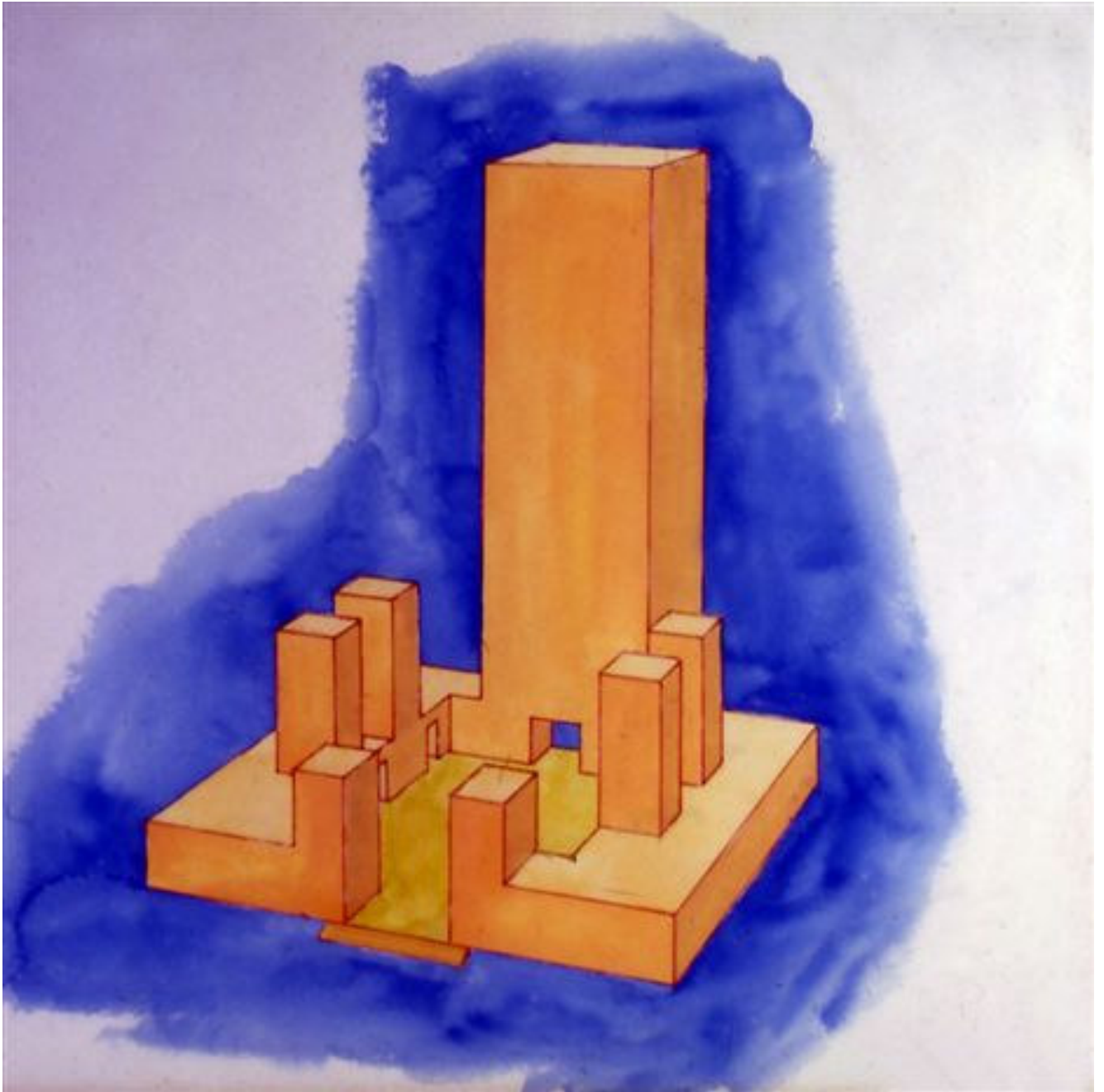
Here is an example of how some people have come to the conclusion that this text should be changed or deleted.

"It is far more sensible to emend the text with the aid of the LXX (Septuagint version), and to read, 'And he measured the porch. . .20 cubits'; i.e. in breadth-the other measurements have been given. . ." (Dictionary of the Bible, James Hastings, Editor).

The height of these posts equals a modern twelve story building! These posts are not just in the east gate but are also "in the gates round about." All six gates have these same high posts.

Just where are they located in each gate?

Perspective View of Gate



So far we have found reference to two different sets of posts in this chapter. There were the posts of the "porch of the gate," which was inward (verse 9). There are also posts for the individual cells. It becomes apparent on close study that the posts relating to the cells are door posts only, and not great high posts towering into the air.

The only other "posts" mentioned in the gates are the two in the porch inward. These are the only posts which could be meant. If the posts of the porch are sixty cubits high then the porch must also be at least that high. The porch of the temple is one hundred twenty cubits high, so the porch of the gate is half the height of the porch of the house. In the drawings of the gates you will notice the similarity between these porches and those of the temple.

The Arches

One of the most difficult things to understand about the gates are the "arches." An arch is a sort of half circle used over an opening or door.

"And there were narrow windows to the cells and to their posts within the gate round about, and likewise to the arches; and windows were round about inward. . ." (verse 16).

Standing in the open space or courtyard of the gate, narrow windows are seen in all the cells. They are referred to as narrow windows, just as were described concerning the temple.

Windows in the Arches

Notice that there are also windows round about in the "arches." This is the first we have read about arches. Where are they located, what are they like? What is their dimension?

Adam Clarke says at this point "The arch was not known at this period" (Clarke's Commentary, Adam Clarke, Volume IV, page 535). So he is no help in answering the question. It is found on careful investigation that the arch was known in ancient times.

Another source, already quoted on other points has this comment.

"40:16 The Hebrew text is corrupt; a scribe has apparently confused the Hebrew word for vestibule with the similar word for arch" (Israel's Laws and Legal Precedents, C. F. Kent).

Gesenius, in his Hebrew-English Lexicon states the following on page 38, under the word translated "arch."

"A term in architecture which is very difficult to define. It appears to have signified the projection of a pediment. It is clearly distinguished from. . . (Hebrew word for vestibule) with which many confound it."

Therefore Gesenius does not agree with C. F. Kent on this point.

The word translated "arches" is *eylam*, or in a shortened form *elam*. According to Strong, this word is probably taken from *ayil* which is the word for "post." He states that it is apparently "a pillar space (or colonnade), i.e. a pale." The same word is also translated ram. A ram with its two curved horns may have given the same idea because of the tall horns.

In the original Hebrew there were no vowels. They were added later. The original Hebrew for these two words was spelled as follows, *aleph, lamed, mem* for arches, and *aleph, lamed* for posts.

A Hebrew Lexicon shows that the next word after *elam* is another word of exactly the same letters but written *eylim*. This is stated to be a "plural of *ayil*." In this case the word is used for palm trees in the desert. It was the name given to a place in the desert by the children of Israel when they left Egypt. You may remember the place where they found seventy "palm trees" or *eylim* (Exodus 15:27). It was called Elim.

We need to go a little further on this same point before we draw any final conclusions. The word translated "porch" is also from this same root Hebrew word. It is listed by Strong as "*ulam*." Each word for post, arch and porch, started with the Hebrew letter "aleph," even though they are changed slightly in our euphonic spelling.

The root word used for post then is the same root for arches, palm trees, and porch. Notice that the porch is very tall and slender. Also, the posts are tall and slender. The arch (as it is translated), must also be similar.

The New American Standard Bible uses the word "porches" instead of "arches", and the New International Version uses the word "portico".

"And there were arches round about, five and twenty cubits long, and five cubits broad" (verse 30).

Here is another place that is almost universally rejected and even left out of some translations. The Septuagint leaves this out. Kent says, of these dimensions, "These, however, are impossible."

The prophet is merely giving us the dimensions of these arches as being twenty-five cubits high and five cubits broad. They have windows in them and they are round about, or on both sides of the court. Notice, the proportion of one to five here. This is just about the same proportion as the side dimensions of the porch in the temple.

It should now be obvious that these so-called arches are simply miniature "porches." But where are they located? Going back to verse seven notice that the "space between the cells was five cubits." Here is the only place where they could fit in the various parts of the gate. These must be the arches. When first mentioned, they are not defined, but only referred to as a "space."

The Septuagint uses the word for "post" here instead of space. Since "arches" may be the plural of post, or porch, they might also be called posts.

In order that there be no confusion, we will continue to refer to these particular pillars or porches as "arches" to differentiate from other porches and posts, even though they are in no way what we now call arches.

These arches have windows "round about inward." Therefore, there are windows on the inner side facing the interior of the courtyard. These arches face outward in the inner gates. Apparently the outer gates have their arches facing in the same direction.

"And the arches thereof were toward the outer court" (verse 31).

Just what is meant by this? There is a front and back side to these arches. The side toward the interior of the courtyard is obviously the side and not the back or front, and there are windows in it. Apparently the front also has windows contrasted to the back side which would not have windows. There are no other details that might indicate the difference between back and front.

With these arches having narrow windows, and being of narrow, high construction, leads us to only one conclusion as to their use. They could possibly be lookout towers. Because of their limited size that is about all they could be used for. The inside measurement with a one cubit wall would only be six by eight feet, not including an inside ladder or stairwell.

For such a purpose a narrow ladder of the fire escape type could be in one corner. An entrance would be most practical from the ground floor through small doors in the wall of the cells.

The Porch of the Gate

The porch of the gate is at the opposite end from the entry to the gate. These porches are on the side of the gate nearest the outer court. On the outer gates they are located on the inward side, and on the inner gates they are on the outer side. The posts of this porch are at the extreme end of the gate. Here is a comment about the inner gate toward the north.

"And the posts thereof were toward the outer 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" (verse 37).

The new point here is that there are palm trees upon each of these posts. These are artificial palm-trees, cut right into the material of the porch.

In the porch there is an "entry" toward the rear, and also to each side. This is proved by the following text.

"Then he brought me through the entry, which was at the side of the gate. . ." (Ezekiel 46:19).

