

The Millennial Temple

Its Location

Its Plan

Its Purpose

By Jim Mattison

THE MILLENNIAL TEMPLE

Its Location, Its Plan, Its Purpose
Ezekiel 40-48

"My house shall be called an house of prayer for all people"

ISRAEL'S MILLENNIAL INHERITANCE

Ezekiel 47:13-21; 48:1-29. From Hamath, 160 miles north of Jerusalem to Kadesh, 80 miles south of Jerusalem.

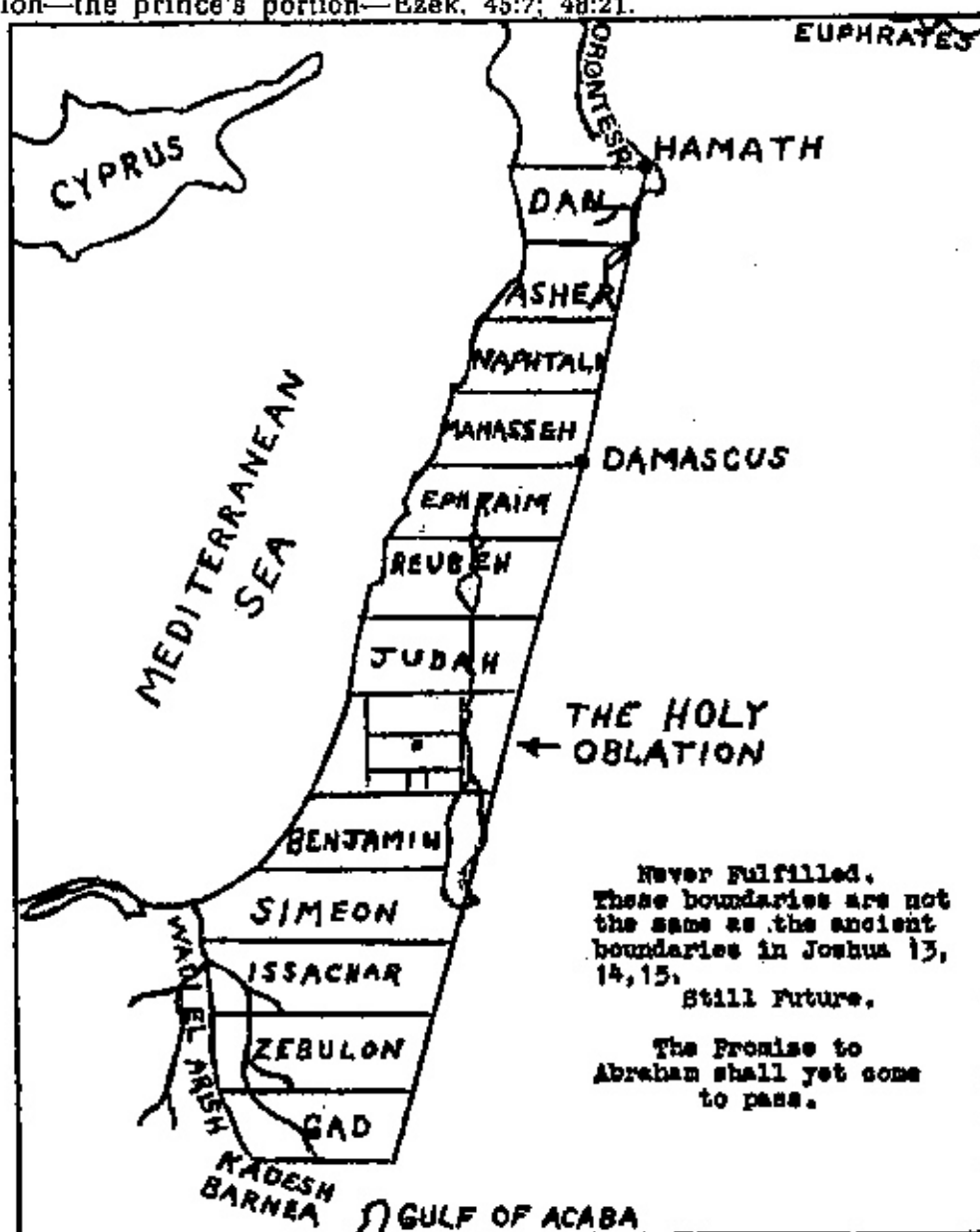
North side: From the Mediterranean to Hamath.

East side: Damascus, "the land of Israel by Jordan,"
the Dead Sea.

South side: Kadesh Barnea.

West side: Mediterranean Sea.

7 tribes on the north, 5 tribes on the south of The Holy Oblation, each approximately 17 miles north to south. The Holy Oblation, 34 miles on each side, using the cubit for buildings of 14:4 inches. On the west side and east side of Oblation—the prince's portion—Ezek. 45:7; 48:21.



Israel's Future Divisions

THE MILLENNIAL TEMPLE FORETOLD

Just as God gave Moses the pattern for the Tabernacle (Ex. 25:8-9), and David the pattern for Solomon's Temple (1 Chron. 28:10-13), He gave Ezekiel the pattern for a future literal Temple (Ezek. 41 and 43:10-11).

Ezekiel's Sanctuary and Temple within will be a real and literal group of walls, gates (entrances), courts, and buildings to be constructed in Palestine after Christ comes, during the beginning of His millennial reign (Ezek. 40-48).

Passages in Ezekiel that bring this out are as follows:

Ezekiel 37:26-28. My sanctuary.

