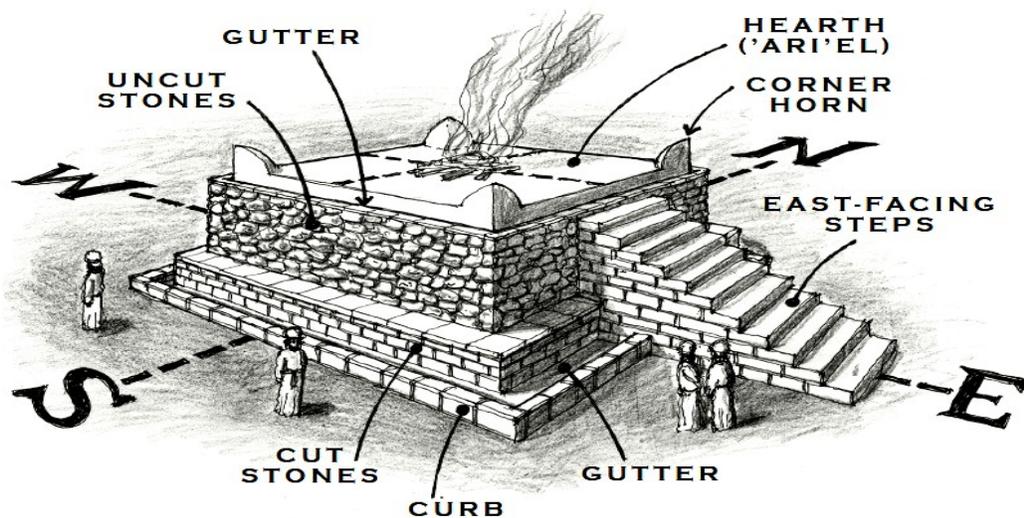


# FINDING JESUS IN THE TEMPLE

*A Christian Midrash on Ezekiel's Temple Vision*

PART THREE:

## Ezekiel's Temple and the Temple of Talmud



by

Emil Heller Henning III

THE WORD OF THE LORD *came expressly unto Ezekiel...And I [saw] a great cloud...And out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures...And every one had four faces, and...four wings...[which] were joined one to another; they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward...[Each] had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and...the face of an ox on the left side; they...also had the face of an eagle...And they went every one straight forward: whither the spirit was to go...And the likeness of the firmament upon the heads of the living creatures was as...crystal, stretched forth over their heads...I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the voice of an host [or “the din of an army”]...Over their heads was the likeness of a throne...[and the] appearance of a man above upon it...This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of one that spoke.*

– from Ezekiel 1.3-28

AND DAVID MY SERVANT *shall be king over them; and they shall have one shepherd...I will make a covenant of peace with them; and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them...My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

– from Ezekiel 37.24-27, the Haftarah to *Va-yigash*

SON OF MAN, *show the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities: and let them measure the pattern. And if they be ashamed of all that they have done, show them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out [i.e., exits] thereof, and the comings in [or entrances] thereof...*

– from Ezekiel 43.10-11, the Haftarah to *Tetsavveh*

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COVER ILLUSTRATION: Author's sketch of Ezekiel's altar of burnt offering, based primarily on Block, *Ezekiel*, v.2, pp. 592-604. From his knowledge of the First Temple, Ezekiel might have understood it being ascended by a ramp rather than steps (Heb. *uma'alotehu*). From the Mishnah, Jewish commentators understand the steps or ramp to have risen toward the north, rather than the west as shown here (see p.8 in Part 2 and note). Primarily this drawing is meant to show the relationship of the altar's four-square symmetry to that of Ezekiel's overall temple plan (see Block, *Ezekiel*, v.2, pp.596-7).

PART THREE:

## Ezekiel's Temple and the Temple of Talmud

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THE VISION OF THE SPRAWLING UNBUILT TEMPLE in the last nine chapters of Ezekiel possesses a complexity of the sort in which one can become thoroughly lost. So does the Talmud, the foundational document of rabbinic Judaism [1]. People can spend years studying Ezekiel's Temple or the "textual temple" of the Talmud (as it's been called) without gaining a full conception of their structure or meaning. Two archetypal models of complexity are the *maze* and the *labyrinth*. A maze is all dead ends except for one path going all the way through, and the larger and more complicated the maze, the harder it is to find. People have nightmares of being lost in a vast maze with endlessly proliferating dead ends and a rapidly vanishing hope of escape. A labyrinth, however, may look dauntingly like a maze, but is just one long path with a multitude of twists and turns to it. Anyone can walk through a labyrinth without having to make a single decision or ever fear becoming lost. Part 3 of this "Christian midrash" on Ezekiel's Temple Vision will compare the Temple's complexity with that of the Talmud, asking if they are more like mazes or labyrinths. This question may seem academic, but it could be anything but academic for someone searching in the deep recesses of Ezekiel's Temple or the Talmud for answers to life's big questions. For them it could potentially mean the difference between *shalom* at the end of their quest and *despair*.

My Parts 1 and 2 provide background for this discussion, and those who have read them could skip over to "Inquiring in the Temple of Talmud" on page 3. For anyone who has not read those earlier parts, or would like a review, I explained in Part 1 my lifelong interest in Ezekiel's vision as a Christian architect and Bible student, beginning from my sense of "lostness" in its bewildering complexity many years before I was either an architect or a Christian. I told in Part 1 of growing up with questions of possible Jewishness from my Heller blood family, my Henning step-name coming when my grandfather Emil Heller took his adoptive father's last name. Despite family anecdotes about being "German Jew" and *gefilte* fish being eaten in my father's home—and people my age saying I look like the late Arizona Senator Barry M. Goldwater—a recent Y-DNA test showed no Ashkenazi ancestry. But that has not lessened my identification with Ezek-

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## *Ezekiel's Temple and the Temple of Talmud, page 2*

iel's vision, or my feeling it may be important for Jewish friends, to whom this "mid-rash" is mainly addressed. Those leadings are stronger than ever since I found out, in the past two years, that Rabbi Yom Tov Lippman *Heller* (called the *Tosefos Yom Tov* for his commentary on the Mishnah) published the first book [2] entirely about Ezekiel's Temple in 1602, some 411 years before my own book on it in 2013. If I am not a distant cousin of that famous rabbi, I wonder if I have not somehow inherited something of his "mantle" in terms of a passion for Ezekiel's Temple and sharing it with others.

Part 1 recalled my teenage bewilderment in trying to grasp the layout of Ezekiel's Temple alone in my bedroom, and how its maze-like aspects mirrored the frustrated maze of my early life. I explained how, after receiving Jesus (Yeshua) as my personal Savior at the age of thirty in 1977, Ezekiel's organizing concept began clearing up for me. While many Jews and Christians expect this temple to become a physical reality at some time in the future, my goal has been to provide an explanation of its "*plan*" or "*layout*," and the arrangement of its "*exits and entrances*"—things Ezekiel was *explicitly told* in his chapter 43 to communicate to the house of Israel—in order to pinpoint a meaning his temple has for today, whatever God's plan for the future may be.

