

1. I call this lesson "Understanding God's plans for a "Post-Christian World."" There is a 1,000-year time period called the "millennium" that exists after Jesus returns. We're focusing on that era.
 - a) These three chapters give architectural details of a future Temple to be built. This temple does not match up with any other Jewish Temple in history. This temple is designed for a future time era after the "church era" is over. It is about life during a 1,000-year reign of Jesus the Messiah on earth from Jerusalem. Confused? Good. ☺ Then let me continue.
2. Ezekiel is starting a new vision in Chapter 40 that takes place 14 years after his last vision.
 - a) In the last lesson, Ezekiel saw a vision far in the future that talks about a great battle where God Himself defeats a large army that wants to destroy Israel.
 - i) The key point of that battle was that God wins. After this battle, Israel will live peacefully in a time era where "all Israelites living in the land will know God."
 - b) In today's world, only a small percentage of people from Jewish ancestry are religious Jews. Just like only a percentage of people from a Christian background have actually committed their lives to serving Christ. Only a small percentage of Jewish people truly given their hearts to God.
 - i) My point is whenever this great battle takes place that is described in Ezekiel 38 and 39, it begins a time frame where "all" Israel will know God.
 - c) Around the time period of this battle, God puts His Spirit (i.e., the "Holy Spirit) upon all the Israelites living in the land of Israel. The way Christians view this is there is a "mass conversion" of Jewish people not only to the God of Israel, but they understand who Jesus is and realize He is their Savior.
 - d) This leads to Chapter 40. This chapter is asking in effect, "OK, the Jewish people are now saved. Now what happens to them?" The answer is they live a life of worshipping God as He wants them to. One gets the impression there is still "free will", but all of Israel collectively have chosen to give their hearts to God.
 - e) With that said, I believe Chapters 40 through 48 are written primarily for future Jewish believers. Yes, there are things the Christian can learn from them, but their primary purpose is for the Jewish believer.
3. With that strange introduction completed, let's talk more about the "Millennium".
 - a) In Revelation Chapter 20, there are six references to a 1,000 year time period. In the Roman Catholic World the majority view is that this 1,000 year period is figurative. In the Protestant world the majority view is that this is a literal period of time.
 - i) I'm going to argue for the literal view. If one holds the view that there is no literal millennium, one will not like this study. I believe such people are saved, but I disagree with that view on this issue. I'll lay out my case in this lesson. ☺
 - b) Let me put the issue of the millennium this way: What purpose does it serve?
 - i) The essential idea of the millennium is that Jesus comes and rules the world from Jerusalem. During this time, He rules over the whole world, not just Israel.
 - ii) If there is a "final" Christian (non-Jewish) believer, and then Jesus comes back to "wrap up the world", why have a special 1,000 year millennium?
 - iii) There are a couple of answers to that question. The first is Satan is bound for this thousand years. (See Revelation 20:2). That will prove to mankind that we are sinful even without Satan's presence. If Satan is bound up, people can't blame him for their sins. We can only blame ourselves. Therefore, one purpose of the millennium is for the human race to understand how much we need a savior and how bad our sins are even without the influence of the devil.

- iv) The next issue is "What about those that survive the "end times"? The book of Revelation speaks of a literal 7-year period where most of the world dies. I believe some people will survive this time era and they repopulate the world. How are such people tested for eternal salvation? That is another argument for a literal millennium. It is during this time period that Jesus rules over the world. Well if Jesus is ruling, He needs someone to "rule over". Even with Jesus ruling, some will chose to rebel and there is one final rebellion after Satan is released.
 - v) The next issue is what happens to "Christians" during the millennium? The answer is somehow, we rule and reign with Jesus. The idea is saved people are now resurrected. Somehow Christians are involved in ruling over the world.
 - a) I hold the view that all Christians are "one", but at the same time we are individuals. We will exist in more than three dimensions. We can occupy the same space and different space at the same time. We will have distinct bodies that function separately, but still be "one".
 - b) With all that said, this does lead us back to Ezekiel Chapter 40. I do believe that Christians are "around", but in the "post-resurrected" sense. Chapters 40 to 48 are primarily for "Jews" living in that future time era.
 - vi) This comes back to the view that God deals with the world either "exclusively" through the church or exclusively through Israel. Chapters 40 through 48 are in a time era when the "church era" is over. Christians are "around" in the post-resurrected sense, but not in the sense of humans walking around the world.
 - vii) My point of this whole exercise is to understand that the "millennium" is primarily for the "Jews" in the sense that God is fulfilling His promise to them of occupying the land and worshipping God in the way He wants to be worshipped.
 - viii) Does this mean the Christian can ignore these chapters as they are not primarily for us? Of course not. As usual, there are principals for us to apply even though I see these chapters as primarily for the Jewish people.
 - c) Going back to those who argue God is done with Israel, how do they explain this section? They argue it is "figurative" or applies to the church. I disagree with that view and I have learned I would much rather take my bible "seriously" than to try to spiritualize passages, especially passages that describe a Temple in great detail as to its measurements.
4. With that said, its time to discuss my business profession. (Bet you didn't see that coming. ☺)
- a) I make a living as a real estate appraiser. What that means among many other things is that I have spent a good portion of my life measuring and describing buildings.
 - b) I mention this, as it fits in well with this week's lesson. In this lesson Ezekiel is given a guided tour of a new Jewish Temple. The tour is given by somebody who is obsessed with the measurements and specific dimensions of every aspect of this Temple.
 - i) Therefore, someone with a background as an engineer, an architect, a surveyor and yes, a real estate appraiser can relate very well to this lesson.
 - ii) If you are not familiar with these professions, that is ok. Just understand that this lesson is a guided tour of a temple, with a heavy emphasis on its dimensions.
 - iii) What I've also done for this lesson is copy some diagrams of this temple and include them as an appendix to this lesson. If a visual diagram is helpful to you, then I would suggest separating those pages and put them besides this reading.
 - c) With all of that out of my system, its time to take a tour of Ezekiel's temple.
5. Chapter 20, Verse 1: In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth of the month, in the fourteenth year after the fall of the city--on that very day the hand of the LORD was upon me and he took me there.
- a) Ezekiel begins a new vision. It has been 14 years since God last spoke to Ezekiel about the long term future of Israel which was the subject of the last lesson. So what does this 14 time gap mean? No one knows.