41:1. He brought me to the temple.

41:13. He measured the temple.

41:20-23. The temple and the sanctuary had two doors.

44:4-5. The glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.

45:3-4. In it shall be the sanctuary, the most holy place.

46:24. The ministers of the house.

47:1. The threshold of the house.

This same Sanctuary and House (Temple) are predicted by other prophets:

Haggai 2:6-9. I will fill this house with glory, says the LORD of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former, says the LORD of hosts, and in this place I shall give peace, declares the LORD of hosts.

Isaiah 2:2-4. It will come about that in the last days, the mountain of the house of the LORD will be established as the chief of the mountains, and will be raised above the hills; and all nations will stream to it.

And many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; that He may teach us concerning His ways, and that we may walk in His paths." For the law will go forth from Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

And He will judge between the nations, and will render decisions for many peoples; and they will hammer their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation. And never again will they learn war.

Isaiah 4. In that day the Branch of the LORD will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth will be the pride and adornment of the survivors of Israel.

And it will come about that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem shall be called holy...

When the LORD has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion...

And there will be a shelter there to give shade from the heat by day, and refuge and protection...

Isaiah 56:7. My house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples.

Micah 4:1-2. The house of the LORD. The house of the God of Jacob.

Zechariah 6:12-15. Behold, a man whose name is the BRANCH...He will build the temple of the LORD.

Yes, He will build the temple of the LORD, and He will bear the honor and sit and rule on His throne. Thus, He will be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.

14:20-21. The LORD'S house. The house of the LORD of hosts.

This Temple has never yet been built, but when it is built just after Christ comes, it will be just as literal as the Tabernacle or Solomon's Temple.

Location of the Sanctuary

Generally speaking, the Sanctuary will be located in the heart of Palestine.

In relation to the twelve tribes of Israel, the Sanctuary will be between the seven northern portions and the five southern portions. Ezekiel 48.

In relation to the Holy Oblation, the Sanctuary will be located in the Priests' Portion, "in the midst" of the entire Oblation. Ezekiel 48:8-21.

In relation to millennial Jerusalem, the Sanctuary will be located some ten miles north of it. Ezekiel 45:48.

The Mountain of the LORD

We have seen the millennial inheritance of the twelve tribes of Israel. We have seen the Holy Oblation, the future divinely appointed center of earth's worship and government. Now, before we come to the Sanctuary itself, let us also see the great Mountain on which all this shall rest. The entire Oblation will be located on this great mountain.

That there will be such a literal mountain the Bible makes very clear. Sometimes the word "mountain" is used symbolically in places like Daniel 2:35 and Isaiah 2:14. But the word "mountain" is also used literally many times, and when it is used in connection with the millennial Sanctuary and City, a literal mountain is clearly indicated.

God has chosen one particular mountain on this earth for His dwelling place among men. "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...There will I make the horn of David to bud..." (Psa. 132:13,14,17.) God has chosen Mt. Zion. Many are the prophecies concerning Zion in the millennium. A great and wonderful work will yet be accomplished from Mt. Zion. From there the divine law shall go forth; earth's people will be taught and healed; and God's Glory shall be manifested—all from Mt. Zion. Mount Zion will be the place of Christ's millennial throne (Psa. 2:6).

Let's notice a few of the verses showing this mountain to be literal:

Daniel 11:45. between the seas in the glorious holy mountain.

Ezek. 20:40. In mine holy mountain...there shall all the house of Israel...serve me.

Joel 3:17. So shall ye know that I am the LORD your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy.

Obadiah 21. Saviors shall come up on mount Zion to judge...

Isa. 27:13. Shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

Isa. 31:4. So shall the LORD of hosts come down and fight for mount Zion. (See Zech. 14:3)

Psa. 48:1,2,8. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is mount Zion, *on the sides of the north*, the city of the great King.

Isa. 2:3. Let us go up to the mountain of the LORD. (House of God there.) Micah 4:1,2 the same.

Ezek. 40:2. In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Israel, and set me upon a very high mountain, upon which was as the frame of a city (the Sanctuary) on the south.

Ezek. 43:12. This is the law of the house; Upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof shall be holy.

Isa. 25:6-10. In this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all nations a feast...He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people...In this mountain shall the hand of the LORD rest.

Isaiah 56:7. Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer.

A great physical change shall take place in the land of Palestine when Jesus comes. Besides the

earthquake that shall split the Mt. Of Olives (Zech. 14:4), Scripture indicates that a huge section of land 36 miles long (Rand McNally Bible Atlas) shall be "lifted up" in the center of Palestine (Zech. 14:10). "All the land shall be turned (changed) into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up..." (KJ).

Other translations say: "The whole land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon" (Moffatt). "In days to come the mountain where the Temple stands will be the highest one of all, towering above the hills. Many nations will come streaming to it, and their people will say, 'Let us go up to the hill of the LORD, to the Temple of Israel's God. He will teach us what He wants us to do; we will walk in the paths he has chosen'" (Good News Bible, Isa. 2:2-3). The NIV says: "In the last days the mountain of the Lord's temple will be established as chief among the mountains. It will be raised among the hills, and all nations will stream to it...."