What I began noticing in the 1980s was that Ezekiel's Temple has two crossing axes that form an organizing pattern for the themes of his text. As explained (with diagrams) in Part 1, the temple's East-West axis contains first, the coming from the east of the Divine Presence to the temple (following its earlier departure from the First Temple as it sank into idolatry, described in Ezekiel's chapters 8-11) and second, the flowing back out eastward of a supernatural river of grace. The North-South axis features the route of God's worshipers, coming in from the south and exiting from the north, or vice versa. The verse saying this (Ezek. 44.9) seems inconspicuous until one considers the emphasis God places on Ezekiel's telling Israel about the "*exits and entrances*," and with the east gate permanently closed after the entry of the Divine Presence, and no gate on the west side, the north and south temple gates are its *only usable* exits and entrances. Ezekiel also has a priestly-kingly worship leader for Israel, the "Prince," who enters the temple along with the people, yet also has a special role on the East-West axis, carrying his sacrifices on behalf of them westward to the priests at the east gate of the inner court.

I characterized these two temple axes in terms of the two sides of God's recurring covenant promise, "*I will be their God, and they shall be my people*" (for example in Ezekiel 37.27, shortly before the Temple Vision of chapters 40-48.) "*I will be their God*" (the E-W axis) is God's sovereign work *on behalf of* His people Israel, and "*They shall be my people*" (the N-S axis) is God's work *in His people* to make them His own. I would refer Jewish readers to the "Going Back to the Temple" section of Part 1 for details, derived from my study of Ezekiel from Reform/Conservative (NJPS) and Orthodox (ArtScroll) versions of the Tanakh, along with a range of rabbinic commentaries (but referring to the Christian New Testament only in a few footnotes.)

However, in my Part 2, *Jesus in the Temple*, I provided a New Testament interpreta-

### *Inquiring in the Temple of Talmud, page 3*

tion that goes back over all the points of Part 1, showing how Jesus fulfilled all that Ezekiel's two axes represent, including the activities on both axes of his Prince, and everything relating to the central altar where his axes converge.

## **INQUIRING IN THE TEMPLE OF TALMUD**

In Part 1, I explained that my studies of the temple were based on a diagram that I first saw in James Hastings' 1905 Bible Dictionary (which my own temple diagrams follow). The descriptive notes on the temple in the Jewish Publication Society's 1985 Tanakh (NJPS) appear to agree with this Hastings diagram [3]. But when I published my Ezekiel book in 2013 (rev. 2016) I did not realize that Orthodox Jews have a conception of Ezekiel's layout that differs in some respects. It wasn't until after I'd begun work on this four-part "midrash" in early 2017 that I learned of "my" Rabbi Heller's temple book, which had been first published in English just months before in the summer of 2016 [4]. The moment I opened Heller's book, I saw differences between what he drew in 1602 and my "Hastings" plan. I quickly ordered an Orthodox *ArtScroll Stone Edition Tanach*, and saw that its illustration of Ezekiel's layout closely follows Rabbi Heller [5].

I said in Part 1 that I believed most of what I wrote there would apply to the Orthodox Heller / ArtScroll plan as well as the Hastings one I adopted. I said I would postpone my critique of their differences because R. Heller's plan was based not only on Scripture, but also on the Talmud. I saw that it would require a separate paper to show how those differences stem from Heller's dependence on Rashi (and to a lesser extent Rambam) and on the tractate *Middot* of the Mishnah. This section will provide that critique, along with more general comments on the maze/labyrinth relationships I became aware of between the Talmud and Ezekiel's Temple.

I referred in my introductory remarks above (and in Parts 1 and 2) to Ezekiel's divine ch. 43 commission to share his temple vision with his fellow Jews in exile in Babylon [6]. Slightly condensed, Ezekiel was told to "*show the [temple] to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and let them measure the pattern. And if they be ashamed of all that they have done, show them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out [i.e., exits] thereof, and the comings in [entrances] thereof...and write it in their sight, that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them*" (43.10-11). This passage will be familiar to observant Jews as the Haftarah, or supplementary reading, to *Tetsavveh* (from Ex. 27-30) in their annual cycle of synagogue readings (every three years in Reform temples.)

While by no means treating every "ordinance" of Ezekiel's temple [7], Parts 1 and 2 of this "Christian midrash" offered an overview of the "*plan*"—its "*arrangement, its exits and its entrances, that is, its whole design*" (ESV)—as a detailed symbolic picture

### *Inquiring in the Temple of Talmud, page 4*

of the Person and work of the Messiah, in the context of a New Covenant for Israel [8]. If you are Jewish and read that (and if not, I hope you soon will) perhaps you felt some tug in your heart from the Scriptural truths in that picture. But you may also remember your rabbi teaching that the Hebrew Bible can only be understood through the Rabbinic tradition reflected in the Talmud. That tradition, the rabbis claim, is an “Oral Torah” that goes back to Moses at Sinai (at least for its authority) and was passed down by word of mouth, independent of the written Torah printed in the Tanakh.

My first inclination as a Christian was to dismiss that tradition out of hand, associating it with teachings of the Pharisees and Sadducees that Jesus attacked as man-made obfuscations of God’s Word [9]. I have seen arguments against the possibility of an Oral Torah different from the written one [10] that hint that the rabbis just wanted a new holy book to compete with the New Testament. Yet I’ve also found respect for the oral tradition in some evangelical quarters, and recalled Jesus’ even greater disdain (vis-a-vis the Pharisees) for the liberal Sadducees, who rejected the Oral Torah, among other things. I decided the Talmud might be worth a look in my quest to understand Ezekiel.

I began about three years ago by reading an article entitled “The Architecture of Talmud” by Mitchell Schwarzer [11] that said the Talmud has a literary structure, or “architectural” organization, analogous to the layout of the Second Temple, which was destroyed by the Romans in the first century. I was intrigued to find Schwarzer drawing on the studies of another Jewish *Heller*—a contemporary scholar, Marvin Heller—to show how traditional printed editions of the Talmud were laid out on the page in carefully designed blocks, with commentaries of various degrees of rabbinic authority layered around a small portion of talmudic text, much as the temple’s courts surrounded its holy inner rooms [12]. According to Schwarzer, rabbinic Judaism replaced the lost Temple with, he says, the “textual temple” of the Talmud, with sacred/profane thresholds (of a literary type), passageways of argumentation, and courtyards for preserving Jewish culture—all “structured,” he says, “on the memory of the destroyed temple” [13].

The literary “edifice” of the Talmud’s long shelf of volumes is built on the “foundation” of the *Mishnah*—the codification by rabbis in the second century after Jesus (R. Akiva and the *Tannaim*) of what is claimed to be the previously unwritten Oral Law going back to Sinai. As differences between the Mishnah and the written Scriptures turned up in the following two or three centuries, later rabbis (the *Amoraim*) made, in the *Gemara*—the “meat,” as it were, of the Talmud—a herculean effort to reconcile the two “inspired” written and unwritten sources. I must say, my initial impression of the Talmud itself was one of shock. It is not written or organized like a textbook, but more resembles the transcript of a vigorous debate in a Jewish rabbinical academy, or *yeshiva*, like I’d seen in the Barbra Streisand movie *Yentl*, in their famously “loud” and “hectic” *bet midrash* (“house of study”) [14]. The Talmud is an interplay of multiple rabbinic voices and opinions, rehearsing interpretations by earlier sages and synthesizing new ones (*Midrash*, for “study” is, besides a genre of historical Jewish theological