As we will see later in the next chapter there is a "pavement" on each side of the gate, around

the outer court. It is only as wide as the gate, therefore these entries provide access directly to the pavement.

Six Gates

In the description of the gate there are six separate and distinct gates. Verses six through sixteen in chapter 40, describes the outer gate toward the east. Next, Ezekiel describes another outer gate, this time to the north. It is described in verse twenty through twenty-three. Notice that this gate is after the same pattern or measure of the first gate.

"And the gate of the outer court that looked toward the north, he measured the length thereof and the breadth thereof. And the cells 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. And the windows thereof, and the arches thereof, and the palm-trees thereof, were after the measure of the gate that looketh toward the east; and it was ascended by seven steps; and the arches thereof were before them" (verses 20-22).

In the remaining gates, the description is given in much the same way, showing that they are all identical. Verse twenty-four through twenty-seven concern the outer gate to the south. Then follows the description of the inner gates to the south, east and north. The inner gates provide entry into the inner court which immediately surrounds the temple.

There is one difference between the inner and outer gate that must not be overlooked. There are seven steps leading to the outer gates, but eight steps leading to the inner gates (verse 37).

Summary

Since we have gone through these details rather exhaustively, it would be good to summarize the details of the gate.

Let's take a quick tour of the eastern gate. The visitor approaches this gate from the east and first traverses seven steps. High doors of about 26 feet with posts on the right and left of the approximate same height are faced. After entering through this opening, a small courtyard is entered. There are three rooms on the right side and three rooms on the left side. Each of these rooms has a door and two windows facing toward the spectator. Between the rooms are tall pillars or posts with windows facing to the outside and also toward the inner part of the court. There are four of these pillars, and they are about 50 feet high. Straight ahead is the porch of the gate. It has an entry onto the pavement of the "outer court" to the right and left, plus another entry straight ahead toward the main temple building. This porch towers some 120 feet.

The researchers have in general rejected any high porches or towers as has been amply mentioned before. Now we understand that there are actually about 42 projections (7 in each gate) which might be called towers. Then the greatest tower of all, the porch of the temple.

In rejecting these high towers, they have also rejected a prophecy of the time to come when

Christ will raise up Zion for His Temple. Then the people of the world will come and count these towers.

"Walk about Zion, and go round about her; Count the towers thereof" (Psalms 48:13).

The porch of the house is said to have a face (Ezekiel 41:25). In other words, the front of the porch is considered the face. The front of the individual arches, and porches should also be considered faces. A face, of course, is usually a part of a head. A head is also defined in the dictionary as "that part of anything which forms or is regarded as forming the top, summit, or upper end. . .a 'projecting part.'" There are seven such heads to each gate. The posts for the doors, the four "arches" and the one porch.

One of the Psalms refers to this. Because of its poetical beauty this Psalm has become well known and has been set to music by several different composers. Very few really understand the significance and meaning behind it. It is not just a lot of unusual poetical abstraction or poetry but really means something. Let us look at this Psalm from the aspect of the gates to God's Temple.

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates, And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; That the King of glory may come in. 'Who is the King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle.' Lift up your heads, O ye gates, Yea, lift them up, ye everlasting doors; That the King of glory may come in. 'Who then is the King of glory? The Lord of hosts; He is the King of glory'" (Psalms 24:7-10).

The "heads" of the gates to God's temple will be lifted up. The doors of the gates will be set. Jesus Christ, the King of glory will be in His Temple in the millennial age to come.

CHAPTER VII

THE COURTS OF THE LORD

The subject of the courts of the temple is probably the least understood of any part of God's House. Most Bible students realize that there are courts associated with God's House. They, however, do not realize what they are for, how they are arranged, or how many important buildings and chambers they contain.

It is because of this confusion that many have a completely erroneous idea of important aspects of the temple.

Most accounts in the Bible referring to the temple concern primarily the activities in the courts, and not in the main temple building.

Even in the New Testament there is confusion by many people regarding activities of the temple. We read many times in the gospels and in the book of Acts where Christ and the Apostles went up to the temple to pray, or to meet with other people in religious worship. Just where did they go? They did not pray in the main temple building as they were forbidden to enter. Only Priests could enter that building. The inner court was exclusively for the Priests in carrying out their duties.

"In Herod's Temple, which is not systematically described in the Bible, there were four courts, those of the Gentiles, the Women, the Men (Israel) and the Priests, in ascending order of exclusiveness." (The New Bible Dictionary, Article Court, page 240)

When we understand the basic pattern of Ezekiel's temple, we will have a better understanding of what transpired in the New Testament accounts concerning Christ and the Apostles at the temple.

What is the Lord's House?

To start with we must clarify one important point. The term "The Lord's House," or "house of the Lord" usually includes the courts of the temple and the buildings in the courts.

On one occasion we read that the apostles met in one of the courts in a section known as "Solomon's Porch." This account in Acts 5:12 has been confused by some people who thought this was the porch of the actual temple building. The porch of the temple building is quite small. Solomon's porch, as it was called, was a long porch extending along the whole eastern extremity of the temple area.

In Jeremiah, chapters 35 and 36 we read of certain events which took place in various chambers of the "house of the Lord" (Jeremiah 35:2). In these particular chambers the priests ate and drank. From the context it is plain that there were several stories of rooms (verse 4), so

some have mistaken these chambers to be the side chambers in the main temple building. The side chambers are relatively small. But, the rooms mentioned here in Jeremiah, are apparently large rooms, or they could not hold many people at one time.

The confusion here has arisen largely because of the term "house of the Lord." This term includes the courts and their buildings as well.

Here is a scripture to prove this statement. Keep in mind when reading it that the people are not permitted into the main temple building. Only certain of the priests were permitted in the main temple building to perform specific services during their periods of duty.

"Then the prophet Jeremiah said unto the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests, and in the presence of all the people that stood in the house of the Lord" (Jeremiah 28:5).

Since the people were in the "house of the Lord," and yet the people were not permitted in the inner court, or in the temple building, it is obvious that this term includes the courts which surrounded the temple. We should be better able to understand many places in the Bible where certain activities took place in these courts.

Before we finish this chapter you will know where these particular chambers were located, and where it was that the people went, when they went to the house of the Lord.

It has been mentioned earlier that Ezekiel is the only place in the Bible where the courts are described in detail. We have already had the gates described in great detail, however, their exact placement in the courts may not be entirely clear yet.

The Courts are Foursquare

We are now ready to start the Bible description of the courts, and the buildings in them. In order that you might better understand the overall picture of these courts it is necessary for you to understand one fact to start with. This will later be proved in detail. The courts and temple area is 500 cubits square. It is foursquare, 500 cubits on each side.

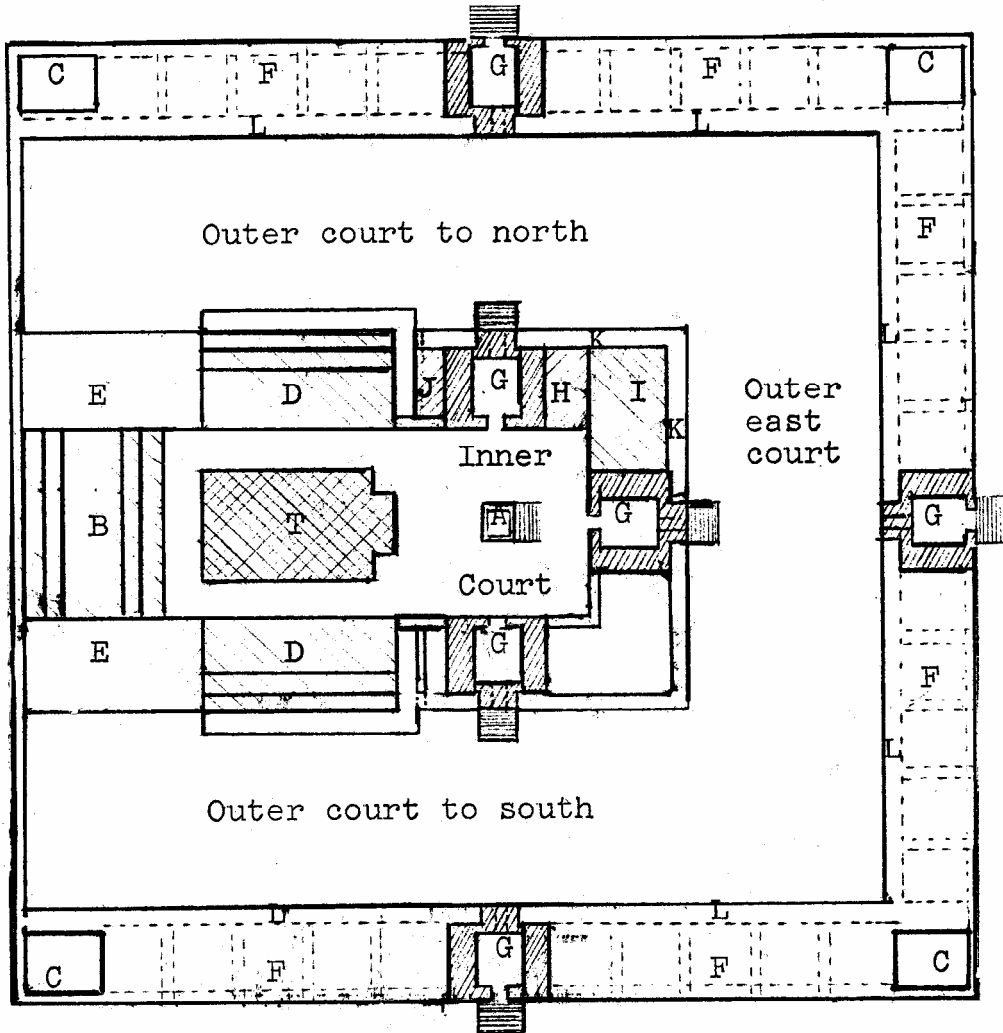
We have already learned that there are gates on the east, south and north. These gates are exactly in the middle of the 500 cubit wall, and each are 50 cubits square. A wall encircles this 500 cubit area. The wall is one reed high and one reed (6 cubits) thick. The account concerning this was given in the last chapter and the exact description is given in Ezekiel 40:5.