THE HOLY OBLATION and its Boundaries

These last nine chapters of Ezekiel, 40-48, are a continuous vision of many things concerning the millennial worship system for Israel and for the nations, given him by Jehovah. The purpose is to bring reconciliation. The large area, almost 50 miles square, called the Holy Oblation (offering) contains the Levites' portion, the Priests' portion, and the city of millennial Jerusalem (not New Jerusalem). The Sanctuary containing the Temple is in the center of this holy area. Ezekiel says in 45:2 of this entire large holy portion, "It shall be holy within all its boundary round about." The boundaries are 25,000 by 25,000 reeds (measuring rods). The Babylonian measuring rod was 10 ½ feet long (six 21 inch cubits equal 126 inches, divided by twelve equals 10 ½ feet. See below, under The Wall). This figures out to be 262,500 feet on each side, or, 49.7 miles on each side.

But the vision also includes other things, like the Glory of God returning to the holy mountain, the river of water of life proceeding out of the Temple, and the portion for the Prince (possibly David).

We will examine these holy areas for the: Levites, Priests, and Jerusalem on later pages, but now we only notice them in passing.

The most important part of this millennial holy area is the SANCTUARY containing the Temple of the LORD. This is the part on which the Angel immediately concentrates in the vision.

THE BEGINNING OF THIS VISION

Let's begin in Ezekiel 40:2. In vision God transported the prophet Ezekiel from Babylon to the land of Israel and set him on a very high mountain. Looking south he saw what appeared to be the walls and buildings of a city. Actually he was seeing the walls, gates (entrances) arches, courts, and buildings of the Sanctuary.

In vision God brought Ezekiel hither, where he saw a "man" or Angel (see Daniel 10:6), who had in his hand two measuring devices, a line, and a measuring rod (KJ calls it a reed).

The Angel was standing in a Gate of the Sanctuary (the north entrance).

The Angel tells Ezekiel to pay close attention to what he sees and hears because he is to tell all this to Israel. "Declare to the house of Israel all that you see." So, this is a message of Hope to Israel for the future, when Messiah comes. We notice in chapters 38 and 39 the invasion of Israel in the last days by Gog of the land of Magog, and his destruction in Israel. In 39 we see the Feast of the fowls that is also given in Revelation 19:17-18 as being after Christ has defeated the Beast and the kings of the earth. Now in chapter 40 we see what happens next, in the rule of Christ—an explanation of the world millennial worship system.

But this vision is also important for Christians who are to be Kings and Priests with Christ in His Kingdom. In their book, *Messiah's Coming Temple*, John Schmitt and J. Carl Laney give this explanation of the importance of this vision to both Jews and Christians: "God wanted His people to prepare themselves

spiritually for the arrival of the Messiah—and this included building His temple...God wants us (Christians) to understand the significance of the Temple for the kingdom age, embrace its truth, and prepare ourselves for Messiah's return."

How wonderful it is of our loving God to tell us, His people, of the millennial plan He has to bring the nations after Armageddon to Him! We don't have to wonder what will happen to them! A great salvation will take place among the nations after Christ comes! Zechariah 6:12-15 and Isaiah 2:2-4 will be fulfilled! Righteousness will fill the earth. The Glory of God will fill the earth as the waters cover the sea!

THE TOUR OF THE SANCTUARY (45:1-4)

This story is presented to us as a tour. The angel takes Ezekiel here, then there, showing him the different parts of the Temple compound, their measurements, and the reasons for each part. For those who read blueprints, the blueprint of this Temple system is laid out for us here. These drawings I've made in this study are made directly from this passage in Ezekiel using the measurements given.

THE WALL SURROUNDING THE TEMPLE AREA

40:5

The first thing Ezekiel sees as he and the angel begin their tour is the Wall around the Temple area. "When the man measured it with the measuring rod in his hand, which was ten and a half feet long, he found the wall was ten and a half feet thick and ten and a half feet high" (Moffatt).

As to its length, 45:2 says that out of this large Holy Portion "there shall be for the holy place a square round about five hundred by five hundred cubits..."

How long is this cubit mentioned here? There was more than one cubit in ancient times. Schmidt and Laney consider this: "The short cubit is about eighteen inches long. The long cubit, sometimes referred to as the royal cubit or the Babylonian cubit, is twenty-one inches long. Since Ezekiel was writing from Babylon, it seems logical that he would use the Babylonian cubit in making his measurements. This is confirmed by a study of the Temple itself." The Babylonian cubit was 21 inches long. (Adam Clarke agrees with this.) This Wall figures out to be 10,500 inches, or, 875 feet square (almost the length of 3 football fields). So the wall around the Sanctuary is 875 feet square with an 87 ½ foot open space around it.

THE THREE GATES (Entrances)

(East, North, South)

The Angel and Ezekiel walk around the wall to the East Gate (entrance), and go up 7 steps (40:22), and the measurements begin. This Gate is significant since it serves as the basis for all the gates. All are the same size, and there are 6 of them mentioned. Later, we will visit the North Gate, then the South Gate, and the three Gates into the raised inner court. All these entrances are the same, with the exception of the steps. Let's just concentrate on the main facts. This entire "Gate" building with its thresholds, 6 guard rooms, and the porches, by the 21 inch Babylonian cubit is about "44 feet wide and about 87 ½ feet in length" (Messiah's Coming Temple, p. 85). These 6 guard rooms, 3 on each side of the entrance are for the Levite entrance gate keepers (44:10-14). We repeat: "The entire gate building is nearly 44 ft wide and about 87 ½ feet long." (As to height, 105 feet high.) Truly quite a building in itself!

Before stepping out of the "Gate" into the "Outer Court" Ezekiel comes to a porch which is 8 cubits, or, 14 feet.