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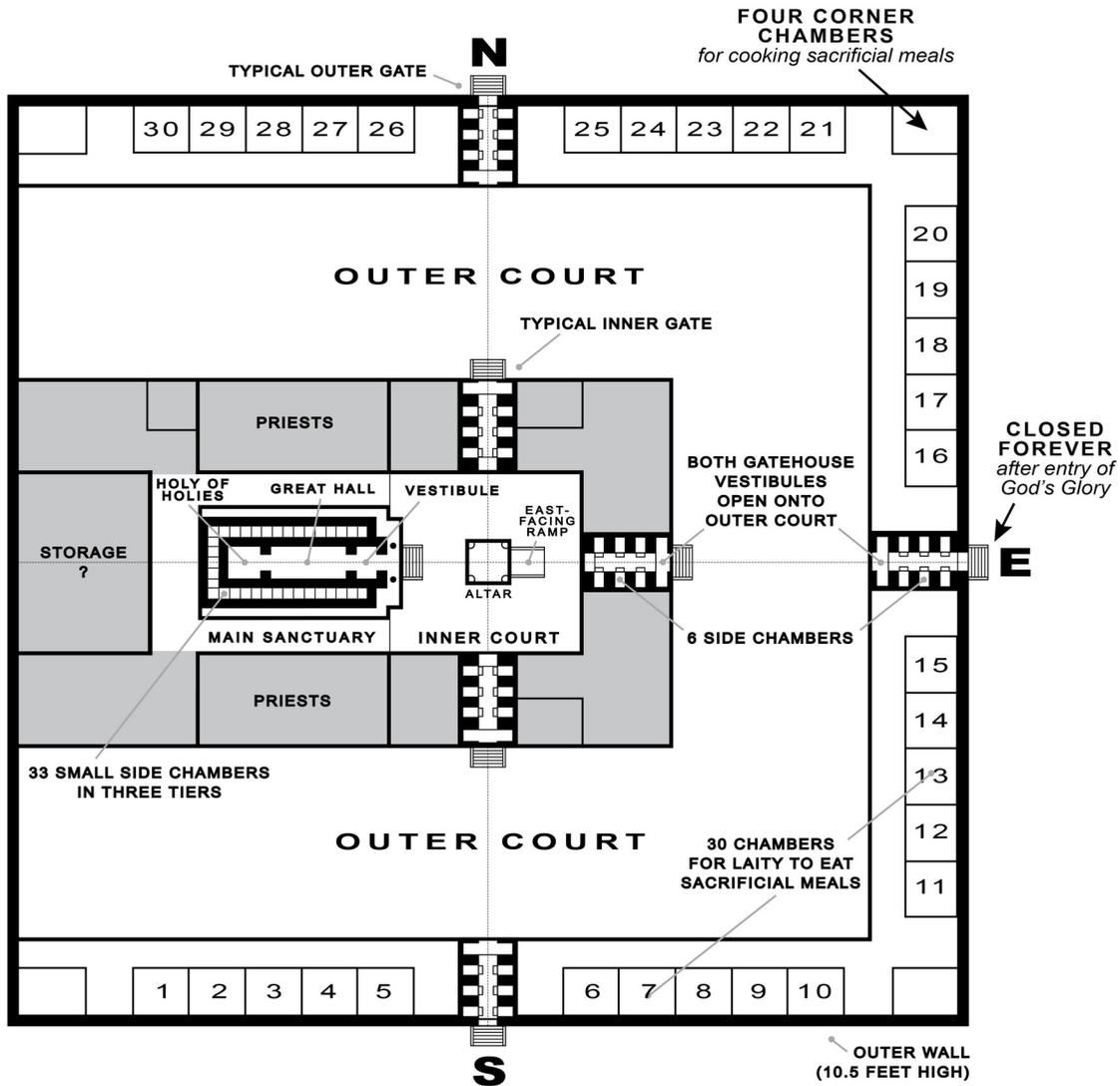
works, a form of free-ranging biblical commentary that inspires its use in my paper's subtitle.) Through the process of midrash, impassioned argument largely becomes the "message" of rabbinic Judaism, with actual reconciling of oral and written revelation often taking a back seat to *talk about the attempt*. The *Jewish Study Bible* repeats what it says is a common saying that "what is Jewish about the Bible is not the Bible itself, or the Hebrew text of the Bible, but the Jewish *interpretation* of the Bible" [15].

With regard to my more immediate interest in the physical layout of the biblical temples, the "literary temple" of the Talmud contains a book, or "tractate" called *Middot* ("Measures") that purports to give details of the lost Second Temple, as reconstructed from the recollections—or recollections of recollections—of priests who had served in it. With touching candor, it includes one's admission that he had forgotten the purpose of a certain temple chamber [16]; although another rabbi (or his tradition) supplies it, it hardly inspires confidence in the reliability of this type of unsubstantiated record, which is nonetheless part of the Talmud's Mishnaic core and considered binding *halakha* (rabbinic law) by Orthodox Jews, just as if it had been spoken by God to Moses at Sinai 1,500 years before the Second Temple was completed.

Of the two historical temples, the First Temple (Solomon's Temple) was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar midway through Ezekiel's ministry to the exiles in Babylon, after which he received the great vision of his chapters 40–48 to give them. But when the Jews returned to Jerusalem, there is no *biblical* evidence they consulted Ezekiel in laying out their Second Temple. Suggesting they did not, Ezra 3.2 and 6.18, instead of mentioning Ezekiel, seem to *make a point* of saying they followed "*the Teaching of Moses, the man of God*" (3.2 NJPS) [17]. It was this latter temple (much enlarged and embellished by King Herod around the time of Jesus) that the Romans destroyed a generation after Him in the first century, and which is recalled in *Middot*.

*Middot* 2.1 says that the "Temple Mount" (the platform of the Second Temple) "was five hundred cubits by five hundred." This is interesting because it was only just in the 1980s that the archeological architect Leen Ritmeyer located a 500×500 cubit square (of Ezekiel's 20.5" size) submerged in the present temple platform in Jerusalem [18]. Ritmeyer dates this square to no later than the time of King Hezekiah, who died 64 years before Ezekiel's birth, so it could not be said to have been inspired by his prophecy (and *Middot* does not say it was.) But its existence creates difficulties for Orthodox interpreters from Rashi and Heller to the present who claim Ezekiel's Temple is 500×500 *rods* (not cubits) in size, which would make his Temple nearly a mile on a side [19].

There are three things Orthodox commentators *do* claim the Second Temple borrowed from Ezekiel. *Middot* 2.5 cites Ezekiel's four kitchen chambers in the far corners of his outer court (ch. 46, see [Figure 1](#)) when discussing the four corner chambers of the Herodian Court of the Women, which was nothing like Ezekiel's outer court in location, size, or purpose ([Figure 2](#)). *Middot* 4.2 even less appositely applies Ezekiel's require-