- b) I "wonder" if this 14 year gap represents the time between the war of the last chapter and the time this new temple is built. I don't know. It may just mean that God wanted Ezekiel to spend years talking about the future kingdom and that battle of the last two chapters.
 - c) As best scholars can tell, this date given in Verse 1 lines up with the 10th day of the Hebrew month of Nissan. This is the same month where the Passover is celebrated
 - i) The 10th day is when the lambs are picked to be sacrificed for the Passover meal. I'm not positive what the connection is, but I suspect it has something to do with the fact that in Ezekiel's "future" temple animals are once again sacrificed.
 - ii) We will spend some time in this lesson and the next lesson discussing why animal sacrifices return in the future. Just as the sacrifices in previous Jewish temples pointed forward to "the cross", these sacrifices point back to that date.
 - d) Meanwhile, back to the text. Verse 1 also that the "hand of The Lord" was upon Ezekiel. We will discover this is another "Beam me up Scotty" type of experience. ☺
6. Verse 2: In visions of God he took me to the land of Israel and set me on a very high mountain, on whose south side were some buildings that looked like a city.
- a) Just like several other times in this book, Ezekiel was somehow "magically" transported from one place to another. Remember that Ezekiel was in Babylon. Not only was Ezekiel somehow transported to Israel, but also transported to a time in the very distant future.
 - b) Ezekiel was taken to a mountain top. Ezekiel did not recognize the mountain. All Ezekiel knew was that on the south side of this mountain was a "city like object".
 - i) Wherever Ezekiel taken to, he did not recognize the place.
 - ii) In Revelation 21:3, John saw a "New Jerusalem" come down from heaven. This is not the same place that Ezekiel is about to see. The "New Jerusalem" in Revelation will be the home of Christians. We know it is different as Revelation 21 says there is no temple in the New Jerusalem. Whatever Ezekiel is about to see is "definitely" a new temple.
7. Verse 3: He took me there, and I saw a man whose appearance was like bronze; he was standing in the gateway with a linen cord and a measuring rod in his hand. ⁴ The man said to me, "Son of man, look with your eyes and hear with your ears and pay attention to everything I am going to show you, for that is why you have been brought here. Tell the house of Israel everything you see."
- a) These two verses finish the introduction. Remember it has been 14 years since God last spoke to Ezekiel. Now he gets this new vision of "a man whose appearance was like bronze". This man is about to give Ezekiel a tour of a new temple.
 - b) Just who is this "man" is another point of speculation. Some argue that it is just an angel. My view (along with many scholars) is that this is a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus.
 - i) In the Old Testament "brass" speaks of judgment. The fact that this man "looked like brass" is a symbol of judgment. This temple is going to be used for sacrifices for sin and therefore it speaks of judgment.
 - ii) I believe this is Jesus as He is the one who will be doing the judging of mankind. I'll have to ask Ezekiel one day if that was Jesus giving him the tour. ☺
 - c) This "man of bronze" had a "linen cord and a measuring rod". Going back to the fact that I'm an appraiser, I understand this. A linen cord and a measuring rod are two different instruments used to measure distance. The "linen cord" is for measuring longer distances and might be the equivalent of a modern "tape measure". The "measuring rod" is for smaller distances and is the rough equivalent of a long "yard stick".
 - d) The main point of this text is that this "man of bronze" tells Ezekiel to pay attention to everything he is about to tell Ezekiel. The man of bronze then tells Ezekiel to repeat to all of Israel everything he sees. I sort of envision Ezekiel following along this man with a legal pad in his hands taking notes of everything he sees.

8. Verse 5: I saw a wall completely surrounding the temple area. The length of the measuring rod in the man's hand was six long cubits, each of which was a cubit and a handbreadth. He measured the wall; it was one measuring rod thick and one rod high.
- a) In this verse, we start measuring. Get used to that concept of measuring. It is going to last for the next three chapters. ☺ Again scholars argue whether or not this is going to be a literal temple. My view is that if God goes to all the trouble of giving every literal dimension, it is literal, or else why be so obsessed with every single dimension?
 - b) Let me pause and explain what a "cubit" is. It is roughly the length from one's elbow to one's fingertip. The Jewish nation had their standard of a "cubit", which was different from the Babylonian "cubit" standard, which was different from say, the Egyptian "cubit".
 - i) The "cubit" used here for this measuring was a "cubit and handbreadth". The latter term is the distance one can feel their breath. It is roughly six inches.
 - ii) One gets the idea that a "cubit and a handbreadth" it is roughly two feet.
 - c) The first piece of measuring done by this "bronze man" is an outside wall. It is roughly twelve feet thick and twelve feet high. What that means, is anybody's guess. ☺
9. Verse 6: Then he went to the gate facing east. He climbed its steps and measured the threshold of the gate; it was one rod deep.⁷ The alcoves for the guards were one rod long and one rod wide, and the projecting walls between the alcoves were five cubits thick. And the threshold of the gate next to the portico facing the temple was one rod deep.
- a) Notice that the "man of bronze" went inside the gate by himself. Ezekiel had to stand outside the gate and listen to the "man of bronze" call out measurements.
 - b) This man entered a gate that faced east. The man went up some steps and was at the gate's entrance. This lead to an "inner gate". The idea is that when one first enters the temple, there is an area for guardians of that gate.
 - c) The good news I want to share here is that one does not have to remember all the individual measurements. At the end of this lesson are some diagrams to help give us a visual idea of what Ezekiel is seeing here.
10. Verse 8: Then he measured the portico of the gateway;⁹ it was eight cubits deep and its jambs were two cubits thick. The portico of the gateway faced the temple.
- a) The "term "portico of the gate way" is sort of the "let us check you out area". It is as if someone wanted to enter the building. Once one goes past the initial entrance is where "guards" can check you out and discuss the business of one entering this temple.
 - b) Again, notice how every detail is described in terms of measurements. What is not given is the construction materials. That is a strike contradiction to the other temples and the tabernacle given in the bible. There is no great "why answer" to that issue. I guess it is because God wants us to focus on the size of the temple and for now, "that's it".
11. Verse 10: Inside the east gate were three alcoves on each side; the three had the same measurements, and the faces of the projecting walls on each side had the same measurements.¹¹ Then he measured the width of the entrance to the gateway; it was ten cubits and its length was thirteen cubits.¹² In front of each alcove was a wall one cubit high, and the alcoves were six cubits square.¹³ Then he measured the gateway from the top of the rear wall of one alcove to the top of the opposite one; the distance was twenty-five cubits from one parapet opening to the opposite one.¹⁴ He measured along the faces of the projecting walls all around the inside of the gateway--sixty cubits. The measurement was up to the portico facing the courtyard.¹⁵ The distance from the entrance of the gateway to the far end of its portico was fifty cubits.¹⁶ The alcoves and the projecting walls inside the gateway were surmounted by narrow parapet openings all around, as was the portico; the openings all around faced inward. The faces of the projecting walls were decorated with palm trees.
- a) As one can tell by the size of this paragraph, I'm going to pick up the pace a little. One can go "crazy" studying the details. The important idea is that this is a literal temple.