This eastern Gate and all the gates have towers and overhead arches. The height of these towers in 40:14 is 60 cubits—105 feet. These entrances are 105 feet high.

Notice that as Ezekiel steps out into this "outer court" the floor, or, "pavement" is called the "lower pavement" (40:18). Remember he had stepped up 7 steps to walk into this entrance. (And on the other

side of this outer court there are 8 steps (40:31) up into the "inner court," and then there are other steps up to the Altar in that inner court, and also steps up to the Temple itself.) So we see this Sanctuary has several different levels.

THE OUTER COURT AND ITS CHAMBERS

40:17-26

The Angel leads Ezekiel out of the East Gate into the Outer Court of the Sanctuary and measures it. This Outer Court measures 100 cubits across, from the inside of the Eastern Gate to the outside of the gate opposite it that leads into the Temple area itself. That's 175 feet. This outer court pavement is on the east, north, and south sides of the Temple. There are 30 chambers on it, 10 on each side. They don't stop to measure them, nor are we told their purpose. Also on this outer court in the four corners, we are told there are 4 Kitchens (46:19-24) where the Priests "boil the sacrifices of the people."

Schmitt and Laney suggest that these 30 chambers "are used in connection with Temple sacrifice. Certain sacrifices of the Temple, such as the peace offering, require that the worshiper has a feast, or meal, with his family and friends as part of the sacrifice ceremony. The kitchens in the corners of the outer court are intended for the preparation of the sacrifice meals. It is probable then that the chambers of the lower pavement are the places where worshipers will gather to eat the sacrificial meal."

After observing the Outer Court and its chambers, the Angel leads Ezekiel around to the inside of the North Gate. It was of the same size as the East Gate. They observe that opposite it across the Outer Court there is a similar Gate that leads (up 8 steps) into the Inner Court (40:23), though they don't go there yet.

They turn around, retrace their steps past the inner East Gate, and go around to the inner part of the South Gate, which has the same measurements as the East Gate (40:24-27), with a Gate opposite it, also, that leads up 8 steps into the Inner Court. The seven steps mentioned in v. 26 refer to the outside steps that lead up into the South Gate from the outside. All three outside Gates or entrances are the same, as are also the three into the Inner court.

THE INNER COURT, TABLES, AND ALTAR

40:27-47

The Angel and Ezekiel face the outside of the south inner Gate leading up 8 steps into the Inner Court where the Altar is, and they go up the steps into the Inner Court. This Gate also has the Guard Rooms like the others, where the Levites have charge of the flow of worshipers going in and out. The shuttered windows in it are mentioned once again, and the other windows "all around inside" as in 40:16.

They walk through the Inner Court (remember it is higher than the Outer court) and go over and observe the Inner court Gate to the East (40:32). There were windows all around it.

Then they walk around the Inner Court to the inner North Gate (40:35) noticing the outside 8 steps leading up into the Inner Court.

This Gate is of great importance, for it contains some items not found in any of the other gates.

Here inside this inner North Gate they see a place there "where they rinse the burnt offering" (v. 38). Also in that north inner Gate in the Inner Court there were "two tables on each side, on which to slaughter the burnt offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering" (v. 39).

On the outside were two tables on each side, four tables. "four tables were on each side next to the gate; or 8 tables on which they slaughter sacrifices. And for the burnt offering there were four tables of hewn stone...on which they lay the instruments with which they slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice" (40:40-42). There also are the double hooks about 9 inches long, "installed in the house all around" (evidently to hang up the carcasses), "and on the tables was the flesh of the offering" (v. 43). Since these tables are for sacrifices it is logical to infer that these "hooks" are to hang up the animal carcasses.

Knowing this Sanctuary system is for the purpose of cleansing the people of the nations in Christ's reign,

with these sacrifice details, apparently the flow of the worshipers coming in will flow through the Sanctuary in a north/south direction, for the east inner gate is for the Prince (44:1-3). It seems evident that worshipers coming in the North Gate will go out the South Gate, and worshipers coming in the South Gate will go out the North Gate (46:9).

On the outside of this gate "were chambers for the singers in the inner court" (v. 44). Another chamber for singers was located on the east side (v. 44).

One of the chambers off the Inner Court is "for the priests who keep charge of the temple," while another chamber off the Inner Court is "for the priests who keep charge of the altar. These are the sons of Zadok" (45,46). Back in King David's age, the priests the sons of Zadok were the only priests that remained loyal to David, "the man after God's own heart." In the Kingdom Age the descendants of this faithful man will have the blessing of being personal ministers of Christ and His Prince. We believe this Prince will be the resurrected David (see 37:24 and 25; and 34:23 and 24). "I the LORD shall be their God, and My servant David will be prince among them; I the LORD have spoken." "David My servant shall be their prince for ever." "My servant David will be King over them." "Then will I set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them."

The size of this Inner Court is a square of 100 cubits each way, or 175 feet square.