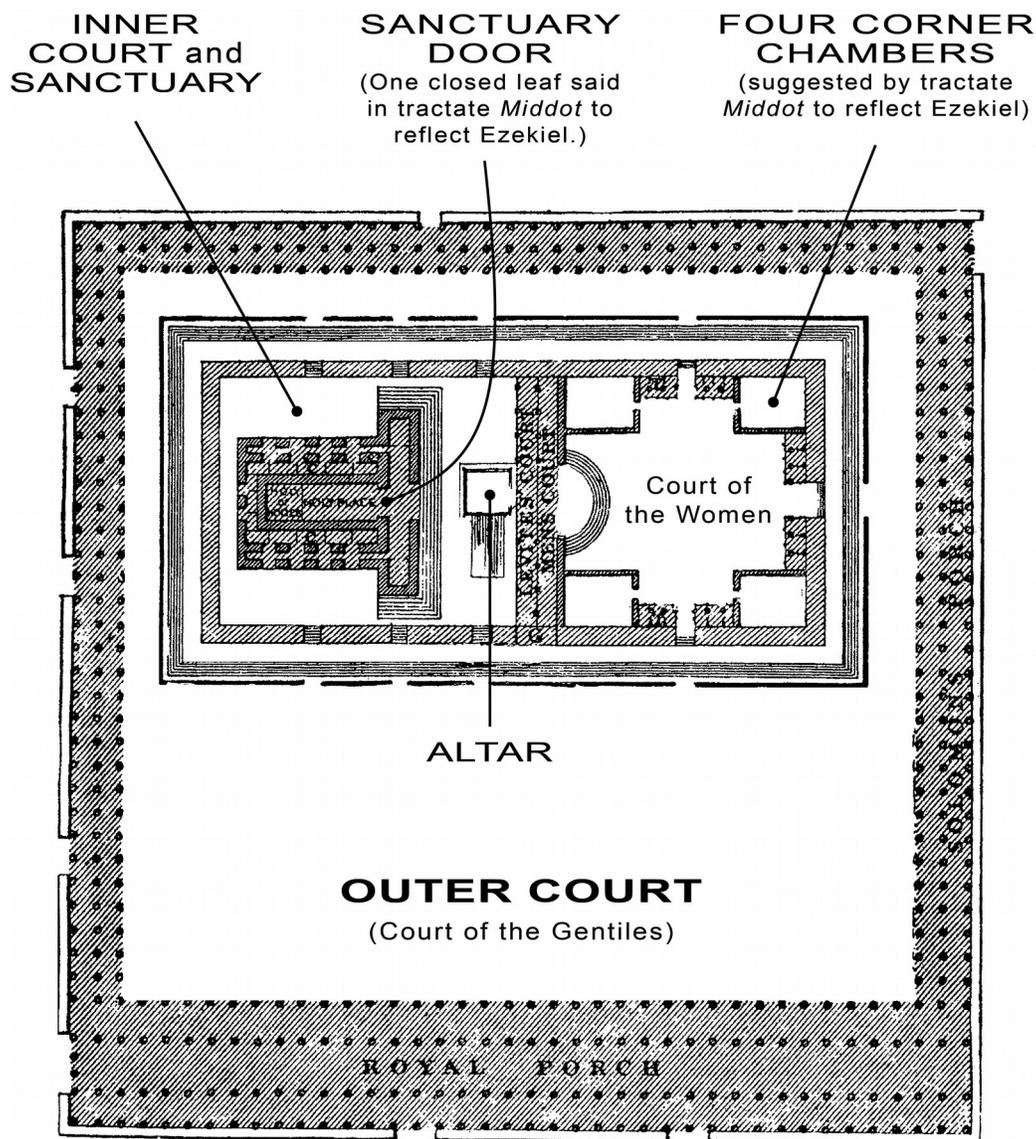


**FIGURE 1**

***THE LAYOUT OF EZEKIEL'S TEMPLE***

Shading indicates areas not clearly understood as to precise locations of walls and roofed-over areas. (In fact, although Ezekiel describes the three inner gates in detail, he does not mention a wall of any sort connecting them and separating the outer and inner courts.)

[Back to Figure 1 text reference](#)



**FIGURE 2**

**DIAGRAM OF HEROD'S TEMPLE**

Diagram of the Second (Herod's) Temple as described in the tractate *Middot* of the Mishnah, showing two features claimed to have been influenced by Ezekiel. (Compare to Fig. 1)

Temple base plan reproduced from *The Temple* (1874) by Alfred Edersheim, Photolithoprinted by Eerdmans, 1994 (no Copyright notice.)

[Back to Figure 2 text reference](#)

*Inquiring in the Temple of Talmud, page 6*

ment that his east outer gate be closed after the entry of the Divine Presence (Fig. 1) to just one closed side leaf of the front door just to the *inner sanctuary* of Herod's temple (Fig. 2). (The third thing supposedly inspired by Ezekiel concerns his altar [20].) After reading Rabbi Heller's "explanations" for these confluences [21], I suppose it is possible that the Second Temple's builders *knew of* Ezekiel, either not understanding him or not seeing his plan as meant for their day, but sought to honor him anyway through these partial gestures having little or nothing to do functionally with his vision. But consideration of what the inspired text of Ezra says about following Moses raises the likelihood that these references to Ezekiel are gratuitous editorial additions from the second century, when *Middot* was compiled by the Tannaim. There's nothing about these three aspects of the Second Temple that require Ezekiel to explain them.

Since starting this paper, I have found in the 1602 book by "my" Rabbi Heller much apparent error from elevating the putative Oral Tradition of the rabbis above Ezekiel's words. Rabbi Heller set himself not so much the task of understanding Ezekiel's inspired text as what the supreme Talmudic authority, Rashi, wrote five centuries before Heller in his 11<sup>th</sup> century Ezekiel commentary (which lacked an overall plan drawing.) Right at the start, Rabbi Heller says the six temple gateways are not 50 cubits *long*—as he admits Ezekiel says—but 50 cubits *high*, because that was *Rashi's* opinion [22]. R. Heller even quotes another of the "big three" medieval sages, David Kimhi (or "Radak"), who said he was "amazed" by Rashi's disregard of Scripture there, but Heller still adopts Rashi's view due to his higher standing at the "top" of the big three [23].

Without the 50 cubit depth in which to account for the gateway's inner chambers, Heller (following Rashi) splits each gate down the middle of its central corridor and peels it apart, laying each half flat against the outside wall. Consequently his six small gate chambers do not flank its central hallway at all—in the manner for instance of the "Solomonic" casemate gates excavated in Israel since Heller's day [24]—and his temple therefore ends up a 312×317 cubit *rectangle* instead of the larger 500×500 *square* to which Radak's better understanding was pointing [25]. That is the biggest single reason for the distorted temple plans in today's ArtScroll Tanach and other Orthodox commentaries [26]. For comparison, I am including as an appendix [Figure A-1](#) (also included in Part 1) which shows how the Hastings plan sums up to 500×500 *cubits* the biblical measurements of the temple courts and structures, as reflected in the NJPS translation.

But other errors also creep into the Heller/ArtScroll plan from following Rashi (or occasionally Rambam) more than Ezekiel, along with Heller's implicit dictum that Ezekiel's temple must match *wherever possible* the later Herodian temple that *Middot* describes [27]. What results is a cacophonous four-way rabbinic dispute between Rashi, Rambam, *Middot*, and Ezekiel. In one place Heller calculates that a one-cubit-wide strip of his outer court really "belongs" halakhically to the holier inner court—his "solution" being "marker posts" set up to warn people without enough ritual sanctity not to step there, on pain of who knows what if they did! [28] His calculations also result in some

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passageways that are just *one cubit* wide—less than two feet!—that might suffice for one person till they meet someone going the other way, but would never be allowed by a modern building code inspector in a civic building [29].

I suspect interpreters of Ezekiel’s Temple have tended to exaggerate somewhat its graded “holiness distinctions,” given that *everything both in and around the temple* being “*most holy*” is nothing less than “*the law of the temple*” (43.12). People point to the small flights of steps from one courtyard up to the next, but this temple’s overall size is so great that in an accurate physical model its topography must appear essentially flat. And as to walls of separation, if increasing sanctity is of paramount importance, why does Ezekiel mention no physical wall (of any height) separating the outer and inner courts [30]? These two courts clearly differ from those of Herod’s Temple in plan, so Rabbi Heller’s dubious dictum about everything not stated being the same hardly applies [31]. Maybe in a literal construction of Ezekiel’s Temple the separation between those courts would be achieved with “marker posts”?