- b) Let's remember where we are in this temple: The "bronze man" is inside doing the measuring and describing the details to Ezekiel who is outside of the temple.
 - c) This "bronze man" is just inside the "east gate". We have now moved from the "front entrance" to the "main entrance". In other words, this "bronze man" is now inside the temple. The entrance to the "gateway" is about 20 feet in width and about 26 feet length.
 - d) One thing I am not sure about is whether or not this is "outdoors or indoors". One thing that is not mentioned is any sort of roof covering. If one studies the Tabernacle as built by Solomon, or the 2nd Temple which was after the 70 year captivity, there was an outdoor area and this lead to an indoor covered area. I suspect this is the same type of model, although not all of the dimensions are similar to previous Jewish Temples.
 - e) I made a conscious decision to not get too bogged down in dimensional details so I am not going to repeat what the text says about each dimension. The main idea is that God through this "man of bronze" is describing to Ezekiel every dimension of a New Temple that is to be built. While we get no idea of the building material, only the details of the size (lengths, width and height) are emphasized.
 - i) The only exception to the "no building material" rule is the last line says that there were "palm tree" designs on the walls. In that culture at that time, palm trees represented "fruitfulness". It is also associated with the presence of a king just as "Palm Branches" are used to show the coming of a king. (For example, think of the people waving palm branches at Jesus on "Palm Sunday". See John 12:13 on this.)
 - f) The details in this last paragraph includes describes of small rooms called "portico's". A portico is a porch leading to an entrance to a building. It is like an "entryway".
12. Verse 17: Then he brought me into the outer court. There I saw some rooms and a pavement that had been constructed all around the court; there were thirty rooms along the pavement.¹⁸ It abutted the sides of the gateways and was as wide as they were long; this was the lower pavement.¹⁹ Then he measured the distance from the inside of the lower gateway to the outside of the inner court; it was a hundred cubits on the east side as well as on the north.
- a) Here we have the first time that Ezekiel "moves" locations. Ezekiel was now (in this vision) brought into the "outer court".
 - b) In the original "tabernacle, then again in Solomon's temple, and the Temple built after the 70-year captivity (which was expanded by King Herod centuries later), the Temple had a series of "courts. An "outer court" is where people would bring their sacrifices to God. The inner court would be like the "covered sanctuary" where the sacrifices were actually presented to God. It's a little more detailed than that, but that's the main idea.
 - c) The text mentions "some rooms" in the courtyard. Again, these are "storage enclaves" that face toward the courtyard.
13. Verse 20: Then he measured the length and width of the gate facing north, leading into the outer court.²¹ Its alcoves--three on each side--its projecting walls and its portico had the same measurements as those of the first gateway. It was fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide.²² Its openings, its portico and its palm tree decorations had the same measurements as those of the gate facing east. Seven steps led up to it, with its portico opposite them.²³ There was a gate to the inner court facing the north gate, just as there was on the east. He measured from one gate to the opposite one; it was a hundred cubits.
- a) If you recall, the "man of bronze" walked in through a gate facing the east. Now in Verse 20, we have another gate entrance facing the north wall. It appears that the dimensions of this north gate are the same as the east gate. The only clues we have of anything other than measuring is the fact the ground is "paved" and there are palm tree decorations.
 - b) Let me pause and discuss the flooring. All the text says is the floor is paved. There is no mention of gold or silvery in this section of Ezekiel. So is the floor made of cement? We don't know. The text doesn't say. Maybe God had cement mixers brought in. ☺ The truth is we don't know.