The Altar was in front of the temple (in the center of the Inner Court) (v. 47). In 41:22 we are told "the altar was of wood, three cubits high (5 ¼ feet high), and its length two cubits (3 ½ feet long)." The corners, base, and sides were wood. Then we are told "*This is the table that is before the LORD.*"

More information about this important altar is given in 43:13-27. 43:18 says, "Son of man thus says the LORD God, These are the statutes for the altar on the day that it is built, to offer burnt offerings on it... for seven days they shall make atonement for the altar and purify it; so shall they consecrate it." After this is completed, "the priests shall offer your burnt offerings on the altar, and your peace offerings; *and I will accept you, declares the LORD God.*"

THE TEMPLE AND ITS CHAMBERS

40:48-41:26

The Temple Building stands on the west side of the Inner Court. This is the central building for which this Sanctuary exists. It is set on a foundation ten and a half feet high (41:8). The priests approach the Temple by going up a flight of 10 stairs to the top. There, there are two large bronze pillars, such as were in front of Solomon's and Herod's temples. After passing the pillars, the Angel takes Ezekiel to the Temple porch and measures it—20 cubits long and 11 cubits wide, or, 35 feet long and 19.3 feet wide. They walk up the stairs to the Holy Place, and the Angel walks in and measures it. It is 70 feet long and 35 feet wide. This is the same size as Solomon's temple.

Behind it is The Most Holy Place, or, Holy of Holies. Ezekiel does not go in there, only the Angel. It is 35 feet by 35 feet. There is wood paneling up to the windows, and there are carvings of cherubs and palm trees, with each cherub having the face of a man and the face of a lion (41:16-20).

Unlike previous temples, here there is no veil or ark of the covenant. These items were a representation of Christ (Heb. 10:19-23; 1 John 2:2).

Priest Chambers

41:5-11

Next, Ezekiel is taken to the outside part of the Temple building to see the side chambers located along the north, south, and west walls. There are three stories high of them, with 30 in each story, 90 chambers in all (42:5-11). Although it is not mentioned, there is evidently a stairway going from one level to the next (see 1 Kings 6:8).

The purpose of these chambers is shown in 42:13-14. These are dining rooms for the priests who offer the sacrifices and are required to eat part of the sacrifice. They are also storage areas for their garments,

for, after ministering at the altar they are to change their clothes before joining the people. This follows the pattern used in Moses' day (Lev. 6:24-7:6).

Separate Place

41:12

Leaving the Temple, Ezekiel tells us of a building behind, a Separate Place, 122 ½ by 157 feet with walls 5 feet thick (41:12). What is its use? The Hebrew word means "to cut off" or "separate from".

Possibly this building is a storage area for things that have become unclean, so need to be removed from the holy, until they can be cleansed. Evidently this building contains necessary things, but not necessary for worship, thus the name—Separate place.

THE PRINCE

44:3; 45:7,16,22; 46:4,8,10,12,16-18; 48:21,22

"In the kingdom age, the descendants of Zadok become the personal ministers to Jesus the Messiah and His prince, the Ruler of Israel, whom many believe to be King David" (Messiah's Coming Temple, p. 93).

This prince, it is clear, is the resurrected David, the man after God's own heart, who has been promised Kingship over Israel forever. Notice what God promises him in Jeremiah 30:9; Ezekiel 34:23-24 and 37:24-25: "They shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them."

"Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself, and be their shepherd. And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David will be prince among them. I, the LORD, have spoken."

"And My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd...and they shall live on the land that I gave to Jacob my servant...and David, My servant shall be their prince for ever."

44:3. The Eastern Gate shall be shut and not opened, because the LORD GOD entered by it. The Prince shall sit in this Gate to eat bread before God, entering and leaving by the porch of this Gate.

45:7,16,22. The Prince's possession or portion of land in the Holy Oblation shall be the part on each side of the Holy Oblation. He shall provide the offerings at the appointed times "to make atonement for the house of Israel."

46 chap. The offerings the Prince provides. When the people go into the Sanctuary he goes with them. When he offers an offering the gate facing east will be opened for him. His possessions.

48:21,22. His portion, again.

This Prince is a very important part of this Temple worship system.

THE GLORY OF GOD

43:1-12

The Angel brought Ezekiel to the East Gate and they saw God's Glory coming. "Behold, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the way of the east. And his voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with his glory."

The Glory of God came into the Temple and filled the Temple (43:4,5). "The Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house."

Then God told Ezekiel that this would be the place of His throne (Christ's throne in the millennium we would think). Once again God told Ezekiel to show Israel the form and pattern of the House.

How glad we are that it has been given—not for our salvation, for that must be found today—but for the salvation that this Temple system will bring to the peoples of earth through the millennium.

THE PRIESTS, LEVITES, and OFFERINGS

44:9-46:24

The chief priests shall be the sons of Zadok, who were faithful to God's anointed David in the rebellion of Absalom (43:19-27; 44:15-31).

Their duties will be to minister in the Temple and in the Inner Court. Certain chambers are set aside for them (42:1-14). Certain laws govern them.

The lesser priests are called Levites (44:10-14). They are not permitted inside the Temple. They will slay the sacrifices and be gate-keepers.

These millennial "priests and Levites" are mentioned elsewhere in the prophets: **Isaiah 66:21**: "I will also take some of them for priests and for Levites, says the LORD;" **Malachi 3:3**: "He will purify the sons of Levi, and refine them like gold and silver, so that they may present to the LORD offerings in righteousness."

The Priests' portion of the Holy Oblation will be "a place for their houses," besides containing the Sanctuary (45:4).

The Levites' portion is also holy, and not to be sold, but to be kept as a possession (45:5; 48:13-14).

There will be a daily "morning sacrifice" (46:13-15). The offerings are mentioned in 45:17 as "burnt," "meat," "drink," "sin," and "peace." Also, feasts, new moons, sabbaths, and solemnities of Israel are mentioned.

These offerings are to bring "reconciliation" to the house of Israel.