The Thirty Chambers

After Ezekiel described and measured the outer east gate (Ezek. 40:6-16) he gave important details concerning what is called the outer court. In this description he mentioned that around the edge of this outer court there was a pavement 50 cubits wide. A pavement is defined as "a surface, ground covering or floor made by paving." To be more specific he stated that this pavement was the same width as the gates and were on each side of the gates. There is no gate on the west, so from his account it should be clear that there is no pavement on that side of the

Buildings and Courts

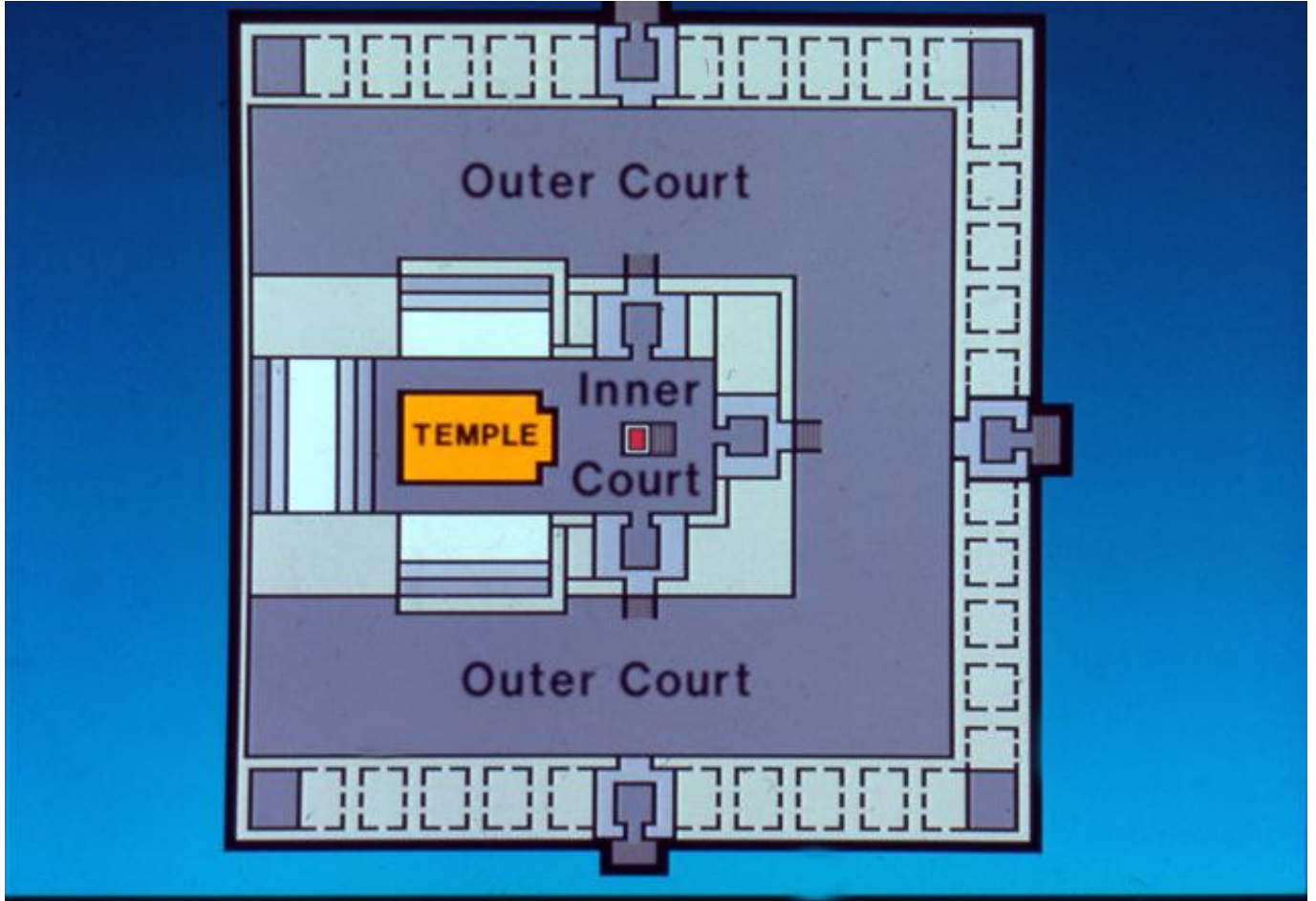
Overall Plan



- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| A. Altar | G. Gates |
| B. Building to the west | H. Chamber-house priests |
| C. Courts for cooking | I. Chambers-altar priests |
| D. Dining chambers for priests | J. Chamber-washing |
| E. Kitchens for priests | K. East wall |
| F. "Thirty chambers" | L. Walkway |

Scale: 100 cubits = 1 inch

**Buildings and Courts
Overall Plan**



outer court. Here is the Bible account of this pavement.

"Then brought he me into the outer court, and, lo, there were chambers and a pavement, made for the court round about; thirty chambers were upon the pavement. And the pavement was by the side of the gates, corresponding unto the length of the gates, even the lower pavement" (Ezekiel 40:17-18).

Built upon this pavement are 30 chambers. The Bible does not say how large these chambers are, nor does it say what they are used for. Later on we should have a good idea as to what their use is.

Just how large should these chambers be, and how many should there be along each wall?

To start with, let us settle on how many there should be along each wall. These chambers are on the three walls east, south and north, therefore there must be 10 on each side. Some authorities have conceived of them as separate buildings, usually quite small, located around the court. The Bible describes them as 30 chambers, not 30 buildings, which seems to imply a continuous building. If they are a part of a continuous building, then the dimension is limited along the outside wall to a definite measurement. There is one factor that will affect this measurement which will be taken up later.

What should the other dimension of these chambers, from the wall of the court inward be?

In the chapter on the gates, it was stated that there are exactly 10 cubits of the gate which is used for the opening of the porch and the posts. It may be necessary to refer to the floor plan of the gates to understand exactly what is meant here. As previously mentioned this 10 cubit space is used for the walkway around the court to the 30 chambers. (See the previous page).

Later on we will come back to this walkway in connection with the "galleries." For the time being let it suffice to say that this 10 cubits (about 20 feet) continues on around the court on the three sides. Please refer to the Buildings and Courts Overall Plan for clarification. The distance from the exterior of the outside wall to the walkway on the inside of the outer court is then 40 cubits, so the 30 chambers depth must be this same dimension.

Four "Kitchens"

There is another important aspect of the outer court which we must consider next. This new point concerns the four corners of the outer court.

"Then he brought me forth into the outer court, and caused me to pass by the four corners of the court; and, behold, in every corner of the court there was a court. In the four corners of the court there were courts enclosed, forty cubits long and thirty broad; these four in the corners were of one measure" (Ezekiel 46:21-22).

A court is an open space, without roof. These particular courts are 30 X 40 cubits. If you will refer to the drawing concerning the courts you will notice how they are placed, and how the 10

cubits of walkway is extended along the long side (40 cubit side) of the court, making an even square of 40 cubits for these smaller courts and their entrances. These particular courts are further described in the next two verses.

"And there was a row of masonry round about in them, round about the four, and it was made with boiling-places under the rows round about. Then said he unto me: "These are the boiling-places, where the ministers of the house shall boil the sacrifices of the people" (Ezekiel 46:23-24).

The purpose of these courts is to provide a place to cook the sacrifices that the people bring. The people did partake of part of the offerings that they presented. Here is the place where they are cooked. Since these cooking places are associated directly with the 30 chambers it now becomes rather obvious that the chambers are probably used as dining rooms for the people to eat the food prepared in these corner courts. Later, we will see where there are extensive other facilities for the priests to eat.

The next important point regards the three inner gates and their exact placement.

"Then he measured the breadth from the forefront of the lower gate unto the forefront of the inner court without, a hundred cubits, eastward as also northward" (Ezek. 40:19).

Since the inner gates are exactly 100 cubits from the outer gates, that means that the outer court would be 100 cubits across. Inside of this one hundred cubit area are the inner gates, the other buildings, the inner court, and the main temple building. Now we will gradually begin to place the various buildings and parts of this section together.

Two Large Three Story Buildings

There are two very large three story buildings which must now be described. One of these buildings is placed directly north of the main temple building, and the other directly south. If you will remember the chapter concerning the main temple building, you may remember that on the north, south, and west side of the temple were open spaces of exactly 20 cubits. This particular space which surrounds the temple is called the "separate place." These two buildings form a boundary on the north and south of this "separate place."

Almost one whole chapter in Ezekiel is given to the description of these two buildings. Therefore they must be important. They are very unusual buildings as you will soon see from the description. As usual, we will find certain difficulties in really understanding what God inspired Ezekiel to write. In order to understand this first section, just remember that the word "against" means "opposite" in modern English. This first quotation tells us exactly where the building is located.

"Then he brought me forth into the outer court, the way toward the north; and he brought me into the chamber that was over against the separate place, and which was over against the building, toward the north, even to the front of the length of a hundred cubits, with the door on the north, and the breadth of fifty cubits, over against the

twenty cubits which belonged to the inner court, and over against the pavement which belonged to the outer court; with gallery against gallery in three stories" (Ezek. 42:1-3).

Now let's analyze what was given in this text. Ezekiel was taken from where he was measuring in the main temple building (chapter 41), out through the inner north gate to a spot in the north that was opposite the separate place, which was also opposite the northernmost buildings of the outer court (the north row of the 30 chambers). This particular place was the side of the building which was 100 cubits long. To make doubly sure we understand, he mentioned that this particular side (verse 3) was opposite the 20 cubits (separate place) which is associated with the inner court. It is also opposite the pavement (on which the 30 chambers were placed). In other words he was standing in a spot between the separate place and the 30 chambers.

Now we have the exact location of the building. There is one additional point which he makes by stating that the building was "gallery against gallery in three stories:" Just what does this mean?

Where are the Galleries?

First, we must understand what a gallery is. A gallery is "a covered walk or promenade," or "a raised platform or passageway along the outside or inside of the wall of a building." It is sometimes used as a promenade on the inside of a courtyard.