14. Verse 24: Then he led me to the south side and I saw a gate facing south. He measured its jambs and its portico, and they had the same measurements as the others.²⁵ The gateway and its portico had narrow openings all around, like the openings of the others. It was fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide.²⁶ Seven steps led up to it, with its portico opposite them; it had palm tree decorations on the faces of the projecting walls on each side.²⁷ The inner court also had a gate facing south, and he measured from this gate to the outer gate on the south side; it was a hundred cubits.
- a) The main point here is that there was a gate on the south side with all the exact same dimensions and characters of the gate and area on the north side.
 - b) Notice that Ezekiel is "inside" at this point, being shown the "south side".
15. Verse 28: Then he brought me into the inner court through the south gate, and he measured the south gate; it had the same measurements as the others.²⁹ Its alcoves, its projecting walls and its portico had the same measurements as the others. The gateway and its portico had openings all around. It was fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide.³⁰ (The porticoes of the gateways around the inner court were twenty-five cubits wide and five cubits deep.)³¹ Its portico faced the outer court; palm trees decorated its jambs, and eight steps led up to it.
- a) The point here is that the north gate, the south gate and the east gate all have entrances leading into the "inner court" area. Again the text does not discuss at this point what is the various courts are for. The point of the text is just to describe all the dimensions like an architect. It is almost as if God wants us to build a model of this structure and is giving us the necessary dimensions. There is very little focus on anything but the dimensions.
16. Verse 32: Then he brought me to the inner court on the east side, and he measured the gateway; it had the same measurements as the others.³³ Its alcoves, its projecting walls and its portico had the same measurements as the others. The gateway and its portico had openings all around. It was fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide.³⁴ Its portico faced the outer court; palm trees decorated the jambs on either side, and eight steps led up to it.
- a) Ezekiel is now brought to the "inner court" via the east gate. This means there is an outer court area and an inner court area. The only thing we know other than very specific dimensions is that everything was paved and we have more mentions of palm trees that decorated the doorway entrances.
17. Verse 35: Then he brought me to the north gate and measured it. It had the same measurements as the others,³⁶ as did its alcoves, its projecting walls and its portico, and it had openings all around. It was fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide.³⁷ Its portico faced the outer court; palm trees decorated the jambs on either side, and eight steps led up to it.
- a) Remember we are now in some sort of "inner courtyard" area as opposed to an "outer courtyard area". Like that is supposed to help. ☺ There are three entrances to this inner courtyard. One is on the north, one is on the south and one is on the east.
 - b) If one looks at drawings of this structure, there are no west entrances. The whole structure backs up to a west wall and there are no entrances on this side. Why is that? I don't know. Remember that Ezekiel was originally watching this from a high mountain and saw this structure. Maybe the west side backs up to a mountain or hill.
 - c) The point of all of this is that Ezekiel is giving such specific dimensions the only logical conclusion is that this is some sort of literal temple.
 - d) Verse 34 mentions "eight steps" leading up to this inner courtyard. Earlier in the text there were seven steps leading to the "outer courtyard". (See Verse 22). The significance is unknown. The number "seven" in the bible is associated with God's "perfection". That would make sense when one first enters the "outer courtyard". The number "eight" is associated with a "new beginning". Just as eight is one more than seven, the number eight in the bible is associated with a "new beginning". Here, there are eight steps leading up to the inner court area of this temple. The "new beginning" can be associated with one's new life as one develops a relationship with God.

18. Verse 38: A room with a doorway was by the portico in each of the inner gateways, where the burnt offerings were washed. ³⁹ In the portico of the gateway were two tables on each side, on which the burnt offerings, sin offerings and guilt offerings were slaughtered. ⁴⁰ By the outside wall of the portico of the gateway, near the steps at the entrance to the north gateway were two tables, and on the other side of the steps were two tables. ⁴¹ So there were four tables on one side of the gateway and four on the other--eight tables in all--on which the sacrifices were slaughtered. ⁴² There were also four tables of dressed stone for the burnt offerings, each a cubit and a half long, a cubit and a half wide and a cubit high. On them were placed the utensils for slaughtering the burnt offerings and the other sacrifices. ⁴³ And double-pronged hooks, each a handbreadth long, were attached to the wall all around. The tables were for the flesh of the offerings.
- a) First let me say, if you've hung in there with me this far, you'll make it through this lesson and the rest of Ezekiel. ☺ Even as someone who works with measurements on a regular basis, even I admit this is getting boring. One has to see this chapter as part of a "bigger unit" that covers the last nine chapters of Ezekiel. Chapters 40-42 are laying out the groundwork (model) of a future temple to be built.
 - i) What God is trying to get across is the literalness of this future temple. We know it has never been built as the dimensions don't match any other Jewish temple.
 - b) We are now in this "inner" area of the temple. This text mentions tables for the washing of animals to be sacrificed. There are also eight tables for the slaughtering of animals.
 - i) The text mentions utensils used for the slaughtering of animals.
 - c) This leads to a big question: Why are we bringing back animal sacrifices? I thought Jesus paid the price for our sins once and for all. The "short answer" is that these sacrifices were brought in to "remember" what Jesus did on the cross. Just as sacrifices before the cross looked forward to that event, these look bad.
 - i) This gets back to some comments I made in my introduction in that this temple is very Jewish in its focus. I believe the "church time era" is done during this 1,000 year millennium period. The saved people that form the "Christian church" is completed at this time. During the millennium, Jesus will reign from Jerusalem over the world. The "world" is those who survived through the "end times". At the same time there will be Jews living in Israel.
 - ii) With all that said, God brings back animal sacrifices for people to confess their sins and give an offering to God for "what He did". (Again the focus is "back" in time.)
 - iii) I wonder what the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has to say about all of this. ☺ I assume they're not around at this time.
19. Verse 44: Outside the inner gate, within the inner court, were two rooms, one at the side of the north gate and facing south, and another at the side of the south gate and facing north. ⁴⁵ He said to me, "The room facing south is for the priests who have charge of the temple, ⁴⁶ and the room facing north is for the priests who have charge of the altar. These are the sons of Zadok, who are the only Levites who may draw near to the LORD to minister before him."
- a) At the north and south gates were special rooms for priests. The south side is for the priests who are in charge of the temple. The north side is for the priests who are in charge of the altar. The text is describing storage rooms for the priests to change garments.
 - b) Verse 46 mentions the "sons of Zadok". This group is discussed in 1st Kings Chapter 1. Essentially this is part of the tribe of Levi assigned to work the temple.
 - i) So how will we know who is a "Son of Zadok" in the future? We will have to wait on God to work that part out. The point is God called this family to be in charge and during the millennium, they will be in charge of temple operations.
20. Verse 47: Then he measured the court: It was square--a hundred cubits long and a hundred cubits wide. And the altar was in front of the temple.
- a) To give you an idea of the size of the court area, it was roughly 200 feet by 200 feet.