Two feasts are mentioned: Passover (45:21-24), and Tabernacles (Zech. 14:16-17).

THE RIVER OF WATER OF LIFE

47:1-12

Out from under the threshold of the east side of the Temple on the right side, came forth "waters." These waters ran eastward, past the south side of the Altar, out under the east wall of the Inner Court and Outer Court and continued flowing out at the right side of the East Gate.

The Angel went out eastward and began measuring the depth of the water, which became deeper and deeper. A thousand cubits out (1750 feet) the water was ankle deep; 2000 cubits out (3500 feet) the water was knee deep, 3,000 cubits out (5250 feet, almost a mile) and the water was hip deep, and 4000 cubits out the water was too deep to walk in, water to swim in. This was the river of the water of life, which originated from the Temple of the LORD.

The waters went out toward "the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea, which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed" (KJ). "The waters of the sea become fresh" (NAS). This is the way the Good News Bible, Today's English Edition reads: "This water flows through the land to the east and down into the Jordan Valley and to the Dead Sea. When it flows into the Dead Sea, it replaces the salt water of that sea with fresh water. Wherever the stream flows, there will be all kinds of animals and fish. The stream will make the water of the Dead Sea fresh, and wherever it flows, it will bring life. From the springs of Engedi...there will be fishermen...There will be as many different kinds of fish there as there are in the Mediterranean Sea. But the water in the marshes and ponds...will not be made fresh. They will remain there as a source of salt (47:7-11).

Zechariah 14:8 speaks of "living waters," but mentions they will go out from Jerusalem, half toward the Dead Sea, and half toward the Mediterranean Sea, splitting into two rivers (see Ezekiel 47:9, "rivers"). Revelation 22:1-3 is evidently a millennial passage. It speaks of "a river of water of life" coming out of the throne of God and the Lamb, and that on both sides of the river there is the tree of life. This agrees with Ezekiel 47:12, which says the same thing, that on both banks of this river of water of life will grow all kinds of trees for food, the leaves won't wither, the trees will bear fruit every month, and this fruit will

provide food while the leaves are for the healing of the nations.

The purpose of the river of life, then, will be similar to the purpose of the tree of life—to give life. “Every living creature...in every place the river goes will live...everything will live where the river goes” (47:9).

THE CITY **48:15-19, 30-35**

Millennial Jerusalem is not New Jerusalem. The descriptions are not the same. Ezekiel's city is 7875 feet square (about a mile and a half), with open space around it to cultivate for food. “Its produce shall be food for the workers of the city” (48:18,19).

It will have 12 gates, named after the 12 tribes of Israel (48:30-34).

The name of the city shall be: “THE LORD IS THERE”

THE PURPOSE OF THE HOLY OBLATION

There is important meaning behind every part of each thing mentioned in these last nine chapters of Ezekiel. The Holy Portion of the land, the Temple and its worship system, the Altar, the sacrifices, the Priesthood, the measurements, the cherubs, and palm trees all have a meaning in this wonderful millennial salvation God will offer mortal Israel and the nations.

The great overall purpose of the Holy Oblation is that Christ the King may point all men to Jehovah so He may reign in the hearts of all men living. Repeatedly, time after time throughout Ezekiel, we find the phrase “and they shall know I am the LORD.”

After the thousand year Reign of Christ over earth, in which He restores all things God has promised to restore, we see God's will being done on earth perfectly and completely. That is the end God has in mind. The Holy Oblation will be the means to that end, for it will be the divine headquarters on earth, under Christ, to govern the earth and to bring healing to men. Many nations will be saved in that day.

Here is a list of some of the prophecies from the prophets concerning the results of the Sanctuary worship:

1. All people will know that JEHOVAH is LORD GOD. Isa. 2:11. Ezek. 39:6,7,13. 38:23.
2. A place where all people will come and see God's Glory. Isa. 66:18. Ezek. 39:21. The Temple will provide a dwelling place for God's Glory, and that Glory, of course, will be seen in Christ and His immortal people.
3. All people will be taught the difference between what is holy and what is profane, clean and unclean. Ezek. 44:23. Isa. 2:2-4.
4. A fountain for sin and uncleanness shall be opened for Israel and for all the world, to bring about the conversion of Israel (Zech. 13:1; Ezek. 36:21-38; 39:22-29), and the conversion of the nations (Zech. 2:10-12; Psa. 72:11; Dan. 7:14).
5. The Temple's river of water of life will provide healing for the Dead Sea and all life where it goes, and the Tree of Life on its banks will provide food and healing for the nations (47:1-12).
6. A place where the nations can gather and worship God (Zech. 8:20-23).
7. The Temple will be a house of prayer for all people (Isa. 56:7; Matt. 21:13).
8. The Meaning of the Sacrifices—to teach all people that there is no cleansing without Christ, the God-given Sacrifice for sins. Jesus Christ, slain from the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8), provides salvation for Old Testament saints who have believed and obeyed as well as for believers in this Age. And the point the Holy Oblation brings out is that Christ's sacrifice 2000 years ago now, will yet bring salvation to many families on the earth during Christ's millennial reign. Christ still has a

great part to play in the redemption of men in the thousand year reign. Men will come and learn of God through Him (Isa. 2). "No man comes to the Father but by Me" will also carry over into His millennial reign.

There is only one Savior. Christ died for all men—of all ages—whether they lived in Abraham's time, now, or will live in the millennium. He is the Savior of all who believe. He is the one who will reward all men, some with Life, and some with Judgment.

