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Ezekiel 40.

(2014)

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Ezekiel 40.

Topics.

- The twenty-fifth year of Israel's captivity.
- Ezekiel has a vision of a man like bronze, with a linen cord in his hand.
- The man with the measuring reed goes to the gateway facing east.
- The entrance of the east gate and its inner room.
- The chambers pavements and gates in the outer court.
- The gates in the wall of the outer court and the gates leading to the inner court.
- The south gate to the inner court (v23).
- The chamber in the inner court and on the outside of the inner court.
- The court and vestibule of the temple.
- The theme of the last nine chapters of Ezekiel.

Introduction to the Book of Ezekiel: Ezekiel, a prophet and priest, was exiled to Babylon in 597 B.C. His ministry extended over at least twenty-three years. The book opens with his first dramatic vision of the "likeness" of the LORD". Ezekiel was keenly aware of God's presence and power in human affairs. He addressed both the exiles and the people left in Judah with messages of warning and judgment, predicting the fall of Jerusalem.

After its fall (586), Ezekiel prophesied of hope and reassurance for the people of Judah, who had then lost the focus of God's covenant and the temple in Jerusalem. His vision of the valley of dry bones (chapter 37) is a classic picture of God's ability to breathe new life into those who are spiritually dead. Ezekiel is prophesying about the Jews that did not go into captivity to Babylon, but remained against the word of the LORD in Jerusalem.

NOTE: Ezekiel's message is primarily directed to the people in the land of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem (the two tribes), but often it is difficult to separate the message from Judah and Israel (the ten tribes) because much of what the LORD says can be applied to both Judah and Israel because the two are so intertwined and both nations were guilty of the same gross sins.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

NOTE: because I do not have knowledge concerning the symbolism that maybe contained in the following measurements concerning the cubit in this chapter I will leave that for those who love to study such things since I am sure they will be rewarded for their efforts and find many symbolic meanings as they do their own enjoyable studies.

The primary focus of this chapter is upon the rebuilding of the Temple of God starting from the wall of the outer court and the focus of the following eight chapters continue with the rebuilding of the Temple with chapter forty-seven shinning a brilliant light upon a river flowing out from the altar of the Temple of God and bringing life to everyone who comes to its water.

The Twenty Fifth Year of Israel's Captivity.

Ezekiel 40:1 ----- ¹In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was struck down, on that very day, the hand of the LORD was upon me, and he brought me to the city.

Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took Ezekiel and the people of influence into captivity about ten years prior to the destruction of Jerusalem and left Zedekiah king of Judah as the king over those who remained in the city, but Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon so Nebuchadnezzar gathered his armies and destroyed the city of Jerusalem and took those who survived the attack into captivity only the extremely poor were left at Jerusalem. Ezekiel and the people of influence have been in captivity twenty-five years, while those who came after the destruction of Jerusalem have been in captivity almost fifteen years.

Ezekiel has a Vision of a Man like Bronze, with a Linen Cord in his Hand.

Ezekiel 40:2-4 ----- ²In visions of God he brought me to the land of Israel, and set me down on a very high mountain, on which was a structure like a city to the south. ³When he brought me there, behold, there was a man whose appearance was like bronze, with a linen cord and a measuring reed in his hand. And he was standing in the gateway. ⁴And the man said to me, "Son of man, look with your eyes, and hear with your ears, and set your heart upon all that I shall show you, for you were brought here in order that I might show it to you. Declare all that you see to the house of Israel."

Visions: can relate to a spectacle gazed at by the eyes or a movie played out in the mind. In most cases God gives the picture or vision then the prophet speaks or writes it in their own words. Sometimes the same biblical event or experience is spoken of as an actual and real event, while at other times the same event maybe recorded as a vision (an image or mental experience within the mind).

A biblical vision is always under God's control and can appear as a movie played out on the screen of the imagination of the mind (similar to a dream) or it may appear as a hologram appearing in the air that is actually seen by the eyes of the prophet or to whoever God chooses to give the vision to.