Since we have a little idea of what a gallery is, we are brought back to the point in this text which states that gallery is against gallery. Or, in modern English, there are galleries opposite each other. Also notice that the building has three stories.

"And before the chambers was a walk of ten cubits breadth inward, a way of one cubit; and their doors were toward the north" (verse 4).

The "walk" of 10 cubits described here is the "promenade" of the "galleries." The doors of the chambers on the three floors are toward the north. Therefore, the promenades, walks, or galleries as they are variously referred to must be on the north.

There is one important point in this verse that we will have to come back to a little later, which concerns the "way of one cubit." The next verse, clarifies certain other important points about these galleries or promenades.

"Now the upper chambers were shorter; for the galleries took away from these, more than from the lower and the middlemost, in the building" (verse 5).

The two upper floors were narrower than the lower floor as each floor had the 10 cubit promenade or gallery cut back into the building. What is described here is something like stair steps. In verse 2 we learned that the building was 50 cubits wide. But the second floor would only be 40 cubits wide and the third floor would be 30 cubits wide, because of the 10 cubit wide gallery.

The next verse brings out a surprising point.

"For they were in three stories, and they had not pillars as the pillars of the courts; therefore room was taken away from the lowest and the middlemost, in comparison with the ground" (verse 6).

Here are the "Pillars" of God's Temple

The amazing point here concerns the pillars. It means that these particular promenades, galleries or walks belonging to this building do not have pillars. Previously in verse 3, we read that the galleries were opposite galleries. That point has not been cleared up yet.

What galleries could be opposite those of this building?

These galleries face north, so the others would have to face south. They must be 10 cubits wide, if the same pattern is used, and they must have pillars to support the roof. The point made in verse 6 is that the galleries of the building do not have pillars but those in the courts do. The only place for these galleries in the courts would be the ten cubit space around the outer courts which give access to the 30 chambers. It is just as simple as that!

With this in mind, we should focus our attention back to the outer court to add a point here concerning this gallery or promenade.

Do you remember in Chapter I where it was mentioned that the saints of this era would be "pillars" in the temple of God. This was taken from the statement of Revelation 3:12. These pillars are only a figure or type of the saints. Here they are, clear around the outer court of God's temple.

How high are these pillars, how many of them are there, and how far apart should they be spaced?

The Bible does not tell us directly, however, there are good clues. The side chambers of the temple are 5 cubits high. Most of the chambers or rooms ought to be the same height of five cubits if the Biblical pattern is followed. That is about ten feet and should be adequate for the various individual chambers. Using that height inside for the 30 chambers plus a cubit for the roof would make a total of 6 cubits. This also follows the numerical pattern used so frequently in the temple of 5 and 6 cubits.

If the rooms were five cubits high, then the roof overhang of 10 cubits over the walkway would surely be the same height of 5 cubits. On that basis we should expect the pillars to be about the same distance apart, that is, 5 cubits between centers.

"And thou shalt make the court of the tabernacle: for the south side southward there shall be hangings for the court of fine twined linen a hundred cubits long for one side. And the pillars thereof shall be twenty, and their sockets twenty, of brass; the hooks of

the pillars and their fillets shall be of silver. And likewise for the north side in length there shall be hangings a hundred cubits long, and the pillars thereof twenty, and their sockets twenty, of brass; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets of silver. . . . The length of the court shall be a hundred cubits, and the breadth fifty everywhere, and the height five cubits, of fine twined linen, and their sockets of brass" (Exodus 27:9-11, 18).

From these scriptures we can see that the pillars of the court of the tabernacle in the wilderness were spaced five cubits apart and were five cubits high. That is the same conclusion already mentioned from the pattern used in the temple.

Now back to the subject of the building to the north of the temple building. We left the subject to explain about the pillars in the courts. If you will remember, there were no such pillars in the galleries of this large building. Without pillars for support, it is obvious that these galleries or promenades are uncovered having no roof. They look something like stairsteps as previously mentioned.

What is a "Way"

With this in mind, we must go back now and answer another question that was left unanswered regarding verse 4. Do you remember that there was a walk of 10 cubits and a way of 1 cubit? Just what is this "way." Most of the commentators and scholars are completely at a loss to explain this. They assume that this is an incorrect translation, that there has been a corruption of the text. They assume that it really means 100 cubits instead of 1.

One source dares to differ on this one point with the other scholars. Havernick and Klieforth state about this word "way" as follows. "'A way of one cubit' in the sense of the approaches (entrances into the rooms) were a cubit broad." This conclusion is scorned by other authorities who state that it is "impossible" and just "correct" the text to read 100 cubits.

Perspective View of Priests Dining Halls



This last source really has the nearest to the correct answer. The word used here is not easily defined from the Hebrew, at least from an architectural point of view. From a practical point of view it soon becomes obvious what is meant. The galleries are open to the weather. In order to protect the entrance and doorway to each door, they are merely recessed into the wall one cubit (two feet). It is as simple as that. There is no need to change or "correct" the text.

Now that you have the description and understanding of these two large buildings and their use it becomes plain which chambers were mentioned in Jeremiah 35 and 36. The Hebrew word for the "chambers" of Jeremiah and those of this building in Ezekiel is "*lishkah*." It should be plain now that chambers similar to these are what Jeremiah had reference to (Jer. 35:2) and not the side chambers of the temple which are "*tsela*" in the Hebrew.

It was to similar chambers in ancient times that the musicians went (I Chronicles 9:33), where the gold was weighed (Ezra 8:29), and where the tithes were taken (Neh. 10:37-39; 13:4-9).

Another East Wall!

Ezekiel next gives attention to details about a wall to the east of this building.

"And the wall that was without by the side of the chambers, toward the outer court in front of the chambers, the length thereof was fifty cubits" (Ezek. 42:7).

This particular wall is nowhere mentioned in scripture beside this particular place. Just where is this 50 cubit wall located? It is toward the outer court, so the first conclusion might be that it is an east-west wall in front of the 100 cubit side. That is completely unreasonable and does not fit into the overall pattern of this part of the court.

Which court is this toward? In the preceding verse (verse 6) did you notice that the pillars were in the courts? There are actually three sections to the great outer court, and in one sense they are three courts. In this particular place (verse 6) the main outer court, or the eastern part of the outer court is meant. This particular wall is located just east of the building and runs north and south, separating the entrances to this building from the inner court. It is 50 cubits long, the same length as the eastern wall of the building. Please refer to the Buildings and Courts Overall plan for placement.

This wall ought to be at least 10 cubits to the east of the building, following the pattern of the galleries.

The next verse again verifies the fact that this side of the building is the 50 cubit side.

"For the length of the chambers that were toward the outer court was fifty cubits; and, lo, before the temple were a hundred cubits" (verse 8).

An important point to note in this last verse concerns the 100 cubits before (opposite, or in front of) the temple. This plainly shows us the exact east-west location of the building. It is directly opposite the main temple building. Since both are 100 cubits long, they are both in

exactly the same location from east to west.

"And from under these chambers was the entry on the east side, as one goeth into them from the outer court" (verse 9).

The Entries

Another problem is now presented. Just what entries are meant here? We have already read that all of the doors were on the north (verse 2, 4). Now entries are described on the east, and they are under the chambers. The doors to the individual chambers open onto the galleries for each story. The second and third story would have no access to the ground floor. Therefore, this particular scripture tells how entry is made to the second and third floor. It is through entries on the eastern end of the building, through exits which are under these particular chambers. There is an interior stairway which connects to the second and third story and the entry to them is located at the east end of the building. Their entry is from the outer court, not the inner court.

The next points mentioned by Ezekiel are at first confusing.

"In the breadth of the wall of the court toward the east, before the separate place, and before the building, there were chambers" (verse 10).

This almost reads as though there are another set of chambers or another building in the same place. This does not refer to other chambers in the same place, since the following verses plainly show that this is referring to an identical building to the south of the main temple building. It faces to the south, toward the southern outer court.

"With a way before them; like the appearance of the chambers which were toward the north, as long as they, and as broad as they, with all their goings out, and according to their fashions; and as their doors" (verse 11).

One additional point is mentioned in the following verse that was not mentioned regarding the building on the north.

"so were also the doors of the chambers that were toward the south, there was a door in the head of the way, even the way directly before the wall, toward the way from the east, as one entereth into them" (verse 12).

From this text it is plain that there is also an entry or doorway in this 50 cubit wall toward the east. It gives access to the entry of the inner gate.

The Two Dining Halls

Just what are these large buildings used for? Surprising as it may seem they are dining halls for the priests.

"Then said he unto me: 'The north chambers and the south chambers, which are before

the separate place, they are the holy chambers, where the priests that are near unto the Lord shall eat the most holy things."

Do you realize how large these buildings are and how much floor space there are in them? The first floor of each one has 5,000 square cubits, the second 4,000 cubits and the third has 3,000 square cubits. In all a total of 12,000 square cubits. That is equivalent to about 24,000 square feet of floor space for both buildings. The equivalent of about 25 small five room houses.

If these are the dining halls, just where are the kitchens to prepare so much food? The answer to this question is found in a different chapter.

"Then he brought me through the entry, which was at the side of the gate, into the holy chambers for the priests, which looked toward the north; and, behold, there was a place on the hinder part westward. And he said unto me: "This is the place where the priests shall boil the guilt-offering and the sin-offering, where they shall bake the meal-offering; that they bring them not forth into the outer court, to sanctify the people" (Ezek. 46:19-20).

This building was at the rear of the building on the north. It is not a "court" like we had described for the kitchens in the four corners of the outer court. Different words are used, so this is obviously an enclosed building.

The word translated "place" here is the same used in the King James translation in chapter 41:9. It refers definitely to a building or structure as a Lexicon will show.

Another Building on the West

The next building that we must consider is an even larger one located immediately to the west of the temple building. It is described only briefly.

"And the building that was before the separate place at the side toward the west was seventy cubits broad; and the wall of the building was five cubits thick round about, and the length thereof ninety cubits" (Ezek. 41:12).

This particular building is further described in the following text:

"And he measured the length of the building before the separate place which was at the back thereof, and the galleries thereof on the one side and on the other side, a hundred cubits" (verse 15).