The obsessive climax (speaking as someone who knows something of what O.C.D. is like) of Heller’s 1602 book is his convoluted, 55-page disputation between Rashi, Rambam, *Middot*, and Ezekiel about the numerous interior “cells”—all less than eight feet wide—that are hollowed out of the thick side and end walls of the inner sanctuary. In length and complexity, Rabbi Heller’s discussion of these claustrophobic cells rivals Ezekiel’s whole nine-chapter description of the *entire temple complex*, with no discernable interest in what they may be *for*—my personal guess being structural honeycombing like the hollow cells in ordinary gray concrete blocks provide in the walls of a utilitarian building like where you might take your car for an oil change [32].

I get the impression that the tension between rabbinic interpretation and the Scriptures to which my Ezekiel study has exposed me is not uncommon in the Talmud. As Mitchell Schwarzer [33] says, the Talmud is a “discontinuous development” from its Mishnaic foundation because of the underlying Mishnah’s “astounding independence from Scripture.” As a result, “Concrete matters are often rerouted to different concrete matters...Often counter opinions multiply,” he continues, like a “giant set of mirrors,” leading to “lessons without conclusions,” and “contorted routes of discussion” with “constant questions and arguments” through “spacious yet raucous halls of reasoning” and “myriad subterranean passages burrowed into incongruity...” An eminent Jewish scholar, Rabbi and Harvard professor Shaye J.D. Cohen [34], says the Mishnah is “not organized logically,” that it has “no beginning or end,” and that it deals with “fragments of themes” but “seldom treats an entire theme.” He says it encourages disputes without showing how the “winning position can be determined,” and “seldom cite[s] the biblical authority” on which its assertions should presumably rest.

The talmudic “superstructure” built on that foundation must necessarily reflect the weaknesses or irregularities of its substrate. In his chapter on the Talmud in the 1984 book *Back to the Sources: Reading the Classic Jewish Texts*, Professor Robert Golden-

*Inquiring in the Temple of Talmud, page 8*

berg walks us through the Talmud's first tractate, *Berakhot* ("Blessings") [35]. Though it is ostensibly a discussion of a practical issue of Jewish worship, Dr. Goldenberg warns us that the issue is never resolved. The "answer" accepted by later rabbinic tradition appears within it, he says, but is never pointed out as such. The tractate lists numerous Scriptures that might conceivably bear on the matter, but provides no clear biblical warrant for the practice in the first place. After "typical" digressions that "really have nothing to do with the subject at hand" are treated as seriously as the main topic, multiple rabbinic voices enter, "adding more and more opinions to an increasingly complicated mix." The discussion moves "in opposite directions," Goldenberg says—"one multiplies disagreements, while the other seeks to deny them." No attempt is made to reconcile opposing voices cited from the Tannaim who compiled the Mishnah. He says even the authenticity of their *disputes* is disputed, resulting in a massive document in which "everything is fascinating," but "nothing can be trusted." After spending thirteen pages discussing *Berakhot*, Dr. Goldenberg says the *true* purpose of the Mishnah and the Talmud built upon it is "to preserve the record of earlier generations studying their own tradition and provide materials for later generations" similarly devoted to "the life of study."

The Messianic scholar Michael L. Brown shows numerous places where talmudic reasoning gets so tangled up in "studying" its "own tradition" as to change the clear meaning of Scriptures to their exact opposite [36]. But reading *Back to the Sources* did give me some feeling for the "fascination" of the Talmud that Dr. Goldenberg mentions. I gather there is a delicious stimulation perhaps something like that of a cup of espresso, a good "whodunnit," or polyphonic jazz or Classical music in the clashing interplay of clever arguments about what activities forbidden on Shabbat can be conducted anyway in a child-care center behind roped-off *eruvim*, or whether it's lawful to shut the door of a refrigerator if its inside light is found to have turned on (perhaps from a timer thrown off by a power failure) without first consulting a "talmudic authority" [37].

As a bit of a math fan and college cave explorer, I can see the appeal of puzzling out talmudic arguments. In architecture, I see the value of eccentric places and spaces whose design is not entirely "rational." Even solving mazes can be fun—if I have time, they're not too hard, and I know there's an answer. I love the complex fugues of Bach that tangle their themes before sorting them out in the end, and the dissonant, driving fugues of Shostakovich. My dad once took me to Preservation Hall in New Orleans, with its raucously joyous (or lugubrious) edifices of overlapping sound. *El Salon Mexico* and *An American in Paris* by the noted Jewish composers Aaron Copland and George Gershwin have that exuberance. But I need something deeper to start my day in these troubling times, and when I'm in bed with the flu, or have financial or personal concerns, neither puzzles, Bach, Copland, Benny Goodman, or New Orleans jazz do much for me. And in my life's spiritual crisis I told about in Part 1, what I needed was not intellectual stimulation, but supernatural pardon and peace in place of my guilt—as I need today when temptations and discouragements attack. Jesus didn't come for the well, the self-justify-

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ing, but to lead sick sinners like me to repentance and eternal life (Matt. 9:12-13).

In his *Back to the Sources* chapter, Dr. Goldenberg admits that in general, “the Talmud for a ‘religious’ text pays remarkably little attention to God” [38]. However fascinating it is, that discourages me from thinking it has anything to advance my personal relationship with Him. I know Jewish people tend to be intellectual (and no one who wasn’t would be reading this) but there must be someone who secretly worries that the God of the Tanakh—the God David avoided in the guilt of his sin in Ps. 32 and cried out to for mercy in Ps. 51—is real, and really angry with our sins, and is not impressed by clever human evasions! Some rabbis say David was inherently too righteous for sin to be accounted to him [39], but if you believe that, are you sure you’re in David’s class with God? Are you a Tzadik who knows for certain your good deeds outweigh your sins?

Another thing that struck me in *Back to the Sources* was Prof. Joel Rosenberg’s statement that the Hebrew Bible is “saturated” with *typology*—the “tendency of characters and scenes to mirror one another” [40]. After mentioning the use Christians (by implication including me) have made of typology, Dr. Rosenberg gives some of his own examples—Noah’s Ark (*tevah*) and Moses’ cradle (*tevah*) later floating in the marsh, and Abraham going to Egypt in a famine and emerging with great wealth (prefiguring Israel’s later sojourn and exodus from Egypt.) I thought he’d then explain why Christian typology is *flawed*—potentially invalidating my whole thesis—but he turned to another subject instead. If typology is so easy that Muslims or Hindus or Buddhists should be able to make typological interpretations of Ezekiel’s Temple, let’s see them! Perish the thought that Noah’s Ark, the Exodus, and the tabernacle and temples are indeed “types” pointing like laser beams to something—to some One!

Despite my disappointments with Rabbi Heller on Ezekiel’s temple, he said something striking in the introduction to his 1602 book. He apparently derived encouragement for his temple study from the Midrash to Ezekiel, where the prophet complains that the exiled Israelites could not possibly construct anything on the scale of his vision. But in the Midrash, God supposedly tells him that “even though they do not build it now, let them study the design of the House and I will consider it as if they were occupied in its construction” [41]. I well know from my own life some things “study” can mean. Besides a sincere pursuit of truth for its own sake, “study” can be undertaken to shirk less appealing duties, to achieve status in some social circle, to cobble a defense for one’s stubborn errors, or to achieve a comfortable living and modicum of respectability, honor, fame, or even glory in some narrowly defined academic or professional niche.