The vision communicates the LORD'S will or future events to the prophet who then proceeds to tell the vision to the people, sometimes in their own words and at other times in the exact words the LORD has spoken to them in the vision.

Ezekiel's Vision.

Ezekiel in a vision sees himself standing on a very high mountain in Israel. He turns and looks to the south and sees something that appeared like a city built on the mountain. God takes him to the gate of what appeared to be a city and Ezekiel sees a man who looked like bronze and who had a linen cord and measuring reed in his hand standing at the gateway of the city. The man tells Ezekiel to declare everything that he is about to show him to the people of Israel.

- The very high mountain: is Mount Zion (the Holy Mountain of God).
- A structure like a city: is the destroyed city of Jerusalem (the Holy City of God).

A man like Bronze, with a Linen Cord and Measuring Reed in his Hand.

- Bronze speaks of Judgment (Israel has been judged).
- Linen is a symbol of righteousness (God is about to restore Jerusalem).
- The measuring reed speaks of preparing the city of Jerusalem for restoration.
- The gateway is the entrance gate in the walls of Jerusalem.

The vision Begins at the Outside Wall of the Temple Area.

Ezekiel 40:5 ----- ⁵And behold, there was a wall all around the outside of the temple area, and the length of the measuring reed in the man's hand was six long cubits, each being a cubit and a handbreadth in length. So he measured the thickness of the wall, one reed; and the height, one reed.

The history and different measures of a cubit: there are varying ideas concerning the exact measurement of a cubit this is because it is not an exact measurement. A cubit is the Hebrew measure of length it arose (as did the English foot) from the simple estimating of distance in terms of the body. Farmers today measure the height of horses by hands.

The word cubit comes from the Hebrew word ('ammah). Strong's Concordance states that a cubit is a unit of measure of the fore-arm (below the elbow to the hand) (approximately 12 inches (300mm) while a long cubit is the length of the fore-arm plus the length of the hand (approximately 18 to 20 inches (450 to 500 mm) and a handbreadth is the length of the hand (approximately 8 inches (200mm)). (The following estimates are calculated on one cubit being 18 inches).

The vision: the first thing to notice here is that the vision it begins at the outside wall of the Temple area. Following is a brief overview of this vision. Ezekiel is recording everything he sees in vision form as he begins to walk from the outside of the temple gate and through the outer court toward the Temple. He is led into the inner Temple (the Holy Place) and after spending some time walking around he is then taken outside to the place where they slaughter the sacrifices in the outer court.

Cubit: ('ammah) from Strong's Concordance is refers to a unit of measure or the fore-arm (below the elbow).

- One cubit is the length of the fore-arm (about 17½ or 18 inches).
- A long cubit is the length of the forearm plus the length of the hand (about 20 inches).
- A handbreadth is the same as a palmbreadth i.e. a cubit plus a palm (21 inches)
- One reed is 6 long cubits (about 9 feet) (for simplicity of this study 1 cubic is equal to 18 inches.
- The thickness of the temple wall was 6 long cubits (about 9 feet).
- The height of the temple wall was 6 long cubits (about 9 feet).

The symbolism: perhaps there is a symbolism in this, 6 is the number of man, so man is on the outside of the temple and the walls are 9 feet thick and 9 feet high so without help there is no-way man on his own is going to get into the Holy Place of God.

The East Gate.

The Man with the Measuring Reed goes to the Gateway Facing East.

Ezekiel 40:6-9 ----- ⁶Then he (the man with the measuring reed) (v3) went into the gateway facing east, going up its steps, and measured the threshold of the gate, one reed deep. ⁷And the side rooms, one reed long and one reed broad; and the space between the side rooms, five cubits; and the threshold of the gate by the vestibule (porch entrance hall) of the gate at the inner end, one reed. ⁸Then he (the man with a measuring reed) measured the vestibule of the gateway, on the inside, one reed. ⁹Then he measured the vestibule of the gateway, eight cubits; and its jambs, two cubits; and the vestibule of the gate was at the inner end.