Here is another building with "galleries." In this case there are "galleries . . . on the one side and on the other side." The galleries are said to be 100 cubits long, therefore they must be on the east and west side of the building, extending north and south.

There is one important factor missing regarding this particular building--the entrances! Here is the only place where this particular building is mentioned, and yet no doors are described.

Where could these doors be? They could not be on the west, since it is enclosed by the wall. They could not be on the north or south, since that is a part of the outer court and the kitchens take up this place. The only alternative is to conclude that they are on the east. Following the pattern of the other buildings with galleries there are doors to the second and third floor opening on to the galleries. Since there are galleries on both sides of the second and third floor, then their doors open on the east and west. This implies that there are double sets of rooms, east and west, in this particular building. All the first floor exits must be on the east, giving entry to the "separate place," and from there to the inner court. This building is almost twice as large as the other two buildings that were previously described.

The Inner Court

Our next subject concerns the "inner court." It is briefly mentioned in this following text.

"And he measured the court, a hundred cubits long, and a hundred cubits broad, foursquare; and the altar was before the house" (Ezek. 40:47).

This 100 cubit square is immediately in front of the temple building and is the inner court. Since it is a separate court, and gates give entry to it, there must be a wall to separate it from the outer court, where no buildings exist to cause a separation. Such a wall should be on the pattern of the exterior wall. There is no other pattern to go by.

Another important point has been skipped in describing this building to the west. This point is brought out in the following excerpt:

"And he measured . . . the separate place, and the building, with the walls thereof, a hundred cubits long" (verse 13).

This gives us the final measurement for the whole temple enclosures and courts from east to west. It was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter that the wall enclosed an area of 500 cubits square. Now let us add up the various dimensions. Going from east to west.

Outer gate	50 cubits
Outer court	100 "
Inner gate	50 "
Inner court	100 "
Temple	100 "
Separate place and building	100 "
Total	500 cubits

Here is the summary from north to south.

Outer gate	50 cubits
Outer court	100 "
Inner gate	50 "
Inner court	100 "
Inner gate	50 "
Outer court	100 "
Outer gate	50 "
 Total	 500 cubits

Two More Buildings

There are only two more buildings in the courts which must be mentioned. Here again is where the Biblical scholars err. An important point about one of these chambers is unreasonable to them. The Bible is incorrect on this particular point, according to their reasoning.

"And without the inner gate were chambers for the guard 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" (Ezek. 40:44).

The point that is usually rejected by these scholars concerns the building which is beside the inner east gate, but which has its prospect (face or front part) toward the north. In order to have symmetry all of the authorities have placed this one chamber by the south gate instead of the east gate. Most modern translations state south gate instead of east gate. This is incorrect, since the text is plain and specific in this place. God has been able to preserve what is right, therefore we do not agree with the conclusion of the men who have had to "correct" or "emend" the text.

Just exactly where are these buildings placed. From the description given, we are limited to a very small area. The one building which faces toward the south cannot be located on the west of the inner north gate. The reason will be given soon. It can only be on the east. Since it faces the inner court, it has its entrance toward the inner court. If you will refer to the drawings you will see the only possible way that they will fit into the plan, and still comply with the scriptural description.

These two chambers are for the use of the priests as Ezekiel 40:45-46 explain.

There is an additional chamber or room situated by the inner north gate which is described in the following text.

"And a chamber with the entry thereof was by the posts at the gates; there was the burnt-offering to be washed" (Ezek. 40:38).

In order to fit this room into the pattern already established it must fit to the west of the inner gate, in the space left, which is 10 by 40 cubits.

That completes the important points regarding the courts.

Were Solomon's Courts Like Ezekiel's?

The question may arise regarding the courts of Solomon's temple in comparison with those described by Ezekiel. Were the courts of Solomon's temple exactly the same?

Very little is said in the description of Solomon's temple regarding the courts except for the following quotations.

"Furthermore he made the court of the priests, and the great court, and doors for the court, and overlaid the doors of them with brass" (II Chron. 4:9).

His own court was paved in a similar fashion to that of the inner court of the temple.

"And the great court round about had three rows of hewn stone, and a row of cedar beams, like as the inner court of the house of the Lord, and the court of the porch of the house" (I Kings 7:12).

No dimensions are given so we cannot be sure that it was 500 cubits square. There were two separate and distinct courts as II Chronicles 33:5 states, and other texts suggest. The inner court was for the priests and the outer for the people.

Probably the courts were not square and of the same size as described by Ezekiel. If they were this large then they could not fit in the area which is raised like a platform on Mt. Moriah. Even though they were probably not the same shape, with the same buildings, they obviously were similar in many ways.

The Altar and Other Items

This work concerns primarily the physical aspects of the temple and not the use or service of the temple. Therefore, nothing has been said about the altar which is located in the center of the inner court. Briefly summarized, it is 11 cubits high and 18 cubits square at the base. In addition there are steps leading to it on the east. Since it is quite large (22 feet high) it will appear very prominently in any complete drawing.

Nothing has been said about the many utensils that Solomon had made, nor of the brazen sea. The brazen sea is not mentioned in connection with Ezekiel's temple.

Nothing has been said about the cherubim, except to state that they are engraved upon the walls. The Bible describes them in quite some detail, especially in Ezekiel Chapters 1 and 10.

Even after understanding the many physical aspects of God's temple, it is almost impossible for us to fully understand the magnificence of these courts and the temple. We have not been able to fully realize the joy and pleasure it will be to be in these very courts of God. David had a better vision of the time to come than we sometimes do. He wrote of this time of joy in the

following Psalm.

"How lovely are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul yearneth, yea, even pineth for the courts of the Lord; My heart and my flesh sing for joy unto the living God. Yea, the sparrow hath found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself, Where she may lay her young; Thine altars, O Lord of hosts, My King, and my God. Happy are they that dwell in Thy house, They are ever praising Thee" (Psalms 84:2-5).

God speed the day when we too may live, with Christ and David in these very courts.

"Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise; Give thanks unto Him, and bless His name. For the Lord is good; His mercy endureth for ever; And His faithfulness unto all generations (Psalm 100:4-5).

CHAPTER VIII

WILL THIS TEMPLE BE BUILT ON MT. MORIAH?

Where will this new temple be built? Will it be built on the same site as the older temples of Solomon, Zerubbabel and Herod?

The Bible alone has the answer. There is no other inspired prophecy available.

What is the Correct Name?

The first thing we must establish is what is the correct name of the place where it is to be built. Then, the only remaining problem is to learn for sure where that place is located.

Many places in the scriptures refer to ZION as the place of God's future habitation. It is from Zion that Christ will rule the world during the millennium. Let us notice a few of these many places.

"Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion" (Ps. 2:6).

"Sing praises to the LORD, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings" (Ps. 9:11).

Some people have applied these and similar scriptures to something already past. But that is not so!

These scriptures refer to the time when Christ, the King over the whole earth, and David under him will rule from Mt. Zion!

The whole 48th Psalm has reference to that future time when Christ will rule from Zion. Here is just a part of that Psalm.

"Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation the joy of the whole earth is mount Zion, on the sides of the north is the city of the great King" (Ps. 48:1-2).

This is not referring to the kingdom of David in ancient times. It is a prophecy of God's throne during the millennium.

"In Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion" (Ps. 76:2).

Salem was the place where Melchizedek ruled in ancient times. When we read carefully in both Old and New Testaments about Melchizedek, it becomes clear that He is actually the same personage of Jesus Christ of the New Testament, and Salem was the place where he was King. It

later was a part of Jerusalem and is the same part of Jerusalem where he will rule again.

"For the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it" (Ps. 132:13, 14).

There are many many more scriptures similar to this. The law will go forth from Zion (Isaiah 2:3 and Micah 4:2), the Lord dwells in Mt. Zion (Isaiah 8:18, and 18:7), and reigns in Zion (Micah 4:7). He is to be there with the one hundred forty four thousand (Rev. 14:1) immediately after his coming.

These texts cannot refer to Old Testament times when Christ also ruled from His temple. They can only refer prophetically to the coming time when Christ the Lord will rule from Mt. Zion.

Solomon did not Build the Temple on Zion!

Where was Solomon's temple built? Was it built on Mt. Zion? The answer from the Bible, though surprising when you see it, is no!

"Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem in mount Moriah" (II Chron. 3:1).

Nowhere in the Bible does it say that Solomon built his temple on Mount Zion. This same scripture makes that plain. Mt. Moriah was the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite that David bought (I Chron. 21). It was also at this place where Abraham went to sacrifice his son Isaac (Gen. 22:2).

Mount Moriah is acknowledged by all students of the Bible to be the easternmost hill of ancient Jerusalem, where the present Moslem "Dome of the Rock" is located. It is on this hill that all ancient temples--Solomon's, Zerubbabel's and Herod's--have been built. Josephus remarks that the second temple was built in the same place as the first one and of course it was still standing when Herod built his.

Which Way is Up?

Can this Mt. Moriah be the same as Mt. Zion? The answer should be plain from the following scripture.

"Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the princes of the fathers' houses of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the city of David, which is Zion" (I Kings 8:1).

The Bible here states that the Ark of the Lord was brought from Zion to the new temple. As we have already seen, the temple was built on Mt. Moriah. The ark was moved from Zion to Moriah. Certainly this plain clear scripture should prove forever that Zion and Moriah are two

different places.

This scripture also shows that the city of David is Zion. Zion is a part of Jerusalem; Zion does not mean all Jerusalem. The two words are different and not synonymous.

There is another important point to notice in the preceding text. Notice that the ark was brought "up." It was not brought down, across or over.

There is a companion place to this scripture in II Chronicles 5:2-5. The account in Chronicles uses the expression that it was brought "up" four different times.

We generally refer to taking something up in two ways, either up in the sense of height, or to the north. In this particular place, it will become evident as we proceed further that the ark was brought not only up in altitude, but also up north.

Mount Moriah was formerly the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. David sinned against God by numbering Israel. And as a result there was a plague from God. The prophet Gad went to David and instructed him to buy the threshing floor of Ornan and raise up an altar on the site. The account is found in II Samuel 24 and in I Chronicles 21.

