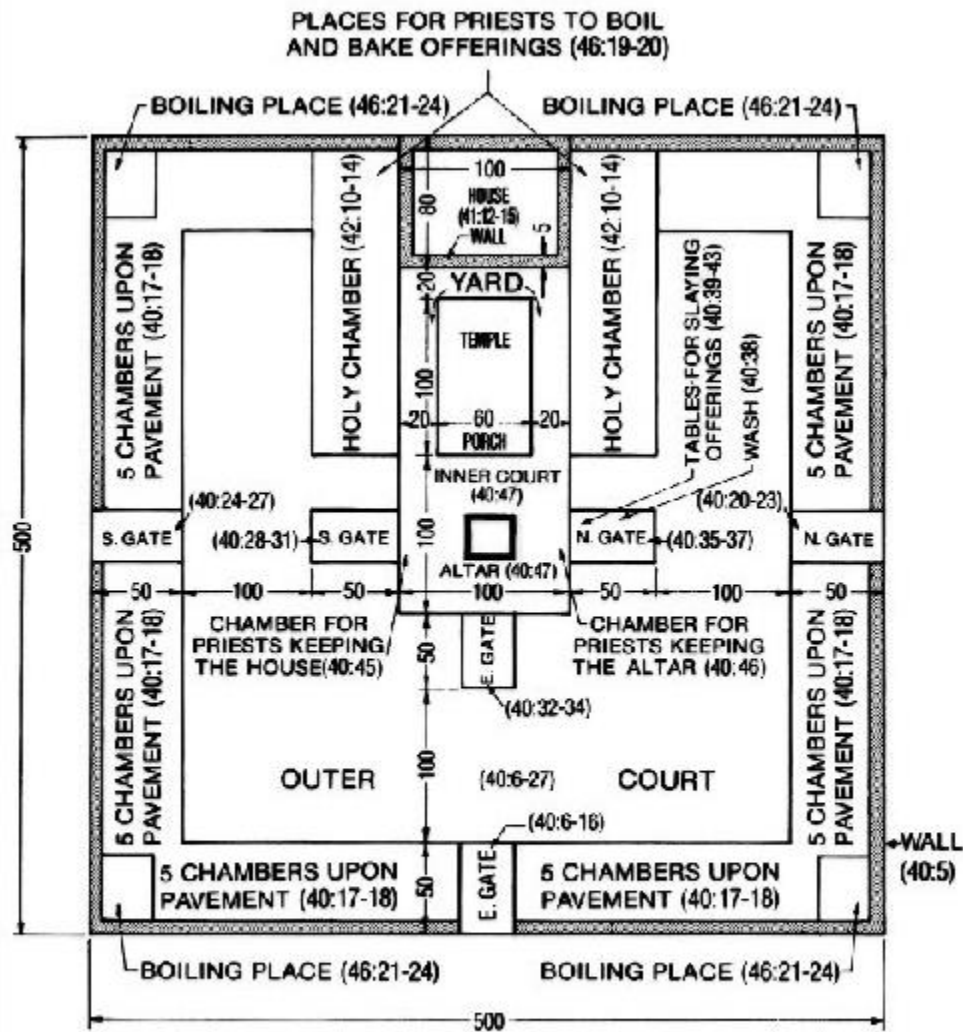


## Life-Study of Ezekiel Summary – Messages 19 to 23

### The Vision of the Holy Building of God

The holy temple is the place where God is, God's dwelling place. If we want to seek God, contact God, fellowship with God, and serve God, we need to realize that God has His dwelling place.



**FIGURE 1: PLOT PLAN —  
TEMPLE AND INNER AND OUTER COURTS**

Within the inner court is the altar. This altar is the center of the whole compound of the building of God. The altar is a type of the cross. This indicates that the cross of Christ is at the very center of God's economy and of God's interests.

In Ezekiel 40-48, a section on God's building, three main things are covered: the holy temple, the holy city, and the holy land. It is significant that Ezekiel begins not from the outside but from the inside. This is the way of God's economy. God begins from within, from our spirit, not from the outside. In light of this, we need to learn in the church life not to have anything that begins in an outward way but always to have something that begins from within.

The first item we need to see concerning the temple is the wall. The temple has a wall on all four sides. The wall is for separation, separating what belongs to God from what cannot belong to Him.

As the wall He excludes us and condemns us, but as the gate He brings us into God's building. We are in the sphere of God's building today because Christ as the gate has brought us in. In front of the gate is a stair of seven steps indicating that in order to get into the building, we need to go up. There are three thresholds, the outer and inner threshold and a passage between these two, and a porch. By passing through these, one can enter into the temple. The columns, which support the roof of the structure, indicate that we need to be upheld by the supporting strength of Christ in order to enter into the enjoyment of Christ. The latticed windows signify the life-giving Spirit. The life-giving Spirit brings in air and light and keeps out all the negative things.