Vestibule: from Strong's Concordance refers to a porch as bound to the building. The English Dictionary says it is an entrance hall or a small room or a hall between an outer door and the main part of a building.

The man with the measuring reed is still at the East Gate and outside the Temple area (v5) he walks up the steps of the East Gate and takes the following measurements.

- The step of the gate was 1 reed deep (9 feet).
- The side rooms were 1 reed long (9 feet).
- The space between the side rooms was 5 cubits (7½ feet).
- The steps of the gate at inner end of the room were 1 reed (9 feet).
- The gateway (on the inside) of the vestibule was 1 reed (9 feet).
- The gateway (at the inner end) of the vestibule was (12 feet).
- The jambs of the small vestibule were 2 cubits (3 feet).
- The step of the gate was 1 reed deep (9 feet).
- The side rooms were 1 reed long (9 feet).
- The side rooms were 1 reed wide (9 feet).
- The space between the side rooms was 5 cubits (7½ feet).
- The steps of the gate at inner end of the room were 1 reed (9 feet).
- The gateway (on the inside) of the vestibule was 1 reed (9 feet).
- The gateway (at the inner end) of the vestibule was (12 feet).
- The jambs of the small vestibule were 2 cubits (3 feet).

SUMMARY: students of the Bible who love studying the meaning of numbers and the symbolism of Bible numbers will certainly be able to do a lot more with this than I am able, but as exciting as this might be the most important thing to be aware of is that the man with the measuring reed is seen in the next eight chapters measuring (in extreme detail) the city of Jerusalem (the Holy City of God) and the Temple of God which means the primary message of this chapter and the following eight chapters is that every aspect of Jerusalem will be rebuilt.

The three Side Rooms on Either Side of the East Gate.

Ezekiel 40:10-14 ----- ¹⁰And there were three side rooms on either side of the east gate. The three were of the same size, and the jambs on either side were of the same size. ¹¹Then he (the man with a measuring reed) (v3) measured the width of the opening of the gateway, ten cubits; and the length of the gateway, thirteen cubits. ¹²There was a barrier before the side rooms, one cubit on either side. And the side rooms were six cubits on either side. ¹³Then he measured the gate from the ceiling of the one side room to the ceiling of the other, a breadth of twenty-five cubits; the openings faced each other. ¹⁴He measured also the vestibule, (porch entrance hall) twenty cubits. And around the vestibule of the gateway was the court.

These verses are a continuation of the East Gate and outside the Temple area (v5). There were three side rooms (all the same size) on either side of the East Gate each one had jambs the same size.

- The width of the gate opening was 10 cubits (15 feet).
- The length of the gateway was 13 cubits (19½ feet).

- The barrier on either side of the side rooms was 1 cubit (18 inches).
- The side rooms on either side were 6 cubits (9 feet).
- The ceiling to the ceiling was 25 cubits (37½ feet).
- The porch entrance hall (the vestibule) was 20 cubits (30 feet).

The openings of the vestibule (of the gateway) faced each other and there was a court around them. The symbolism of the words, "The openings were all facing each other," (v13) maybe a symbol of brothers and sisters caring for each other, not turning their back, but always watching to protect from harm.

The Entrance of the East Gate and its inner Room.

Ezekiel 40:15-16 ----- ¹⁵From the front of the gate at the entrance to the front of the inner vestibule (porch entrance hall) of the gate was fifty cubits. ¹⁶And the gateway had windows all around, narrowing inwards toward the side rooms and toward their jambs, and likewise the vestibule had windows all around inside, and on the jambs were palm trees.

The man with a measuring reed is now at the front gate and its porch entrance hall and outside the Temple area. From the front entrance gate to the front of the inner porch is 50 cubits (75 feet) and the gateway and the windows had windows all around and the jambs had palm trees carved on them.

The Outer Court.

The Chambers Pavements and Gates in the Outer Court.