The Apostle Paul warned his young half-Jewish disciple Timothy that he would encounter people who were “*ever learning*” yet “*never able to come to the knowledge of the truth*” (2 Tim. 3:7). Dear Jewish reader, do not “study” Ezekiel’s temple like Rabbi Heller, dissecting its blind “cells” and driving yourself mad with roped-off areas to compensate for ill-conceived “calculations” of ritual sanctity. If the futility of such “study” resonates with anything in your life, as it has with mine, pull back the chairs or whatever

obscures your view, stand back and look at the big picture—the picture of God’s sovereign love in sending His most precious Gift to accomplish every purpose for which the Torah was intended. Jesus said, “*Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think that ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me*” (John 5:39).

### WHICH WILL YOU HAVE—A LABYRINTH OR A MAZE?

Dr. Rosenberg tries to portray the Hebrew Bible itself as having the internal conflicts they all see in the Talmud [42], and he has a point—if you deny Jesus as the focal point of every page. The *Jewish Study Bible* even thanks the “contradictions and redundancies” of the Bible for “forcing” the creation of the talmudic rabbis’ “fine distinctions and nonliteral interpretations” [43]. Perhaps you are entertained by the rabbinic debates, and content with whatever practical lessons your rabbi draws from them. But I cannot help relating the observations by the Jewish scholars I’ve quoted to my early impression of Ezekiel’s temple as a maze with contorted routes, halls of mirrors, myriad subterranean passages, no beginning or end, and fragmentary perceptions instead of wholes. A recent book about popular Jewish mysticism calls it a “labyrinth even the experienced can get lost in” [44] (it really means a “maze,” because you can’t get lost in a labyrinth, which as we’ve said is only one long continuous pathway.) I know that at least the dead ends, the contorted and fragmentary things in *the maze of my life* came from rejecting Jesus. He is the difference between a maze and a labyrinth. He is “*the way*” through (John 14:6). He is “the LORD” in Prov. 3:6 who makes paths straight.

I see now that any ability I may have to reason soundly (then or now) comes from Him—the “*true light, which gives light to everyone*” (John 1:9 ESV) or “*lighteth every man that comes into the world*” (KJV). No one can truly understand the Bible or have an undivided mind to reason about anything at all apart from Jesus’ light, whether they acknowledge it or not. As Paul wrote, all things visible or invisible were created *by* Jesus and *for* Him, and “*he is before all things, and in him all things consist*” (Colossians 1:15–17) or “*hold together*” (ESV). Whatever physicists may come up with, He is ultimately in and behind the invisible “dark matter” that keeps the galaxies from flying apart, as He is in and behind the laws of noncontradiction and causality on which all rational thought depend. If you skipped reading Part 2, go back now and see how wide and deep and high is the fullness of God’s manifold wisdom in so wonderfully and intricately creating salvation in Jesus for all who believe! On the other hand, those who reject Him risk being “given up” to eternal lostness in a maze of despair, as all that seems “logical” or “right” leads to dead ends.

They can come up so fast! We think we’re safe and secure, but a freak accident or careless mistake can land us in a dead end with breakneck speed. One day in high school

*Which Will You Have—A Labyrinth or A Maze? page 11*

after taking a college entrance exam, I was so glad to get out of the building that I ran across a busy street, reaching a narrow median between the opposing lanes just as I was noticing how much traffic there was. I tottered on the brink of falling in front of an on-rushing car, a hair's breadth from the dead ends of death or being crippled for life. And when I was in the army, they unexpectedly asked if I'd rather go to Vietnam to start my two-year active duty commitment or extend that to three years, with the first 18-month tour in the continental U.S. If I chose Vietnam, I could become yet another war casualty; if the latter, when I got out I'd be three (instead of two) years behind my architecture school classmates in work experience. I chose that, and survived the war but have always been a bit behind my peers professionally. I wonder, over the course of our lives, how many of our spot decisions have drastic, even life-crippling consequences, immediately or over years. If you don't have a living, personal relationship with a sovereign, omnipotent God you can trust to fulfill His purposes for you (Ps. 138.8), what will lead you past your dead ends in the maze of life—Luck? Fate? Mazel? Chutzpah?

We live today in more frightening times than I have known since the Cold War of my childhood, when TV screens were full of A-bomb tests with mushroom clouds and buildings being blown down by the shock wave, and images of Hiroshima and its horribly burned victims (not entirely unlike a visit to the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. [45]) and air raid sirens terrorized us kids every month. At school they made us crawl down under our desks, as if that would protect us from a nuclear fireball like we saw on TV! September 11, 2001 was a wake-up call, after the few relatively calm years after Vietnam. Some readers may have stood, like me, on the plaza between the two towers, gawking at their size, if not beauty. Then there was that 2013 marathon bombing at a spot well known to me from my early life. I saw TV shots of victims being carried into the hospital where I was born. Trouble can surprise us when we are enjoying life with our friends in a familiar place. And in the case of illnesses that must overtake most of us, being inside that nationally ranked hospital where I came into the world, or one like it, surrounded by loved ones and the best doctors, nurses, and technology, at some point none of it can give us the help we need. That hospital is not religiously affiliated, but victims were also taken to a renowned Jewish hospital three blocks away—though I assume people depart this life there most every day as well.

From what I've observed, the process of dying can be a maze, with more and more dead ends as it progresses. First there are intermittent symptoms we can shake off, then ones we can't. In the hospital, the dead ends proliferate, as we struggle to change position for a few seconds of relative comfort, and doctors try one new treatment after another till all fail to help. Perhaps we are too sedated to recognize the last dead end when it is entered, but it is, and beyond it there's no hope of ever knowing what became of our family, friends, professions, businesses, civic or cultural institutions, and pastimes in which we invested our life, working for what we *thought* or *hoped* was good. They simply go on, the better or worse for our involvement we will never know. Isn't the futility

of that a sort of “hell on earth,” whatever your thoughts are about an afterlife?

And that’s only the process of dying, which *will* come to its futile end, so *what do you think about an afterlife?* The *Jewish Study Bible* says the “*length of days*” David talks about at the end of Ps. 23 refers just to God extending his “natural life,” but goes on to admit that “it has *traditionally* been understood as referring to the next life” and is therefore “*customarily* recited at funerals” (emphasis added) [46]. Do you want it read at yours? What comfort is there for you now, or your loved ones then, to think of eternal life beyond the grave as a “traditional” reading of something into the Bible, done essentially because human “custom” demands it? Read Psalm 16 if you want to know what David really thought—if you are willing to consider what the Bible says. Read Isaiah 66. 24, which liberal Judaism likewise considers just a mythic accretion. But Jesus, who holds the keys to heaven and hell, backed Isaiah up (Mark 9:48), indeed describing hell as a place of unquenchable flame, and “*the worm that never dies*” (Mark 9:48) sounds like the tormented soul (or resurrected body) *writhing* under the wrath of God and never finding a way to move, *or even think* that brings relief or rest (Rev. 14:11)—only a never-ending sequence of dead ends. The Jewish philosopher Philo supposedly said something to the effect that “the punishment of the wicked is to live forever dying” [47]. So little unrelieved discomfort—let alone real pain like burning—can drown out happy thoughts and fixate us on our suffering!