The Biblical account tells how David went from his home in Zion, to the threshing floor.

"And Gad came that day to David, and said unto him: 'Go up, rear an altar unto the Lord in the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite.' And David went up according to the saying of Gad, as the Lord commanded" (II Sam. 24:18-19).

This account shows how David also went up to Mt. Moriah.

Modern Zion?

At the present time some people consider the southwest hill of Jerusalem to be Mt. Zion. It is so labeled on some maps. It is part of the old city of Jerusalem.

This particular mountain is some one hundred feet higher than Moriah. Certainly it could not be said that this was the City of David. It would have been said that the ark was brought "down" instead of "up," from this mountain to Moriah. This cannot with any stretch of the imagination be the Mt. Zion of the Bible.

"Till a few years ago it was the general opinion that the southwest hill, the most massive and dominant of the heights of Jerusalem, was Zion, but the trend of opinion is now decidedly toward the whole or southern part of the Temple hill" (Peloubet's Bible Dictionary, F. N. Peloubet, D.D., article Jerusalem).

Just where is Zion then? It is obviously not the southwest hill. We have seen that it cannot be Moriah.

The previous quotation offers a suggestion, that Zion is either "the whole or southern part of

the Temple hill." The temple hill of course is Moriah. Since it cannot be Moriah, it might be the southern part of the same ridge or hill, which is often called Ophel.

"The southern part (of Moriah) was called Ophel. Most scholars now regard this or the whole Temple hill as the famous hill of Zion, David's city, his original fortress which he captured from the Jebusites" (Ibid).

The southern part of this hill is quite a bit lower than Moriah. Certainly it would have been proper to say that the ark was taken up to Moriah, if this is the place.

But now for further Bible proof on this location of Zion. What is Zion supposed to be like in this end time, before it is made the capital of the whole world? Keep in mind that these prophecies are often dual in meaning. We are concerned with the physical aspects of the prophecies concerning Mt. Zion. We are not now concerned with the spiritual type of Zion, God's people, who are also referred to as Zion (Isaiah 51:16).

Prophecies Concerning Zion

The world is not concerned about Zion today as this scripture states.

"This is Zion whom no man seeketh after" (Jer. 30:17, King James version).

Some people look to a hill in the southwest section of the old city called Zion. Some look to the site of the old temple, now occupied by the the Dome of the Rock. The Moslems, the Christians, the Jews look to the place of the dome of the rock as being desirable. It seems no one is interested in seeking after the real Zion.

"Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field" (Micah 3:12).

Where is the only place within the area of ancient Jerusalem which would fit this prophecy? Only Zion.

The southeast hill has been of little concern over the centuries. Even into this century it has been so.

"It (Jerusalem) has grown considerably on the northwest and left the southeastern portion in the hands of the farmer and market gardener. 'Thus saith the Lord of hosts: Zion shall be plowed as a field.' Jeremiah XXVI, 18" (Pictorial Palestine-Ancient and Modern, C. Lang Neil, page 22).

There are a few things we should know about Zion. It was known as the City of David, and before that it was the Jebusite stronghold. Before that it was called Salem during the time of Melchizedek's earthly priesthood.

In ancient times the only source of water in the area was Gihon. Gihon has in modern times been named the "Fountain of the Virgin." The site now in question, sometimes called Ophel, in

its northernmost area, is immediately adjacent to the spring. The spring is immediately overlooked on the west by this hill. In ancient times it was necessary to have a source of water close to any stronghold, so that in the time of attack water would be available. Such a stronghold would naturally be close to such a source.

In this particular case, the Jebusites made a "gutter" or entry down to the spring. It was through this gutter that many believe Joab first entered into the city to open it to attack so that David could take the city (II Sam. 5:8).

Zion is the Extreme Southeastern Hill

This lower extremity to the south is now generally accepted as being the location of the old Jebusite stronghold. David made this stronghold his city, adding to and strengthening it. Certainly this can be none other than the Bible Zion.

"If the words of I Kings 8:1, 4 (Cf, II Sam. 24:18-19) are to be taken literally it must have been to the south of the Holy Place of the Jews. In this direction, on a site so situated as to command the spring, it has been placed by Birch. . .Stade. . .Robertson Smith. . .(Encyclopedia Britannica) Sayce. . .Von Alten, Klaiber. . .G. A. Smith. . .and the majority of recent authorities" (Hastings Bible Dictionary, Article, Zion).

Since we take the Bible to be literal, we also must come to this same conclusion. Here is further evidence supporting this same conclusion.

"Zion (which is synonymous with the Ophel) is properly the southern part of the eastern hill on the top of which was built the temple, so that the name came to be given to the whole hill" (Encyclopedia Britannica, Eleventh edition, Article, Zion).

This same source in a footnote to the same article states as follows:

"Christians of the 4th century removed the name to the S.W. hill, and this tradition has persisted until modern times, when archaeological and topographical evidence has re-identified Sion with the E. hill" (Ibid).

Another source states as follows:

"For a very long time people were mistaken about the exact situation of the old Jebusite city. . .Enlightenment came only with the excavation of the southeastern hill, much lower than the one to the southwest, and outside the present city walls. This revealed that the original Zion must have stood on the southeastern hill. . .Although the spur (several times referred to in the Bible as Ophel, meaning 'swelling' or 'hump') on which the city of David stood is lower than the surrounding mountains, a strong town could be built there, thanks to the deep valleys on either side and the spring which rises at its foot; but its weakest point, the northern side, had to have very strong defenses. This may have been the site of the sector of the defenses called the Millo in the Bible. The Jebusites had sunk an almost vertical shaft into the limestone hill within their ramparts,

so that in the event of a siege they could still obtain water from the spring, the normal approach to which was then walled up. The account of the capture of the town. . .seems to imply that Joab crept up the shaft and took the Jebusites completely by surprise. At the beginning of the century, an English climber demonstrated on the spot that this unusual style of mountaineering must have called for extraordinary agility" (Atlas of the Bible, L. H. Grollenberg, pages 68 and 70).

Because of the much lower elevation compared to the hills around it, some may say that this must not be the right place. But Mt. Zion is sometimes referred to as a hill and not as a mountain. It is a narrow spur of raised ground when seen on a map or in a photograph. In a spiritual type this same idea is mentioned by the prophet Isaiah (chapter 49). He refers to Zion in verse 14. Later on, still in reference to Zion the prophet says that the place is too "narrow," verse 20.

This small spur of land might well be considered a very unlikely place for God to set His temple, because of its low relation to other nearby hills. The scriptures tell us that one of the punishments on the city is that it will be low (Isaiah 32:19). But it will not always be that way.

Zion To Be Raised

There is some evidence in Josephus that part of the hill of Zion was at one time cut down to a lower elevation. If men made it lower, God will someday raise it up. It will be exalted above the hills (Isaiah 2:2 and Micah 4:2). It will be established as the top of the mountains (Micah 4:1). Christ will build up Zion (Psalms 102:16). Since it will be exalted, it must be low now.

We read that mountains are going to be made low and valleys exalted at the revealing of Christ. He will exalt Zion and it will become an high mountain (Isaiah 40:9).

David never had his tabernacle in Mt. Moriah. He had it in his own city, which was Zion. It has since been completely ruined. Since David lived in Zion here is another reference to show how it will be raised up.

"In that day will I raise up The tabernacle of David that is fallen, And close up the breaches thereof, And I will raise up his ruins, And I will build it as in the days of old" (Amos 9:11).

Is it possible that the place called Zion by God has changed to mean a different place today. Or, is it the same Zion as David and the Bible refer to. David answers the question for us. Zion could never be changed or moved to another place.

"They that trust in the Lord are as mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abideth forever" (Psalms 125:1).

Christ will again rule from that same Zion. Just as He did while in the office of Melchizedek from Salem, which was Zion. Just as He did as the Lord of the Old Testament during the days of David, when the ark of the covenant was there.

God has shown by His word where Zion is. He will raise it up in the time He has set. Then the beauty and glory of Zion shall be the joy of the whole world.

CHAPTER IX

TABERNACLE AND TEMPLE CONTRASTED

We have seen described in great detail the temple that Solomon built and the one commonly called "Ezekiel's" temple. "Ezekiel's" temple will be in use during the thousand year reign of Jesus Christ on the earth.

What was Zerubbabel's temple like, what was Herod's temple like, and what was the tabernacle in the wilderness like?

The one that Herod built was in existence during the time of Christ. What was it like? Was it the same as Zerubbabel's, or was it the same as Solomon's?

These are questions that should be clarified now. It would require several more chapters to thoroughly study these other temples. Since the primary purpose of this work is to describe God's temple in prophecy, only a summarization of certain main points about these other temples will be given.

Tabernacle in the Wilderness

Let's start first with the tabernacle in the wilderness. Some scholars believe there was no such tabernacle. In chapter four such an "authority" was quoted. The Eternal God has inspired His Word and has been able to preserve it for us today. Therefore, we believe literally the account found in Exodus concerning the construction of this remarkable portable tent. It was in use during the wilderness wanderings of the Children of Israel during the time of Moses and later.

In the 26th and 27th chapters of Exodus God instructed Moses in all the details of building this tent. Chapters 36 through 38 describe its construction. Here again God was the Architect, and not man.

"And thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion thereof which hath been shown thee in the mount" (Exodus 26:30).

This tabernacle had a board framework (covered with gold) around the south, west and north sides. This framework was covered with ten curtains of linen fastened together. Over this was another series of curtains of skins fastened together.

There were two hanging curtains to separate the two rooms. The first one, which made up the east wall was called a "screen," and the second which separated the holy of holies was called a "veil."

It was previously mentioned that the temple of Solomon was patterned after the tabernacle in the wilderness. The tabernacle was not the same dimension as the temple, but was exactly half

the size. The Holy of Holies, called it the *debir* was a cube of exactly ten cubits. The Holy Place, or *hekal* was ten by twenty cubits.

These measurements were undoubtedly inside measurements, just as the basic measurements of the temple were inside measurements.

No Porch in the Tabernacle

One major difference between the tabernacle and the temple was that there was no porch to this tabernacle in the wilderness. Surrounding this tabernacle or tent, was a wall of fine twined linen. This particular wall enclosed an area of fifty by one hundred cubits.