Ezekiel 40:17-18 ----- ¹⁷Then he (the man with a measuring reed) (v3) brought me into the outer court. And behold, there were chambers and a pavement, all around the court. Thirty chambers faced the pavement. ¹⁸And the pavement ran along the side of the gates, corresponding to the length of the gates. This was the lower pavement.

In the outer court there was a lower pavement which ran all around the court and had living quarters facing it.

The Lower Gate in the Outer Court.

Ezekiel 40:19 ----- ¹⁹Then he (the man with a measuring reed) (v3) measured the distance from the inner front of the lower gate to the outer front of the inner court, a hundred cubits on the east side and on the north side.

While the man is still at the lower gate in the outer court (v17) he measures from both the East and North side of the court a distance of 100 cubits (150 feet) from the front of the lower inner gate to the outer front of the inner court.

The North Gate in the Outer Court.

Ezekiel 40:20-22 ----- ²⁰As for the gate that faced toward the north, belonging to the outer court, he (the man with a measuring reed) (v3) measured its length and its breadth. ²¹Its side rooms, three on either side, and its jambs and its vestibule were of the same size as those of the first gate. Its length was fifty cubits, and its breadth twenty-five cubits. ²²And its windows, its vestibule (porch entrance hall), and its palm trees were of the same size as those of the gate that faced toward the east. And by seven steps people would go up to it, and find its vestibule before them.

The North Gate in the outer court had three side rooms and its vestibules, its windows and palm trees were the same measurements as those of the East Gate.

The North gate in the outer court was: -

- 50 cubits (75 feet) long.

- 25 cubits (37½ feet) wide.
- It had seven steps up to it.

Overview: Ezekiel in his vision has been walking with the man measuring the living and sleeping quarters, paths, steps and gateways of the outer court area and is now taken into the inner court.

The Inner Court

The South Gate to the Inner Court.

Ezekiel 40:23-27 ----- ²³And opposite the gate on the north, as on the east, was a gate to the inner court. And he (the man with a measuring reed) (v3) measured from gate to gate, a hundred cubits.²⁴And he led me toward the south, and behold, there was a gate on the south. And he measured its jambs and its vestibule; (porch entrance hall) they had the same size as the others. ²⁵Both it and its vestibule had windows all around, like the windows of the others. Its length was fifty cubits, and its breadth twenty-five cubits. ²⁶And there were seven steps leading up to it, and its vestibule was before them, and it had palm trees on its jambs, one on either side. ²⁷And there was a gate on the south of the inner court. And he measured from gate to gate toward the south, a hundred cubits.

The jambs, the windows and the porches of the South Gate were the same size as the others.

- Between the opposite gates was 100 cubits (150 feet).
- The length of the south gate was 50 cubits (75 feet).
- The width of the south gate was 25 cubits (37½ feet).

The South Gate had seven steps leading up to its porches (vestibules) and its jambs had palm trees on either side.

The South Gate of the Inner Court.

Ezekiel 40:28-31 ----- ²⁸Then he (the man with a measuring reed) (v3) brought me to the inner court through the south gate (of the outer court), and he measured the south gate (of the inner court). It was of the same size as the others. ²⁹Its side rooms, its jambs, and its vestibule (porch entrance hall) were of the same size as the others, and both it and its vestibule had windows all around. Its length was fifty cubits, and its breadth twenty-five cubits. ³⁰And there were vestibules all around, twenty-five cubits long and five cubits broad. ³¹Its vestibule faced the outer court, and palm trees were on its jambs, and its stairway had eight steps.

The South Gate to the inner court was the same size as the other gates, its side rooms, palm trees on the jambs, porches (vestibules) and windows were all the same as the others

- The width of the porches (vestibules) was 5 cubits (7½ feet).
- The length of the porches (vestibules) was 25 cubits (37½ feet).

The porches (vestibules) faced the outer court and had eight steps leading up to the Gate. The symbolism of the, "windows all around" is describing the living quarters of the priests, Windows all around is probably a symbol of clearness (i.e., nothing is done in secret).