21. Verse 48: He brought me to the portico of the temple and measured the jambs of the portico; they were five cubits wide on either side. The width of the entrance was fourteen cubits and its projecting walls were three cubits wide on either side. ⁴⁹ The portico was twenty cubits wide, and twelve cubits from front to back. It was reached by a flight of stairs, and there were pillars on each side of the jambs.
- a) We are now approaching the "center" area of the Temple. As usual every aspect is measured and reported. We also have an unspecified number of stairs and some pillars.
22. Chapter 41, Verse 1: Then the man brought me to the outer sanctuary and measured the jambs; the width of the jambs was six cubits on each side. ² The entrance was ten cubits wide, and the projecting walls on each side of it were five cubits wide. He also measured the outer sanctuary; it was forty cubits long and twenty cubits wide.
- a) In Chapter 41, the "man of bronze" was still measuring and Ezekiel was still taking notes.
 - b) Chapter 41 begins with Ezekiel being brought to the "outer sanctuary" and measuring the jambs. A jamb is a doorway. This doorway leads to the inner sanctuary.
23. Verse 3: Then he went into the inner sanctuary and measured the jambs of the entrance; each was two cubits wide. The entrance was six cubits wide, and the projecting walls on each side of it were seven cubits wide. ⁴ And he measured the length of the inner sanctuary; it was twenty cubits, and its width was twenty cubits across the end of the outer sanctuary. He said to me, "This is the Most Holy Place."
- a) We now move from the "outer sanctuary" to the "inner sanctuary". The idea is to compare (Chapter 41) Verses 1 and 2 with Verses 3 and 4. The point is the entrance to the inner sanctuary is a little smaller than the entrance to the "outer sanctuary". I believe the idea is to show the inner sanctuary is a little more sacred and has a smaller entrance.
 - b) The "inner sanctuary" is the entrance to the most "holy" area. If one studies the details of the sanctuary is described in Exodus, this is where the presence of God is located.
 - i) One thing not mentioned is any sort of "veil" between the outer and inner parts of the sanctuary. Going back to the Exodus sanctuary, there was a big deal made about a thick curtain between these two. Only the high priest can only enter the inner part once per year.
 - ii) When Jesus died on the cross, one of the details given was a miracle of the temple veil being ripped from top to bottom. (See Matthew 27:51 or Mark 15:38). Note that this veil was very thick and is not something that accidentally rips. It is a symbol of God saying in effect, "The price for sin has been paid, and the veil is no longer necessary to separate my existence from people."
24. Verse 5: Then he measured the wall of the temple; it was six cubits thick, and each side room around the temple was four cubits wide. ⁶ The side rooms were on three levels, one above another, thirty on each level. There were ledges all around the wall of the temple to serve as supports for the side rooms, so that the supports were not inserted into the wall of the temple. ⁷ The side rooms all around the temple were wider at each successive level. The structure surrounding the temple was built in ascending stages, so that the rooms widened as one went upward. A stairway went up from the lowest floor to the top floor through the middle floor.
- a) We are now describing the dimensions of the inner sanctuary. Note that the walls were six cubits thick which were about 12 feet thick!
 - b) There were "side rooms", which are storage areas. These side rooms were on three levels.
 - c) The text mentions ledges around the walls to serve as supports. That way no supports were put into the wall of the temple itself. Remember that we are getting a description of the temple from an "architects" point of view.
 - d) This teaches that as thick as the walls are, it is to be treated as "holy" and the side rooms have their own support system and do not need the walls themselves. The idea is the inner sanctuary is so important it is not to support anything else in this Temple.

25. Verse 8: I saw that the temple had a raised base all around it, forming the foundation of the side rooms. It was the length of the rod, six long cubits.⁹ The outer wall of the side rooms was five cubits thick. The open area between the side rooms of the temple¹⁰ and the priests' rooms was twenty cubits wide all around the temple.¹¹ There were entrances to the side rooms from the open area, one on the north and another on the south; and the base adjoining the open area was five cubits wide all around.
- a) This inner temple sanctuary had a raised base. The idea is to show its importance by raising it above everything else in the temple area. This inner area had more storage rooms for the priests to use on the north and south sides.
26. Verse 12: The building facing the temple courtyard on the west side was seventy cubits wide. The wall of the building was five cubits thick all around, and its length was ninety cubits.¹³ Then he measured the temple; it was a hundred cubits long, and the temple courtyard and the building with its walls were also a hundred cubits long.¹⁴ The width of the temple courtyard on the east, including the front of the temple, was a hundred cubits.¹⁵ Then he measured the length of the building facing the courtyard at the rear of the temple, including its galleries on each side; it was a hundred cubits.
- a) Ezekiel is now working his way "outward" and getting the overall dimensions of the temple building and the courtyard.
 - b) One gets the impression that they are making a big deal in that the temple faces east. God will enter this temple from the "east" as we will discover in Chapter 43.
 - c) If all of this is a little boring to read, understand that it is "necessary background" for a key moment when God enters this sanctuary in Chapter 43.
 - d) Meanwhile we still have about 35 more verses of description to go. Hang in there! ☺
27. Verse 15 (cont.) The outer sanctuary, the inner sanctuary and the portico facing the court,¹⁶ as well as the thresholds and the narrow windows and galleries around the three of them-- everything beyond and including the threshold was covered with wood. The floor, the wall up to the windows, and the windows were covered.¹⁷ In the space above the outside of the entrance to the inner sanctuary and on the walls at regular intervals all around the inner and outer sanctuary¹⁸ were carved cherubim and palm trees. Palm trees alternated with cherubim. Each cherub had two faces:¹⁹ the face of a man toward the palm tree on one side and the face of a lion toward the palm tree on the other. They were carved all around the whole temple.²⁰ From the floor to the area above the entrance, cherubim and palm trees were carved on the wall of the outer sanctuary.
- a) The good news of these verses is we get a break from the measurements to describe some of the materials and details within the temple itself.
 - b) One of the unique things about this temple is there are windows. No previous Jewish Temple had windows. Verse 16 mentions the windows were covered. Given those coverings, I suspect the purpose of the windows is to look out, not in. Maybe it is for the priests to look out and see who is coming to the temple. ☺
 - c) Notice that a lot of the outer areas were covered with wood. Why wood? Why not gold or something of greater significance? I don't know. Maybe it is a reminder of the "tree" that Jesus was crucified on, or maybe it is just a symbol of "life" inside this temple. We don't get a lot of explanations with this temple.
 - d) The other "coverings" we get is decorations of palm trees and cherubim's. I've discussed the palm trees, but as a reminder, it represents the "fruitfulness" of life and it also is symbolic of being in the presence of the king. Both of those are significant as one is restoring "life" by giving to God and one is in the presence of the "king" in this temple.
 - e) The cherubim have "two faces". One is of a man and one is of a lion. The "man face" represents how God became man for our sake. The "lion face" ties the reference of the "lion of the tribe of Judah", which is a Messianic title. The other two faces of "cherubim" of the earlier chapters are not mentioned. One is the "ox" and the other is "eagle". It is a matter of speculation why the other two faces are not mentioned at this time.