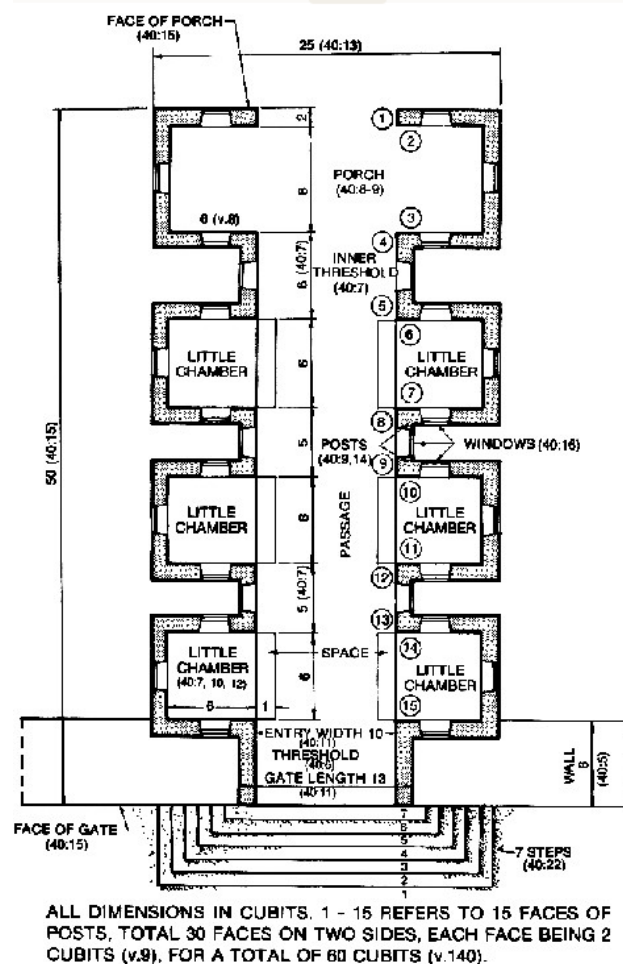


FIGURE 2: GATE DETAIL

### The Outer and Inner Court

The first thing we need to pay attention to in the outer court is the pavement. There are six different sections of pavement, and on each section there are five chambers. In addition to thirty chambers on the pavement, there are four small courts, one at each corner of the outer court. These four courts at the four corners are places for boiling the sacrifices. The main thing in the outer court is the enjoyment of Christ as the offerings and sacrifices. After we pass through the

gate, we come to the outer court and enter into the chambers to eat, to enjoy, Christ, who is the reality of all the offerings. The pavement connected to the gate indicates that the enjoyment of Christ is connected to the experience of Christ.

From the outer court we need to pass into the inner court. As we enter into the inner court, we also ascend higher. From this we see that entering into the inner court means that the more inward we travel, the higher we become. In the inner court we repeat our experience of Christ. We experience Christ again by passing through another gate. We experience the same Christ, but we experience more of Him. This ushers us into the inner court.

When we pass through the gate to the inner court, the ministering begins immediately. The chamber to was the burnt offerings was the last step in the preparation of the burnt offering. This indicates that at this point in our experience, we are ready to be a burnt offering for God.

### **The Altar**

No matter which gate we take to enter the compound, eventually we will come to the altar. If we want to meet God, we must come to the altar. The altar is the center of the whole premises of the temple. This altar, which signifies the cross, is actually the center of the universe. As the center of the universe, the cross signifies the all-inclusive death of God, of man, and of all the creatures.

After we have been saved, we will meet the cross everywhere. Apart from the cross, it is impossible to contact Christ or to have Christian spiritual experiences. Although we meet the cross everywhere in our Christian life, we experience the cross in a particular way when we come to the altar at the center of God's building. To come to the altar at the center is to realize that all that we are and all that we have were terminated at the cross.