The East Gate to the Inner Court.

Ezekiel 40:32-34 ----- ³²Then he (the man with a measuring reed) (v3) brought me to the inner court on the east side, and he measured the gate. It was of the same size as the others. ³³Its side rooms, its jambs, and its vestibule (porch entrance hall) were of the same size as the others, and both it and

its vestibule had windows all around. Its length was fifty cubits, and its breadth twenty-five cubits. ³⁴Its vestibule faced the outer court, and it had palm trees on its jambs, on either side, and its stairway had eight steps.

The East Gate to the inner court was the same size as the other gates, its side rooms, palm trees on the jambs, porches (vestibules) and windows all around were all the same as the others.

- The length of the gate was 50 cubits (75 feet).
- The width of the gate was 25 cubits (37½ feet).

The porches (vestibules) faced the outer court and it had eight steps leading up to the gate and the porches (vestibules)

The North Gate to the Inner Court.

Ezekiel 40:35-37 ----- ³⁵Then he (the man with a measuring reed) (v3) brought me to the north gate and he measured it. It had the same size as the others. ³⁶Its side rooms, its jambs, and its vestibule were of the same size as the others, and it had windows all around. Its length was fifty cubits, and its breadth twenty-five cubits. ³⁷Its vestibule faced the outer court, and it had palm trees on its jambs, on either side, and its stairway had eight steps.

The North Gate of the inner court was: -

- The same size as the other gates.
- The side rooms, palm trees on the jambs, vestibules and windows all around were all the same as the others.
- The length of the gate was 50 cubits (75 feet).
- The width of the gate was 25 cubits (37½ feet).

The porches (vestibules) faced the outer court and had eight steps leading up to the gate and the porches.

The Chamber in the Inner Court.

Ezekiel 40:38-39 ----- ³⁸There was a chamber with its door in the vestibule (porch entrance hall) of the gate, where the burnt offering was to be washed. ³⁹And in the vestibule of the gate were two tables on either side, on which the burnt offering and the sin offering and the guilt offering were to be slaughtered.

These doors seem to be opening into the outer area.

The Tables for Sacrifices on the Outside of the Inner Court.

Ezekiel 40:40-43 ----- ⁴⁰And off to the side, on the outside as one goes up to the entrance of the north gate, were two tables; and off to the other side of the vestibule (porch entrance hall) of the gate were two tables. ⁴¹Four tables were on either side of the gate, eight tables, on which to slaughter. ⁴²And there were four tables of hewn stone for the burnt offering, a cubit and a half long, and a cubit and a half broad, and one cubit high, on which the instruments were to be laid with which the burnt offerings and the sacrifices were slaughtered. ⁴³And hooks, a handbreadth long, were fastened all around within. And on the tables the flesh of the offering was to be laid.

- The length of the tables was ½ cubic (9 inches).
- The width of the tables was 1½ cubic (18 inches).

The height of the tables was 1 cubic (18 inches).

The Two Chambers on the Outside of the Inner Court.

Ezekiel 40:44 ----- ⁴⁴On the outside of the inner gateway there were two chambers in the inner court, one at the side of the north gate facing south, the other at the side of the south gate facing north.

The South Chamber on the Outside of the Inner Court.

Ezekiel 40:45 ----- ⁴⁵And he (the man with a measuring reed) (v3) said to me, This chamber that faces south is for the priests who have charge of the temple,

The chambers of the Levites faced toward the outer court because they were to do the service of the Temple only. The South chamber is the living quarters for the Levitical priests who took care of the Temple.

The North Chamber on the Outside of the Inner Court.

Ezekiel 40:46 ----- ⁴⁶and the chamber that faces north is for the priests who have charge of the altar. These are the sons of Zadok, who alone among the sons of Levi may come near to the LORD to minister to him.

The chambers of the sons of Zadok faced toward the inner court because they were to minister to the LORD. The sons of Zadok were the only priests appointed to minister to the LORD.