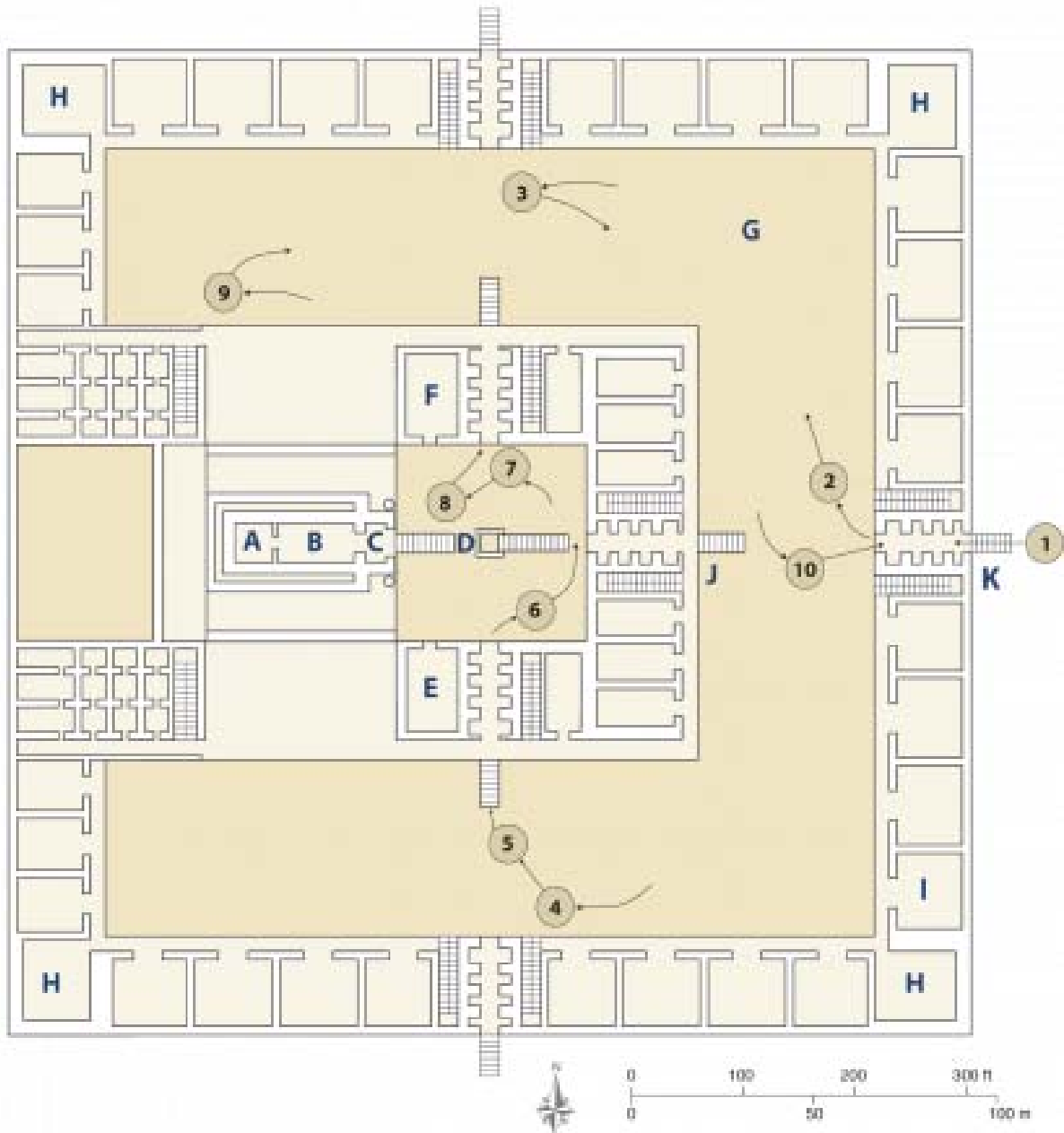
28. Verse 21: The outer sanctuary had a rectangular doorframe, and the one at the front of the Most Holy Place was similar.²² There was a wooden altar three cubits high and two cubits square; its corners, its base and its sides were of wood. The man said to me, "This is the table that is before the LORD."²³ Both the outer sanctuary and the Most Holy Place had double doors.²⁴ Each door had two leaves--two hinged leaves for each door.²⁵ And on the doors of the outer sanctuary were carved cherubim and palm trees like those carved on the walls, and there was a wooden overhang on the front of the portico.²⁶ On the sidewalls of the portico were narrow windows with palm trees carved on each side. The side rooms of the temple also had overhangs.
- a) We finish chapter 41 with a few more descriptions. We get the door frame and a wooden altar. This altar is for the burning of incense. If one has ever studied the details of the tabernacle in Exodus, this altar is for incense (i.e., "prayers") being offered up to God.
 - b) Before I take on Chapter 42, notice what is not mentioned in comparison to the original tabernacle as described in Exodus (and as used in the original temple built by Solomon):
 - i) The "ark of the covenant". This was the most holy item in the original temple and the original tabernacle. It was the center point of the worship of God and was only seen once per year by the High priest. Jeremiah said the "ark" will not be used in the future. (See Jeremiah Chapter 3, Verse 16.)
 - ii) There is also no lighted candlestick. This was another key item in the other Temples. Since God will be present here, no other "light" is needed.
 - iii) There is also no "table of showbread". That was used so the "tribes of Israel" can have a fellowship offering with God. In this age, "all" share with God's presence.
29. Chapter 42: Then the man led me northward into the outer court and brought me to the rooms opposite the temple courtyard and opposite the outer wall on the north side.² The building whose door faced north was a hundred cubits long and fifty cubits wide.³ Both in the section twenty cubits from the inner court and in the section opposite the pavement of the outer court, gallery faced gallery at the three levels.⁴ In front of the rooms was an inner passageway ten cubits wide and a hundred cubits long. Their doors were on the north.⁵ Now the upper rooms were narrower, for the galleries took more space from them than from the rooms on the lower and middle floors of the building.⁶ The rooms on the third floor had no pillars, as the courts had; so they were smaller in floor space than those on the lower and middle floors.⁷ There was an outer wall parallel to the rooms and the outer court; it extended in front of the rooms for fifty cubits.⁸ While the row of rooms on the side next to the outer court was fifty cubits long, the row on the side nearest the sanctuary was a hundred cubits long.⁹ The lower rooms had an entrance on the east side as one enters them from the outer court.
- a) Ezekiel is shown more storage rooms and the areas on the upper floors. We are still getting exact measurements of things as if God wants us to build an exact model.
 - b) Apparently, the "inner sanctuary" had three levels. The 2nd floor is called the "upper rooms" above and the third level is just called the "third level". The text mentions that the rooms were smaller on the third level.
 - c) So what are all these storage rooms for? We will read that a lot of them are to store the offerings given to God. We will read more about that in Verses 13 and 14 coming up.
30. Verse 10: On the south side along the length of the wall of the outer court, adjoining the temple courtyard and opposite the outer wall, were rooms¹¹ with a passageway in front of them. These were like the rooms on the north; they had the same length and width, with similar exits and dimensions. Similar to the doorways on the north¹² were the doorways of the rooms on the south. There was a doorway at the beginning of the passageway that was parallel to the corresponding wall extending eastward, by which one enters the rooms.
- a) Ezekiel goes to a lot of trouble to state in effect the "south side" is the same as the "north side". We've gotten that type of detail several times in these chapters. A small point is to teach the "symmetry" of this temple where both sides are the mirror of each other.