This tabernacle was entirely portable, and was moved by the specially appointed Levites each time the children of Israel moved.

Since you have a copy of the Biblical account, but may not have a copy of Josephus here is his brief summary of the court which surrounded the tabernacle. It is found in Antiquities of the Jews, Book III, Chapter XI.

"And when he had measured the open court, fifty cubits broad and a hundred cubits long, he set up brazen pillars, five cubits high, twenty on each of the longer sides, and ten pillars for the breadth behind; every one of the pillars also had a ring. Their chapters were of silver, but their bases were of brass: They resembled the sharp end of spears and were of brass, fixed into the ground. Cords were also put through the rings, and were tied at their further ends to brass nails of a cubit long, which, at every pillar, were driven into the floor, and would keep the tabernacle from being shaken by the violence of winds; but a curtain of fine soft linen went round all the pillars, and hung down in a flowing and loose manner from their chapters and enclosed the whole space, and seems not at all unlike to a wall about it."

Josephus went on to show that the fourth wall, which faced the east had an opening for the entry of the priests.

Here are some of his comments concerning the tabernacle.

"As to the tabernacle itself, Moses placed it in the middle of that court, with its front to the east, that, when the sun arose, it might send its first rays upon it. Its length when it was set up was thirty cubits, and its breadth was twelve cubits. The one of its walls was on the south, and the other exposed to the north, and on the back part of it remained the west. It was necessary that its height should be equal to its breadth."

Josephus apparently gives the outside instead of inside dimensions regarding the breadth (12 cubits) since the Bible account shows that the breadth was ten cubits, not twelve cubits.

Josephus continued by describing the boards of wood which were used for the framework of the tent. All of these pillars and their parts would fit together perfectly and could be easily taken apart for transportation.

Anyone wishing further details about this tabernacle can get a good summary by reading the chapters already quoted and by reading the article "Tabernacle" in most Bible Dictionaries.

Solomon's Temple

During the time of David, God was still dwelling in a tent, while the people all dwelt in their own private houses. David was concerned about this and asked Nathan the prophet if he could build a temple building to replace the tabernacle. Nathan the prophet agreed; however, he was soon instructed by God that David could not build this temple to God. He had been a bloody man all his life so God did not permit David to build the temple. He did prepare for it, however, and supplied many of the materials needed for the temple.

Solomon built the temple after David's death, which lasted until the invasion and captivity by Nebuchadnezzar.

Nebuchadnezzar destroyed this temple and carried off the gold, silver, brass and many precious things to Babylon, about 585 B.C. It had stood since about 1000 B.C.

At the end of the captivity, God again stirred up the hearts of certain of His people to rebuild His temple in Jerusalem.

Zerubbabel's Temple

Under Zerubbabel, the governor, and Joshua, the High priest, the work on the construction of a new temple began. It was not completed immediately. There were many setbacks, but it was finally completed after about 21 years in 516-515 B.C..

Just what kind of a temple did Joshua, Zerubbabel and the people of Judah build?

The Bible only gives a very brief description of this temple. Here is the Bible account of King Cyrus' decree concerning the temple.

"In the first year of Cyrus the King, Cyrus the King made a decree: concerning the house of God in Jerusalem, Let the house be builded, the place where they offer sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; the height thereof threescore cubits and the breadth thereof threescore cubits; with three rows of great stones and a row of new timber and let the expenses be given out of the King's house" (Ezra 6:3, 4).

The Bible states that Solomon's temple was one hundred and twenty cubits high. At first glance Zerubbabel's temple appears to be much smaller. Most of the authorities agree that it was smaller than Solomon's temple, because of these particular measurements.

Josephus (Antiquities, Book X, Chapter I), gives exactly the same dimensions as the Bible. We also find that in the Apocrypha, I Esdras 6:25, the same dimensions are given. Since this temple, along with all the other temples have been completely destroyed, we cannot go back and

measure them now. The sources of information concerning Zerubbabel's temple are extremely meagre as it mainly consists of the Bible, Esdras, and Josephus.

Since this was to be God's house, it must have been somewhat similar in size, shape, and dimension to the inspired plan of God which was given to Solomon by David.

The porch of Solomon's temple was originally one hundred and twenty cubits high. Zerubbabel's was only half that high. The tabernacle in the wilderness did not have any porch. There were only two rooms, the *hekal* and the *debir*.

Here is one possibility of what is meant by the brief statement and decree of Cyrus. The Holy of Holies was to be twenty cubits in length, and the Holy Place was to be forty cubits, or a total of sixty cubits. Cyrus could have referred to this specific dimension when he said that it was to be sixty cubits in length. If so, it would be the same size as the same two rooms for Solomon's temple. The porch could then be counted separately for the sixty cubit height. Cyrus certainly did not mean that all of the building from front to back was to be sixty cubits high, even though many commentators and authorities do believe that the whole building was that high.

In summary then, even though there are very few details available, the temple of Zerubbabel was patterned after the same general pattern as Solomon's. One major exception being that the porch was only sixty cubits high instead of one hundred and twenty.

This temple was obviously lacking in many of the refinements, and details of Solomon's. The ark had since disappeared and was no longer present.

Many of the older people who had seen Solomon's temple were greatly disappointed in this new temple.

"But many of the priests and Levites and heads of father's houses, the old men that had seen the first house standing on its foundation, wept with a loud voice when this house was before their eyes; and many shouted aloud for joy; so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people; for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off" (Ezra 3:12-13).

Herod's Temple

The next temple, commonly called Herod's temple, was the one existing during the time of Christ.

In the eighteenth year of Herod's reign, Herod made it known that he wanted to rebuild the temple. It was his desire to make it larger, to bring it to better perfection, and to be a memorial of himself. He knew that the Jews might not agree with such a project, and he could not accomplish his goal without their full cooperation. He gathered the Jews together to inform them of his plans. He stated that Zerubbabel's temple had not been built according to the same measure and plan as Solomon's temple since it was Cyrus and Darius who determined the "measures" of the building. Herod also said that since it was not on the grand plan of Solomon's

temple, that he himself wished to rebuild the temple, making it a much greater and magnificent building.

After his speech, many of the devout Jews were frightened about his proposal. They thought he might start to rebuild the temple and not be able to finish it. Herod reassured them that he would not pull down their temple till all preparations and material were ready for building it up entirely again. Herod did make the proper preparations, and after he was entirely ready the work started. Josephus records that the length of this temple was a hundred cubits, which was the same as Solomon's. He stated that the temple was built of stones that were white and strong.

The temple was enclosed by very large cloisters and buildings around the courts. It was these other buildings that took most of the 46 years mentioned in John 2:20. Josephus describes at some length these cloisters that surround the temple. Herod could enter into these various cloisters, but he could not enter into the inner court or into the temple itself. Into these parts only the priests were able to enter. He was forbidden, because he was not a priest.

The actual temple building was not built by Herod or his workmen but was built by priests, as Josephus states in the following quotation.

"But the temple itself was built by the priests in a year and six months" (Antiquities, Book XV, XI, VI).

Obviously, as many commentators state, this was only a major renovation or remodeling and not a complete rebuilding from the foundation up.

This temple that was built by the priests under Herod's direction had the same inside pattern as the previous temples. The *hekal* and the *debir* were the same dimensions. When it came to the porch, Herod departed from the pattern laid down by God in the Old Testament, if available sources are correct. This porch is stated by Josephus to be one hundred cubits in height and breadth and only eleven cubits in depth.

Since this porch was so broad, an aerial view of the temple would appear somewhat like a T. This is described in the Mishna as "narrow behind and broad in front, resembling a lion, as it says, Ah, Ariel, Ariel, the city where David encamped. Just as a lion is narrow behind and broad in front" (Chapter IV, Mishna VII).

The side chambers were stated by the Mishna to consist of only thirty-eight in number. Josephus says there were ninety in all. Since this has already been commented on in Chapter IV, no further details need be given here, except to state that this statement of the Mishna is obviously incorrect.

To further show the general unreliability in this description by the Mishna, it is stated "There were trap doors in the upper chambers opening into the Holy of Holies by which the workmen were let down in baskets so that they should not feed their gaze on the Holy of Holies" (Mishna V). The men who wrote and compiled these writings apparently believed that God was not able to take care of His own sanctuary. They apparently believed that it required the labor of physical

humans to keep this room in order. The Bible states that only the High Priest entered this particular room and that only once each year (Heb. 9:7; Ex. 30:10). It would be sacrilege for workmen to enter such a holy place. God would have slain any workman who came into His own sacred chamber.

In time past, men have thought that God could not take care of those things that were sacred and holy to Him. On several occasions men have thought it necessary to steady or to protect the ark of God from falling. In each case, the person involved was immediately killed for violating such a sacred and holy thing (I Sam. 7:19; II Sam. 6:7).

God is able to take care of His own Holy Chamber.

Since this book concerns only the Temple of God in prophecy, we will not pursue this subject further. It is not considered to be of sufficient importance in connection with this present work to give more details.

Solomon's temple was built entirely according to the plan that God gave David. The temples of Zerubbabel and Herod were not built with the same splendor, glory, and accuracy with which Solomon's temple was built. They were God's temples though, as it was God's house. In spite of their differences they followed the basic plan for the *hekal* and *debir*.

They do not measure up to the plan that God gave David, nor the one described by the prophet Ezekiel.

Even Solomon's temple may have been deficient in the matter of the courts. It is only in the temple described by Ezekiel that God's complete plan concerning His temple comes to fruition. It is this perfect temple, for the world tomorrow, that we look forward to with great anticipation.

CHAPTER X

MOUNT ZION STANDS MOST BEAUTIFUL

You have now seen God's temple in prophecy. This was made possible in part by just putting down on paper the architectural design that God inspired millenniums ago, and which He has preserved for us today.

Conclusions Startling

The conclusions have been surprising. The answers to many of the problems have been very unexpected. But, more of the mind and design of God has unfolded point-by-point as the subject progressed.

At first, some of the answers may have seemed impossible, since they are not entirely conformable to man's ideas of architecture. The conclusions are entirely different from the conclusions of men.