The Tabernacle and Temple rituals all pointed forward to the Great Sacrifice for sins to come—Jesus Christ our Lord and Redeemer. These things were a schoolmaster to bring men to the Messiah. In the millennium, the Temple worship system will point backward to the same great event—THE DEATH OF CHRIST FOR MEN'S REDEMPTION.

Christ's death has a greater significance than many might see. The layout of the Sanctuary and its worship system show the great importance of the death of Christ in God's complete plan. A wonderful salvation shall come to many of earth's nations during the millennium. And it will come through Christ! How thankful we are that God has allowed us to see this future salvation!

THE RESULT OF THE HOLY OBLATION WORK

1. Israel shall be regathered, shall inherit Palestine as long foretold, shall be cleansed, and once more be God's people. Ezek. 28:25-26; 34:11-15. Christ shall be King of Kings. Rev. 1:5; 17:14; Jer. 33:15-16. David shall be King of Israel. Hos. 3:15; Jer. 30:9; Ezek. 37:24-25; 34:24. The 12 Apostles will be over the 12 Tribes of Israel. Matt. 19:28.
2. The nations will learn God's ways and walk in them. The nations will be healed and saved. Rev. 22:2; 21:24. Many of them will become God's people. Zech. 2:10-12.
3. The earth will be restored and will become like the Garden of Eden. Ezek. 36:35; Isa. 35; The millennial reign of Christ shall bring about the times of restitution. Acts 3:19-21. The whole earth will become the paradise of God. Rev. 2:7.
4. The Oblation work will be done under Christ's "rod of iron" rule (absolute authority). Psa. 2:9. He will overcome all enemies of God, even death. 1 Cor. 15:24-28. Then Christ will turn the perfect paradise over to His Father, so that Jehovah God, the Almighty, might be "all in all," and reign in the midst of New Jerusalem and over His people forever. Rev. 21. Isa. 24:23.

This is the work to be accomplished on earth during the times of the Holy Oblation in Palestine during the Millennium.

This, in brief outline, is this Bible student's understanding of the plan and purpose of God's millennial Temple.

Jim Mattison
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GREAT CHANGES IN THE MILLENNIAL WORSHIP SYSTEM FROM THE OLD TEMPLE SYSTEM

What is missing? 8 items. The wall of partition, the court of the women, the laver, the lampstand, the table of showbread, the altar of incense, the veil, and the ark of the covenant. (This thought courtesy of Schmidt and Laney.)

The Messianic Age is the time for bringing all things together under God through Christ (Eph. 1:10). One change Zechariah 8:19 mentions is that the old Jewish days of fasting will then be changed to days of feasting. "The fast of the fourth...fifth...seventh...and 10th months...shall be...joy and gladness and cheerful feasts."

We have noticed there will be great changes in the physical landscape of Palestine. Also, a River will flow through it that will revitalize the earth.

It should come as no surprise that the millennial worship system will be a new one.

Wall of Partition removed.

This wall, in the former system, was to separate the outer and inner courts of the temple. Gentiles could not go past this wall on pain of death. Messiah's work of Redemption was for ALL men (Isa. 49:6; 42:6; John 10:16). Through His death for all men, Christ broke down the barrier between Jew and Gentile (Eph. 2:14).

Court of Women.

Jewish women were permitted to come only to a wall in the temple ritual. This separation is still seen at today's Western Wall. What happened to the Court of the Women? Paul tells us in Galatians 3:27-28: "There is neither Jew nor Greek...slave or free, *male nor female*; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." Now, ALL believers share in spiritual equality.

The Laver.

Under the old system, the laver was a large bronze basin filled with water where the priests washed before performing their duties. There is no laver in Ezekiel's Temple. Ezekiel himself solves this difference in 36:24-27. Ceremonial cleansing will then (as now for Christians) no longer be needed because the blood of Jesus has brought about the washing of regeneration.

The Lampstand.

The purpose of the Lampstand in the Holy Place was to provide light. Christ is the Light (Isa. 9:2,6; Matt. 4:13-16; John 8:12: I am the Light of the world." Remember that the Glory of God in the person of Christ the King will fill the Millennial Temple (Ezek. 43:1-5). No lampstand will be needed.

The Table of Showbread.

In the old days, the priests placed 12 loaves of bread on a table before the LORD, one for each of the tribes. This reminded Israel that God was their invisible Provider. Jesus said that He, the Son of God, was the living bread that God sent down, like the manna, to feed His people the healthy spiritual food needed to produce eternal life (John 6:31-58; 4:7-26). There was no need for showbread.

The Altar of Incense.

Incense burned on this altar before the veil, signifying the fragrance to God of the prayers of His people. These prayers are like a sweet perfume to God. Does this mean prayers will be done away with? Messiah Himself will be present in the Temple, available to hear the petitions of His people, as He is now available to us, His servants. No incense will be needed, for Christ takes its place.

The Veil.

The veil of the Temple was torn in two when Christ died for our sins, signifying that the way to God was now open to all men through Christ (Heb. 9:6-8). Notice Isaiah 25:7: "And on this mountain He will swallow up the covering which is over all peoples, even the veil which is stretched over all nations."

There will be no veil in Christ's Temple because He Himself is the way to God. No one comes to God except through Him.

The Ark of the Covenant.