31. Verse 13: Then he said to me, "The north and south rooms facing the temple courtyard are the priests' rooms, where the priests who approach the LORD will eat the most holy offerings. There they will put the most holy offerings--the grain offerings, the sin offerings and the guilt offerings--for the place is holy. ¹⁴ Once the priests enter the holy precincts, they are not to go into the outer court until they leave behind the garments in which they minister, for these are holy. They are to put on other clothes before they go near the places that are for the people."
- a) Here we get the explanation of the function of all the rooms. Most of them is to place the offerings. It's time for a quick review of "Leviticus" and explain offerings.
 - i) A "grain offering" is to about sharing with God. The idea is to show our own-going commitment to serve God.
 - ii) A "sin offering" is an offering for one's sins. The idea it covers "unintentional sins".
 - iii) A "guilt offering" is similar to a sin offering. It is to say in effect we know we are sinners and this covers "my life".
 - b) Meanwhile back at the rooms, the garments the priests wore had to stay there at all times. That is also why so many rooms are needed.
 - c) Let me add the last five verses of this chapter and then explain what is going on.
32. Verse 15: When he had finished measuring what was inside the temple area, he led me out by the east gate and measured the area all around: ¹⁶ He measured the east side with the measuring rod; it was five hundred cubits. ¹⁷ He measured the north side; it was five hundred cubits by the measuring rod. ¹⁸ He measured the south side; it was five hundred cubits by the measuring rod. ¹⁹ Then he turned to the west side and measured; it was five hundred cubits by the measuring rod. ²⁰ So he measured the area on all four sides. It had a wall around it, five hundred cubits long and five hundred cubits wide, to separate the holy from the common.
- a) This "tour" started on the outside, then worked its way inside and is finishing the tour by working its way outside again. The last bit of measuring is the outside walls. To put the walls in "English", the outside of this entire structure is about 1,000 feet by 1,000 feet.
 - i) Therefore, the whole structure is about 10,000 feet in size. By modern building standards, that is not "enormous", but it still is significant in size.
 - ii) Remember the temple will be for the Jewish people living in the millennium and their children. It should be big enough for that population at that time.
 - b) Let me wrap up this lesson by adding a few verses from Chapter 43. I want to do this because Chapter 43 gives the "explanation" of the last three chapters.
33. Chapter 43, Verse 1: Then the man brought me to the gate facing east, ² and I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east. His voice was like the roar of rushing waters, and the land was radiant with his glory. ³ The vision I saw was like the vision I had seen when he came to destroy the city and like the visions I had seen by the Kebar River, and I fell facedown. ⁴ The glory of the LORD entered the temple through the gate facing east. ⁵ Then the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple.
- a) In these verses, Ezekiel is back outside and gets to watch another event.
 - b) In these verses, we have God actually entering this temple. Ezekiel compares it to the visions he had many years ago when he saw God "leave" the existing temple prior to the Babylonians attacking Jerusalem.
 - c) Notice in Verse 2 "the land was radiant with his glory". That is why there is no light mentioned in this temple. The glory of God "is" the light.
 - d) In Verse 5 the "spirit of God" put Ezekiel back in the temple to see God's presence.
34. Verse 6: While the man was standing beside me, I heard someone speaking to me from inside the temple. He said: "Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place for the soles of my feet. This is where I will live among the Israelites forever. The house of Israel will never again defile my holy name--neither they nor their kings--by their prostitution and the lifeless idols of their kings at their high places.