Truly we have seen that God's temple in all of its aspects is unusual, singular in design, and different from anything that man has conceived.

Isn't that just like God is? His ways are not like our ways. His thoughts are not like our thoughts. Our human nature is antagonistic to His laws. God's culture, His politics, His religion, His plans are all entirely different from those of man. It should be no strange thing then that God's temple is not what we might suppose it to be. We should expect it to be unusual in design from man's point of view.

Even though the design of God's temple is unusual, it, just as all of the other attributes of God, grows in beauty to us. The things of God become more appreciated and enjoyed the more familiar we become with them.

This plan of God's temple is based on purpose and right reason. It is based on soundness, on strength, on utility and on beauty. It is based on grandeur and largeness of scale that we have not previously conceived.

This is a City

When you see this temple in its right perspective you can come to understand why it is called the city of our God. It is not just a building--it is many buildings, and yet the many parts make up one complete and harmonious whole. These many buildings and rooms take up a great deal of space. In fact there is enough floor space in the various buildings of this temple for about 280 small houses (1,000 square feet basis).

Certainly it is going to be the beauty of the whole world. It will be the place that the people in the world tomorrow will come to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts.

It is the place from whence rivers of living water (both physical and spiritual) will issue forth (Ezekiel 47:1-12).

All of the many scriptures referring to the beauty of Zion, refer in both a physical and literal sense to this place. It is literally Zion where Christ will live and rule.

The song "Mt. Zion Stands Most Beautiful," based on Psalm 48 should now take on new and added meaning since we understand more fully what Zion, the city of God really will be like.

Dazzling to the Eyes

Josephus described Solomon's temple as a temple which shined and dazzled the eyes of those who saw it or entered.

The temple to come will be even more startling and beautiful to the eyes. The kings of the earth are used to opulence, splendor and magnificence, and yet the Psalmist tell us that in the time to come that even these kings are going to be amazed when they see this temple, "the city of the great King."

They are going to be struck with awe at its majesty. Trembling will take hold of them as they hasten away.

"For, lo, the kings assembled themselves, They came onward together. They saw, straightway they were amazed; They were affrighted, they hastened away. Trembling took hold of them there, Pangs, as of a woman in travail. With the east wind Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish. As we have heard, so have we seen In the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God--God establish it for ever" (Psalms 48:5-9).

Even the house of Israel has a lesson to learn from this temple.

"Thou, Son of man, show the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities, and let them measure accurately. And if they be ashamed of all that they have done, make known unto them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the forms thereof and all the ordinances thereof, and all the forms thereof and all the laws thereof, and write it in their sight that they may keep the whole form thereof and all the ordinance thereof and do them" (Ezekiel 43:10-11).

This Temple area in Jerusalem is the place where the nations will come to worship the king and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles (Zech. 14:16).

The temple is the perfection of beauty. God is the Designer.

"Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined forth" (Psalms 50:2).
This is the place where Jesus Christ will rule the earth with peace and happiness. His

presence will make this place the most glorious and wonderful spot on earth.

From this temple God's law will go forth.

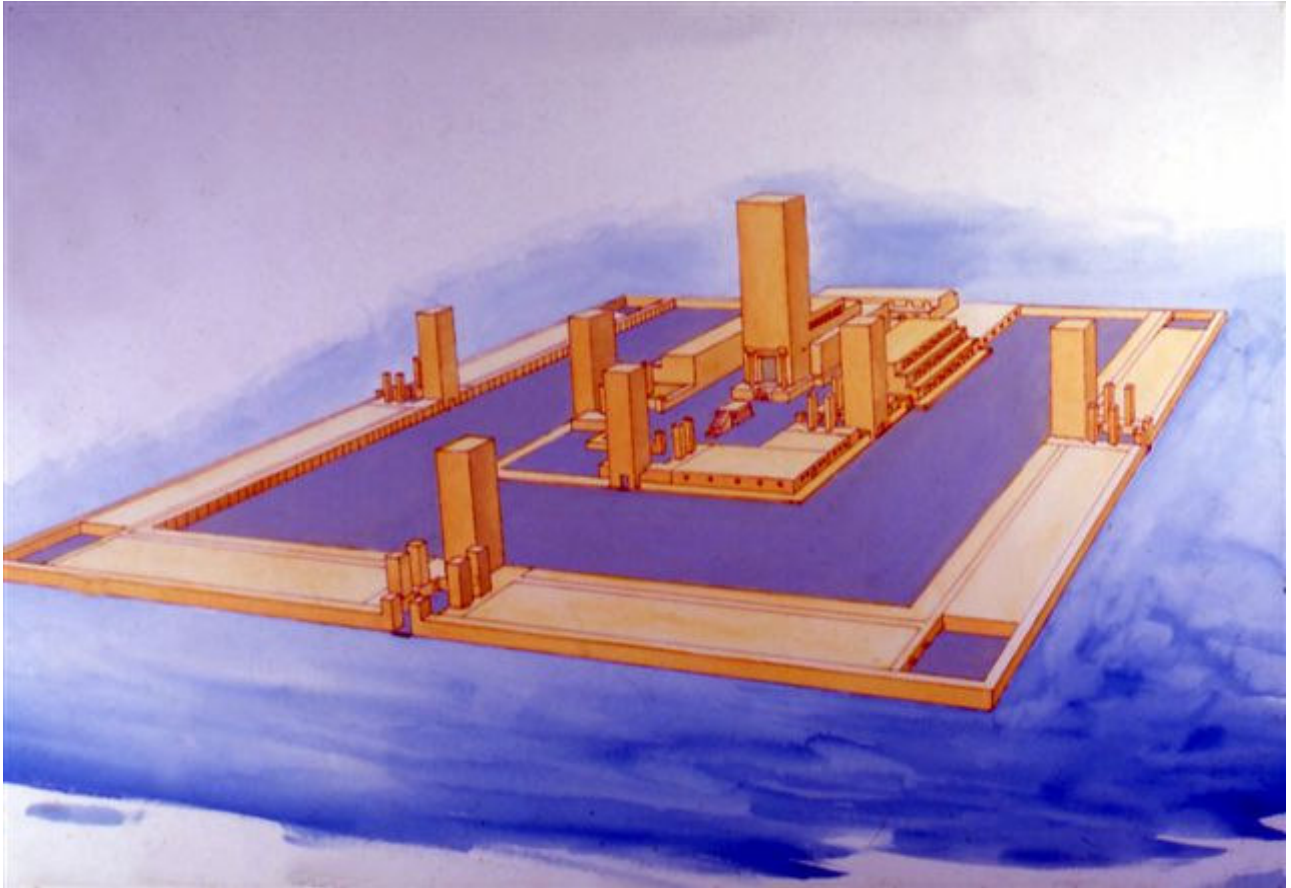
From this temple the restoring of all things will be directed and executed.

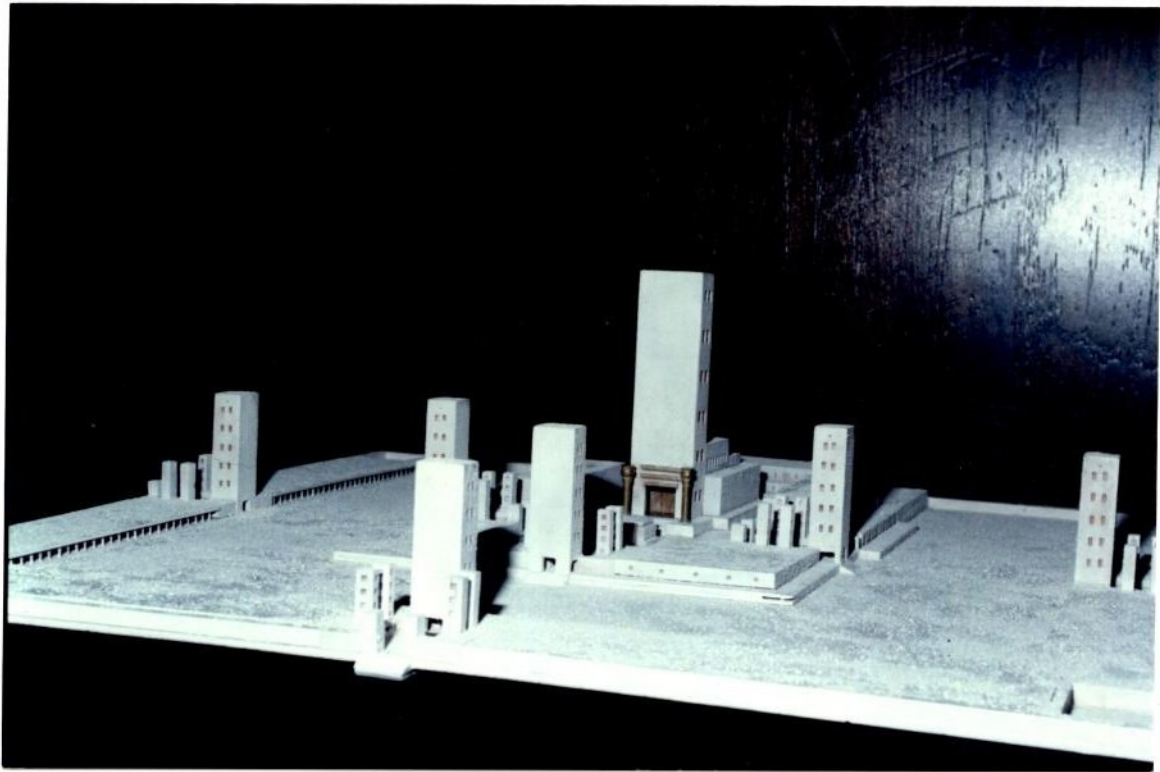
God is calling His saints to have a vital part in the government which will rule from this very same temple.

"Happy is the man whom thou choosest, and bringest near, that he may dwell in thy courts; may we be satisfied with thy goodness of thy house, the Holy Place of thy Temple!" (Psalms 65:5)

PERSPECTIVE VIEW

Temple and Courts





Original Model by Edward Russell
(Deceased)
Chillicothe, Ohio

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