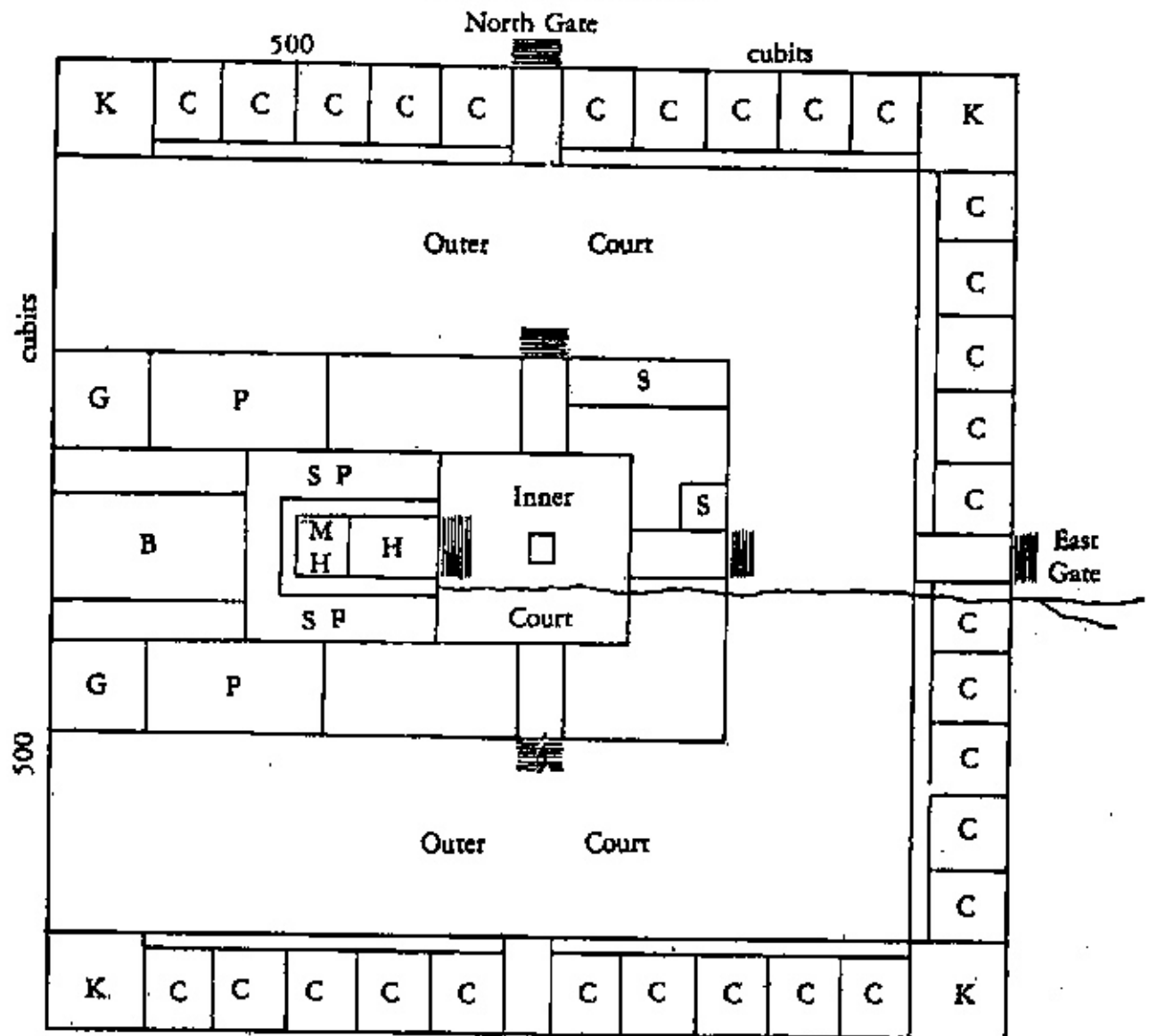
On the ark was the mercy seat. God told Moses that He would meet with him there. It signified God and His Laws were with His people. Notice Jeremiah 3:16 and 17: "In those days...they shall no more say 'The ark of the covenant of the LORD.' And it shall not come to mind, nor shall they remember it, nor shall they miss it, nor shall it be made again. At that time they shall call Jerusalem 'The Throne of the LORD,' and all the nations will be gathered to it, to Jerusalem, for the name of the LORD."

Also remember Isaiah 2:2-4 foretells how the nations will learn God's ways or rules in Jerusalem.

As the Spirit of the LORD filled Ezekiel's Temple, Ezekiel heard someone saying, "Son of man, this is the place of My throne and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell among the sons of Israel forever" (Ezek. 43:5-7).

The reason the ark is missing in the future Temple is because the throne of the Lord is present. The Lord Jesus, King of kings, the Righteous One, shall sit upon His Throne as King Messiah in Ezekiel's Temple.

THE SANCTUARY



- C —30 chambers in outer court. 40:17.
 K —4 corner courts. 46:21-24.
 S —Singers. 40:44, 45.
 □ —Altar. 40:47; 43:13-18.
 H —Holy Place. 41:1, 2.
 MH—Most Holy Place. 41:4.

South Gate

- SP —Separate Place. 41:10, 12-15.
 P —Holy chambers for the priests. 42:1-14.
 G —Priests' kitchens. 46:19, 20.
 B —Building. 41:12, 13, 15.
 — River of water of life. 47:1-12.

THE HOLY OBLATION (Holy Area or Holy Portion)
Ezek. 48:8-21, 45:1-7

The Portion for Judah

25,000 reeds = 49.7 miles