- a) The reason I wanted to include parts of Chapter 43 here is because we get an explanation of why we have all these details of this new temple. It is so that God can spend forever with "His people" and the "House of Israel" will never again turn against Him.
 - b) Back in Chapters 35 through 39, there were references to when the Israelites are once again gathered in the land, God will put "His Spirit" on all of them so the Jewish people would know He is God. Most Christian scholars argue it is a time where there will be mass conversions to Christianity and they all live together in the "land".
35. Let me go back to the concept of the 1,000-year period called the "millennium".
- a) I stated in the introduction that in the millennium, the "Christian era" is over and all saved Christians are now in heaven. Revelation 20 and 21 speak of a "New Jerusalem" that comes out of heaven. It is not the same as the place described here in Ezekiel because in the "New Jerusalem" there is no throne. If Christians have their new home in this "New Jerusalem", I believe the idea is we "peak in" on what is happening on earth and somehow we help Jesus rule over the earth during this time.
 - b) Let me move on to the tougher question. If this millennium is a period of peace where God has his presence on the earth and Jesus rules from this temple, then what is the purpose of all the sacrifices? If this is a time of world peace, then who needs forgiveness?
 - i) Let me start by reminding us that Satan is "bound up" for a 1,000 years. (See Revelation 20:2-3). After 1,000 years Satan is released and there is one final attempt by him to rebel against God. (See Revelation 20:3). After that 1,000 years Satan is bound up forever along with those who joined Him in this rebellion.
 - ii) During this 1,000-year period, the earth will be repopulated. It will be a time of peace with Jesus the Messiah ruling over the earth. (See Isaiah 9:6 and 66:12.)
 - iii) I suspect those born during this time era will never know war. I believe people will live a lot longer during this time frame. (See Isaiah 65:20 on this point.) Some suspect the earth returns to a "Garden of Eden" like state.
 - iv) In order for people of that time era to appreciate what God did at the cross, there are opportunities for this new world to worship God and acknowledge the price He paid. Such people will bring sacrifices to be offered.
 - v) Just like any other point in history, some will choose God and some will rebel against God. Those that rebel will join Satan in the final rebellion against God.
 - c) To sum all of this up, the 1,000-year period is a time of judgment for those living on the earth during the millennium. Like every other period in human history, such people must have the free will to choose to accept or reject God.
 - i) So why is God having this "era of time"? Why not just wrap it up when Jesus comes back and that's that? The answer is God must keep His unconditional promises. A key promise is that God promised He would rule the world one day from Jerusalem. That promise was also given to Mary after Jesus was born. (See Luke 1:32). The reason I believe in a literal 1,000 year millennium is so that God can keep His promise to the Jewish nation that was made thousands of years ago.
 - ii) Do I claim to understand all the details of this time era? No. I simply believe what the bible says is true and give my best effort to understand it.
 - d) I believe a main point of Chapters 40 to 48 is to show that God is not done with the nation of Israel. Many Christian bible commentators go lightly through this section as they understand the fact it is "not for us Christians" but it is primarily for the Jews.
 - e) What about the New Testament passage that says that all Scripture is useful for teaching. (That is 2nd Timothy 3:16). If this section is for the "Jews" of a future time era, how is it beneficial to the Christian? It is for us to understand that God keeps all of His promises and just as God has an eternal future for us, so God has one for the Jewish nation.

36. Let's pray: Father, I have to admit studying architectural details of a future temple is tough reading. It's tough to apply sections of scripture that are no primarily meant for our learning. Help us to remember that You have an eternal plan for all that turn to You. Help us to see the world as "bigger" than our own world around us. Help us to remember during difficult times that You are in control and have a wonderful plan for all that follow You, past, present and future. We ask this in Jesus name we pray, Amen.

The chart below shows the interior of the Temple complex. (Table source - ESV study bible.)
 The "exterior courtyard" is where numbers 2,3,4,5,9 and 10 are located.
 The "interior courtyard" is where numbers 6, 7 and 8 are located.



Letters in diagram represent locations within the temple complex; numbers indicate the stages in Ezekiel's temple tour (see charts on opposite page).

This chart below goes with the picture on the previous page.

	Reference	Explanation
A	41:4	The "Most Holy Place."
B	41:3	The inner room of the temple.
C	42:2	The entrance to the temple.
D	43:13-17	The imposing altar; although the number of stairs is not given, the entire altar structure is about 16 feet (4.9 m) tall, so many steps would have been required. This area of the inner court was accessible only by priests – not even the prince was permitted entry.
E	40:46	Chamber for Zadokite priests.
F	40:45	Chamber for "priests who have charge of the temple."
G	40:17-19	The outer court, with its 30 chambers in the outer wall (40:17).
H	46:21-24	The temple "kitchens," one in each corner of the outer court.
I	40:17	The 30 outer chambers.
J	46:2	The "prince's gate": from its threshold he worships on each Sabbath while the priests bring the offerings into the inner court.
K	43:1	The main east gate, through which "the glory of the God of Israel" returns to his temple (cf. 10:19; 11:22-23).
Tour:	Reference	Explanation
1	40:6	The eastern (main) gate begins the tour; the E-W axis of the temple should be noted; if a line is drawn from the east gate to the Most Holy Place, there are a sequence of three elevations, as the space in the inner temple becomes increasingly constricted.
2	40:17	From this vantage point in the outer court, Ezekiel is shown the main features of this "plaza" area.
3	40:20	The northern-facing gate.
4	40:24	En route to the southern-facing gate, no details are given of the outer facade of the inner court; the architectural details of this area must remain speculative.
5	40:28	Ezekiel's entry to the inner court is by way of its south gate...
6	40:32	...then to the east gate (past the imposing altar, not yet described) . . .
7	40:35	... and on to the north gate, which includes areas for handling sacrificial animals.
8	40:48; 41:1	Ezekiel approaches the inner temple structure itself, first describing its entrance; he is then stationed outside the entrance while his guide first measures its interior, then the exterior.
9	42:1	They exit the inner court through its north gate to explore the northwestern quadrant of the outer court.
10	42:15	Ezekiel and his guide leave the temple from the east gate by which they first entered. From this vantage point, Ezekiel was able to watch the return of "the glory of the God of Israel" moments later (43:1-5).