

Ezekiel 40 - 46

October 5, 2022

In these seven chapters are specifications and regulations for a temple to the Lord. It gives quite a detailed blueprint.

The angel takes over 100 measurements of the various rooms and courts and assigns specific purposes to them, such as kitchens or priests' quarters.

The question immediately arises, what temple does it describe? Common views are:

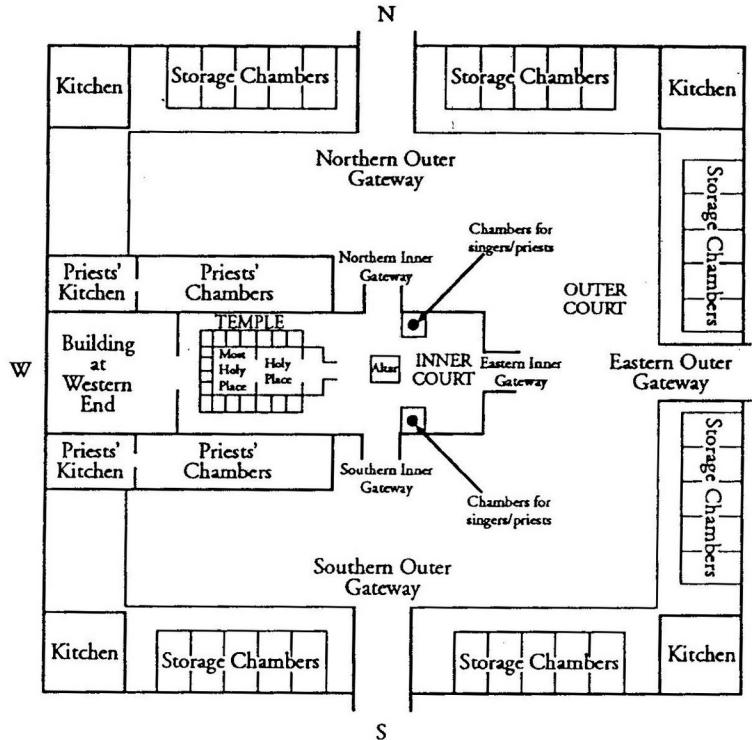
It describes a **real, historic temple**. It could be Solomon's or the second temple built in the time of Ezra and heavily modified by

Herod the Great. Or it could even be modeled on the tabernacle. This solves the difficulty of the animal sacrifices apparently taking place. The problem here is that neither the size nor the descriptions of this temple fit what we know of the others. Its inner temple is about the same size as Herod's but the overall size is far larger. And Solomon's temple was smaller yet.

It is **symbolic of the church**. Those who call the church the new Israel favor this view. But it has problems. The temple seems like a real building. For one, its size is large at 750 feet square but still in a realistic human scale. And it's difficult to assign a symbolic meaning to the myriad details

Questions (which may not have definitive answers):

1. What temple do you think is described here?



of Ezekiel's temple. All you could realistically derive is that the Lord is quite particular about the organization and conduct of His church.

Or it could be a **temple to be built sometime in the future**. It may be first built during the tribulation as mentioned in Matthew 24:15 or Revelation 11:1. And it could be the focus of Jewish worship in the millennium. This seems likely in the context of the previous two chapters. The comprehensive plans given for its construction indicate the Lord intends for it to be built.

Some notable passages in this section:

Chapters 43 and 44 describe the **glory of the Lord** returning to the temple.

40:42, 44:11, and 46:24 tell of **animal sacrifices** taking place. This is admittedly hard to reconcile with Hebrews 9:26, "*But as it is, he [Christ] has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.*"

Chapters 44-46 mention a **prince** with special privileges and responsibilities. We would be inclined to say this is Christ, but two facts argue otherwise: the prince has sons (46:16-17) and he makes sacrifices for his own sins (45:22).

2. What is the purpose of the temple?

3. What temple do we have today (hint: see 2 Corinthians 6:16)?

4. What is the significance of the glory of the Lord again filling the temple? When did the glory depart?

5. What might be the reason for the animal sacrifices described here? Why were animals sacrificed in the Old Testament system?