Maybe you tell yourself you’ll just “merge with the universe” or wander peacefully among the stars. But do you really know the “default state” of the universe you’re asking to be left in is benign? Could it be the primordial chaos the rabbis speculated about, when all was *tohu* and *bohu*? [48] Which would you prefer—struggling forever, endlessly trying to breathe the vacuum of space, or burning eternally, crushed by untold tons of pressure deep inside one of those lovely stars? Jesus is saying that wherever souls passed over for eternal life are left, it is unrelieved torment. When death nears, with fears about what lies ahead, we need unshakable promises that can’t be cleverly reinterpreted to mean the opposite, and an elder Brother who has been through the bitter passageways and can turn the cruel maze of dying into what is in effect a mere labyrinth—daunting, to be sure, as we pass through David’s “valley of the shadow of death,” but leading safely by all dead ends to eternal life [49]. We need a Brother who is *both God and man* to bridge the infinite gap between us and heaven.

I would invite my Jewish friends to read the interesting talmudic discussion in BT Makkot 23b-24a, where famous biblical heroes winnow down the 613 *mitzvot* to a single most fundamental one. After many steps, the final one is reached, and it is Habakkuk 2.4 —“*the just shall live by his faith.*” Following Torah as a system of ethics or righteous works cannot create a good standing with God—only a saving, personal relationship with Him can. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, and Habakkuk, in addition to Ezekiel, all had encounters with God that changed their lives. For them, the sum total of one’s life consisted not of what they “achieved,” but of the closeness they had with God

in their struggles, the knowledge that He was *with* them. None who had any closeness with God would have said they were justified by Torah obedience. Genesis 15.6 says Abraham “*put his trust the LORD, and He reckoned it to his merit*” (NJPS) or “*reckoned it to him as righteousness*” (ArtScroll)—all *before* he was circumcised under the Law. The *Jewish Study Bible* at that verse rightly says that biblical faith “means trusting profoundly in a person, in this case the personal God...” [50] Jesus came to make that not merely *possible* for a Moses or a David, but a *promise* for *the many* (Jer. 31, Heb. 8).

Jacob wrestled with a manifestation of God, and would not let Him go before being blessed by Him *personally*. David longed to build God a house, but not more than he longed for His presence: “*As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God*” (Ps. 42.1). They knew the essence of God’s Torah as *knowing him*, not trying to put Him in their debt by their obedience. This is why Jesus came—to restore man to the intimate, unending personal fellowship with God for which Adam and Eve were created, and give man the closeness He had with His Father in eternity (John 17:13) [51]. Abraham, sojourning by faith as an alien in tents in the Promised Land, was really seeking a Promised Person: he saw “*my day*,” Jesus said, “*and was glad*” (John 8:56, Heb. 11:9-10). Jesus told His disciples, who, like Abraham, left all behind to follow Him, “*if ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*” (Luke 11:13). What we’re talking about here is *eternal life*—not something just for when we die, but beginning right now, as soon as we have Jesus’ Spirit in our hearts. As He said, “*He that hears my word, and believes on him that sent me, has everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life*” (John 5:24). Not *will* have everlasting life, but *has* it—not *will pass* from death to life, but *is passed*.

I’ve said I was converted to faith in Jesus in 1977 at the age of thirty. Over a year ago I turned seventy, and Palm Sunday of 2017 was my fortieth “birthday” as a Christian believer. I’d love to say everything has “worked out” for me, but if you could see where this is being written you would know it hasn’t financially—probably due to sin-bought effects of my life’s maze, the lost time I mentioned professionally, and other things. But I am grateful for the time for contemplating Ezekiel that my relative lack of career success has afforded. Jesus promises that “*to him that knocketh*” (even on temple gates, perhaps?) “*it shall be opened*” (Matt. 7:8). He’s fulfilled my love of geography and maps through this study, and as I design the architectural projects I do have, I try to share with others a morsel of what God has lavished on me in His creation, rechanneling things I’ve experienced in canoe and cave trips, and memories of many places from my old ViewMaster disks He’s enabled me to see in reality. And as far as Ezekiel goes, if the Puritan commentator William Greenhill [52] was right about his vision’s calling for “spiritual mathematicians” to “measure” it, perhaps in God’s kindness He has even let me know at least some fulfillment of that frustrated early desire, even giving me a real mathematician friend who tells me about the outer fringes of his discoveries. But my

greatest possession by far is the presence of Messiah Jesus as the Shepherd whom Ezekiel talked about, leading me through my trials to eternity in heaven with Him. Until then He is heaven in my heart. And He is always “at home” for me in His Temple, my fortress against the evil of the world and the remaining corruption inside that would mar my fellowship with Him.

God may well have some unexpected fulfillment for you of your deepest longings in Jesus, because *He is* our deepest longing, and He loves to give. As a Jewish believer in Jesus, you would be part of the greatest *construction project* in history, the building of Jews and gentiles into one spiritual body and “household of God” in Jesus, “*built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus [the Messiah] himself being the cornerstone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy TEMPLE in the Lord,*” a “*habitation for God through the Spirit*” (Ephesians 2:20-22).

As was observed in Part 2, Rambam said you will recognize the Messiah for certain when you see Him gather Israel together and build the temple in its place [53]—two things that Jesus has done, and is doing. His *spiritual* temple is Ezekiel’s message to Jews, not the promise of worldly fame and glorious buildings, as much as I want all the best for the Jewish people—as I believe the Apostle Paul prophesies in Romans chapter 11 [54]. It’s more glorious than things like fame and buildings—a glorious Redeemer, well acquainted with grief for our sake, smitten as it were by God for our iniquities, but uncomplaining. A Redeemer gentle and lowly in spirit, with no earthly form or beauty that anyone blinded by the bright lights of this age desires, as it says in Isaiah 53. Earthly glories fade, but the One discerned in the pattern of Ezekiel’s temple does not. He has no deceptive maze, but the holy temple of His church, spreading like a fruitful vine across the entire earth embracing every race and tongue and nation, and a spacious heavenly *house* ahead, with no dead ends but “*many rooms*” custom designed for all who love Him (John 14:2) by the Master Architect of the universe (Heb. 11:10).

Sometimes Satan troubles us with his lies and deceptions, tempting us and inciting factions and strife in the church [55], but he must ultimately fail at Jesus’ return, and until then Jesus sustains His true flock as they keep their eyes on Him alone (Heb. 12:2), not outward circumstances, and follow Him as He leads the way out to safety. When we look at the church through earthly eyes, we are often dismayed, forgetting that God has promised ultimately to make His Bride fit for Him, in His way and time.

So as one who long rejected Jesus, and is only, by God’s undeserved grace—in Him, through faith—escaping my maze, I beg my Jewish friends, I “*pray you on [Messiah Jesus’] stead, be ye reconciled to God*” (2 Cor. 5:20). If you have felt the Ruach HaKodesh speaking to you in the Scriptures presented here, do not be like the stubborn Israelites who went into captivity trusting “*in lying words [or “illusions” NJPS], saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD*” (Jer. 7.4). As the ArtScroll Ezekiel commentary rightly said, “the people were obsessed with the delusion

that Jerusalem and the Temple had an innate guarantee” of God’s favor [56]. Do not, like them, persist in the idolatry of thinking God is worshiped in ritual forms typified by the cold, hard metal cherubim fastened to the cover of the Ark, but a Living Reality corresponding to the living chariot of God’s throne that supersedes for Ezekiel the ministry of the earlier Holy of Holies. As Jesus told the woman at the well in John 4:23, God must be worshiped “*in spirit and truth*”—neither in the dead forms of the Samaritans’ mongrel religion nor the historically correct ones of the Jerusalem Temple. Its ceremonial religion was a great good in its appointed time, but was then passing away before this Dispenser of “living water” that wells up to eternal life (John 4:14).