The sons of Zadok: after the seventy year Babylonian captivity and the re-building of Jerusalem and the Temple of God, the LORD appointed the Levites to be ministers of the Temple and do all its service and bear the oversight of the Gates, the burnt offerings and the sacrifices, but because they ministered to idols, prior to the Babylonian captivity and stumbled Israel, the LORD said they cannot come near to Him or serve Him as priests or come near the things that are Most Holy. Only the Levitical sons of Zadok were to enter the inner court and minister to the LORD and stand before Him to offer the sacrifices, because they kept charge of His sanctuary when the people of Israel turned to idols and went astray (Ezekiel 44:9-17).

The Court of the Temple.

Ezekiel 40:47 ----- ⁴⁷And he (the man with a measuring reed) (v3) measured the court, a hundred cubits long and a hundred cubits broad, a square. And the altar was in front of the temple.

- The length of the temple court was 100 cubits (150 feet).
- The width of the temple court was 100 cubits (150 feet).

There is an altar in front of the Temple.

The Vestibule of the Temple.

Ezekiel 40:48-49 ----- ⁴⁸Then he (the man with a measuring reed) (v3) brought me to the vestibule (porch entrance hall) of the temple and measured the jambs of the vestibule, five cubits on either side. And the breadth of the gate was fourteen cubits, and the sidewalls of the gate were three cubits on either side. ⁴⁹The length of the vestibule was twenty cubits, and the breadth twelve cubits, and people would go up to it by ten steps. And there were pillars beside the jambs, one on either side.

The porches (vestibules) of the Temple.

- The Jambs on either side of the door was 5 cubits (7½ feet).
- The width of the gate was 14 cubits (21 feet).
- The sidewalls of the gate (on either side) were 3 cubits (4½ feet).
- The length of the vestibule was 20 cubits (30 feet).
- The width of the vestibule was 12 cubits (18 feet) and there were ten steps leading up to the vestibule.

SUMMARY: it appears Ezekiel is recording everything he sees in vision form as he begins to walk from the outside of the Temple gate and through the outer court toward the Temple. He is led into the inner Temple (the Holy Place) and after spending some time walking around he is then taken outside to the place where they slaughter the sacrifices in the outer court. He describes the Temple the gates of the inner and outer walls on the north, south, east and west sides of the city. The living quarters for the priest's, the tables for sacrifice and the Temple court.

Students of the Bible who love studying the symbolism of numbers will certainly be able to do a lot more with this than I am able. The man with the measuring reed is seen in the next eight chapters measuring (in extreme detail) the city of Jerusalem and the Temple of God, which means the primary message of this chapter and the following eight chapters is that every aspect of Jerusalem will be rebuilt.

The theme of the Last Nine Chapters of Ezekiel.

1. The theme of chapter forty is the rebuilding of the Temple of God starting from the wall of the outer court.
2. The theme of chapter forty-one is the rebuilding of central part of the Temple of God.
3. The theme of chapter forty-two is the rebuilding of the priest quarters in the outer court of the Temple of God.
4. The theme of chapter forty-three is cleansing the altar and preparing yourself for the glory of the LORD is coming to the Temple.
5. The theme of chapter forty-four is the ministry of the priests when the glory of the LORD fills the temple.
6. The theme of chapter forty-five is the land allotted to the LORD and the land allotted to the Sanctuary, the Prince of Israel and the priests.
7. The theme of chapter forty-six is the Prince entering the Most Holy Place and the people of the land bowing down in peace and entering the Temple with the Prince from their freewill and upon the prince providing a freewill offering and giving an everlasting inheritance to his sons forever.
8. The theme of chapter forty-seven is a river flowing from the threshold of the Temple of the LORD that begins as a trickle then becomes ankle-deep, then waist-deep, then deep enough to swim in. The river has trees on both sides and as it flows into the sea it turns the salt water to fresh water and brings life to every living creature that comes to its water.
9. The theme of chapter forty-eight is the land being divided up between the twelve tribes of Israel.

End.