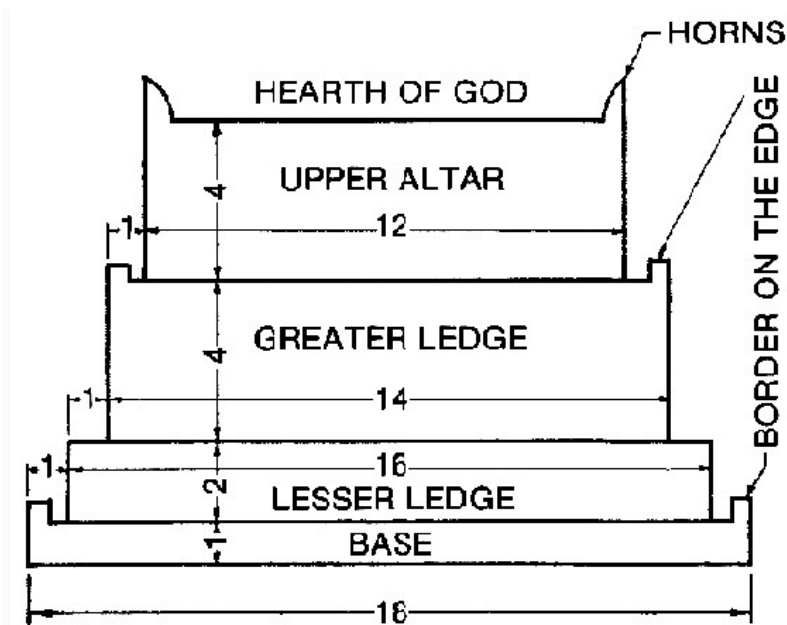


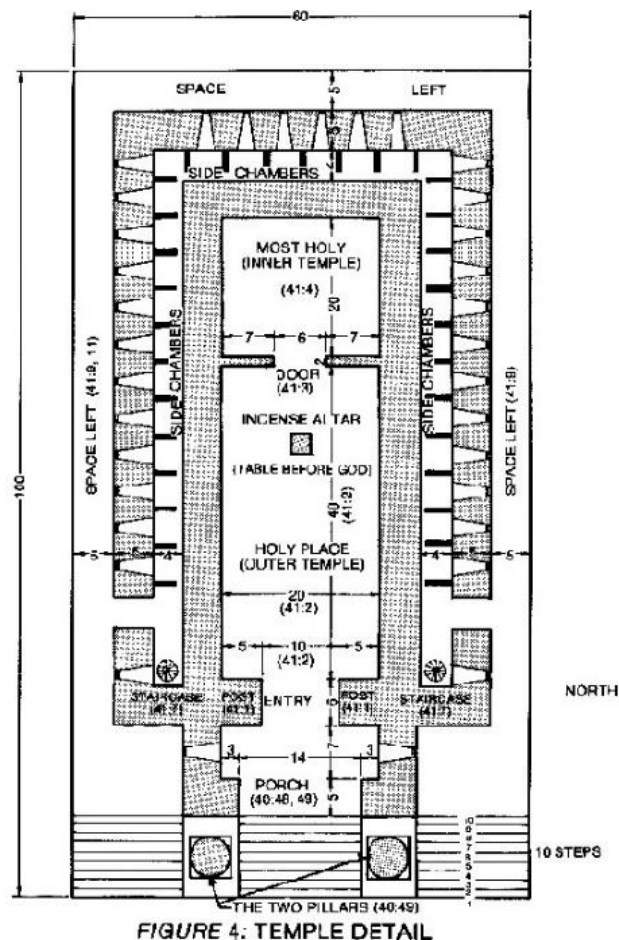
FIGURE 3: ALTAR DETAIL (43:13-17)

The altar has four sections: the base, the lesser ledge, the greater ledge upon the lesser ledge, and the upper altar upon the greater ledge. The upper altar is called the hearth of God, the place where something burns for God and by God. The altar is not only solid and stable but is also able to hold things. This indicates that the death of Christ on the cross is not only stable and solid but also able to hold things.

Only after passing through the altar can we come to the temple. This means that without the proper realization and experience of the cross of Christ, we cannot have the reality of the church life. It is only after we realize that we have been thoroughly terminated on the cross that we can have the real church life.

### **The Temple and Side Chambers**

The temple is composed of three main sections: the porch, the outer temple (Holy Place), and the inner temple (Most Holy or the Holy of Holies). The pillars signify Christ as God's witness bearing the house of God with a strength which is unlimited and immeasurable. The porch itself is used as a lobby. In the church life we should have a lobby, making it easy for others to come in. We need to have an atmosphere that is stretching out and making it easy for others to contact us and touch us.



After we pass through the porch, we come to the outer temple. The further inward we progress, the more narrow the way becomes. From our spiritual experience we know that the closer we are to the Lord, the more we are restricted by Him. If we are loose and careless, this is a sign that we are far off from the presence of the Lord. The side chambers which surround the house increase in height and in breadth on each storey. This indicates that as we progress inward, we ascend higher, and as we ascend higher, we become broader. The beauty of this temple is with the side chambers. If the side chambers were removed, the temple would be too simple and have no beauty. Although there are 90 chambers, there are only two doors. This indicates that it is easy to get in, but it is not easy to get out. The doors being open to the spaces that are left free indicate that there can be an entrance only when there is a surplus of grace.

### **The Building at the Back, the Walls, the Incense Altar, the Holy Chambers, and the Boiling Places**

The building in the back signifies the riches of Christ. The riches of Christ are what Christ is. For example, Christ is life, light, reality, and the way. The fulness of Christ is the church as the expression of Christ. Christ is so rich that He is able to fulfill all the requirements and meet all the needs of both God and man and still have a large “building” left.

According to the record in Ezekiel, all the parts of the building related to the temple are covered with wood. Wood signifies humanity, especially the proper humanity of the Lord Jesus. In God’s building the primary material is humanity. This indicates that we need to be “Jesusly human.”

The incense altar is made wholly of wood. In the tabernacle and in the temple there were the altar, the lampstand, and the showbread table. But here in Ezekiel the altar is also the table. As an altar it is good for us to offer something to God, and as a table it is good for God to minister something to us. Whatever is on this altar-table must be Christ. In this temple there is no lampstand for giving light. Instead there are many windows letting in light and air. Thus there is no need of a lampstand. The holy chambers are for the priests to eat the offerings and also to place and store the offerings. It is here that the priests lay their priestly clothing. The priestly clothing signifies Christ expressed and lived out. In all these things we can see much improvement in the experience of Christ. It is here in the holy chambers that one reaches the highest peak of spiritual experience.

(Life-Study of Ezekiel – Messages 19 to 23)