Jesus wept bitterly for Jerusalem, knowing how soon it would be destroyed, and with it its great Temple. “*They shall not leave in thee one stone upon another,*” He said, “*because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation*” (Luke 19:44). And what was that time? It began before Jesus’ birth, when Zechariah the father of John the Baptist prophesied that “*the dayspring from on high*” would “*visit us*” (Luke 1:78), which brought the Magi to Bethlehem (see Part 2). It lasted through Jesus’ earthly life and death until He rose and entered the heavenly Holy of Holies with His blood that fulfilled and supersedes all future sacrifices. The wonderful plan of Ezekiel’s temple is a witness to Israel’s Divine Visitation. Don’t be like those who missed it—who missed the Messiah! Don’t be found among those who miss His coming Return, which will be with the brightness and majesty of the blazing sun and hell gaping in His train, with anything but meekness for His foes.

Jewish people talk about *Teshuvah*, but resisting the Holy Spirit is the ultimate sin, and must be confessed and repented of before one can “return” to God and enter into the reality of His temple, as Ezekiel’s chapter 43 commission plainly says. Repent and believe now, the appointed day of salvation. Follow up the mere introduction to Ezekiel’s Plan in these pages (Ezek. 43.10) with a lifetime immersed in the New Living Torah of the New Testament (43.11). There may not be a tomorrow for everyone reading these words. Jesus is in the Temple—is the Temple, the meeting place of God and man—and welcomes all who come to Him in faith. Listen to Radak when he says that “those who visualize the design” of Ezekiel’s temple “will live in this House in the Ultimate Future” [57]. He was more right than he knew. Read, study, and put your trust in Jesus, God’s Living Temple and you will dwell securely in Him now and forevermore.

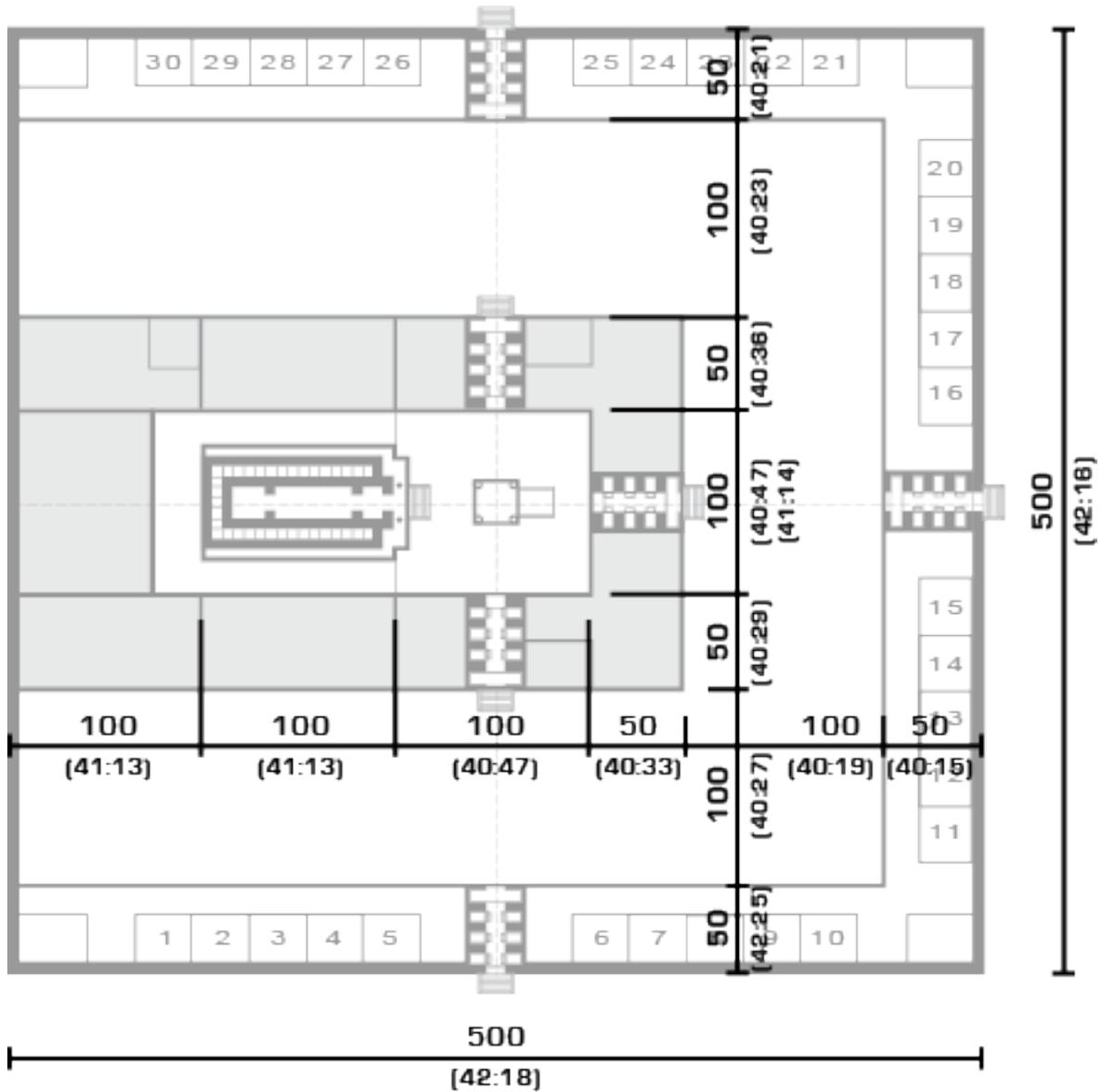
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This four-part “Christian midrash” on Ezekiel’s Temple Vision concludes in Part 4 with the consideration of three frequent objections to Jesus (Yeshua) as the Messiah—the anti-semitism of Martin Luther, the “Christian Sabbath” on Sunday, and the Tri-Unity of the God of the Bible (the Trinity). These three objections were chosen for relationships they have to aspects of Ezekiel’s Temple covered in Parts 1, 2, and 3.

If you skipped reading the preceding Part 1, ***Lost and Found in the Temple*** and Part 2, ***Jesus in the Temple***, I sincerely hope you will go back and do so. They tell the story of my personal involvement with Ezekiel's Temple and my resulting burden to share with Jewish persons what I believe God has shown me through a lifetime of contemplating it. But more importantly they open up what I think you may find to be a surprising message, told in a symbolic way entirely befitting Ezekiel, and using exactly what he was explicitly commissioned to convey to the House of Israel—the Temple's form or layout, and the arrangement of its exits and entrances.

**Are you a Jewish person desiring to receive Jesus (Yeshua) as your Messiah?** If you are willing to acknowledge that your sins disqualify you from any hope of eternal life and that you need a Savior, and if you are willing to transfer your trust from whatever you've been trusting in to Jesus, and forsake your sins, then pray to God as your Heavenly Father, in Jesus' name, asking Him to forgive you. Tell Him you believe His Son Jesus lived the only perfect Torah life and died on the cross as the spotless Lamb of God whose blood atones for your sin. Ask God to save you and fill you with His Holy Spirit. Thank Him for giving you eternal life in Jesus. Only God sees the heart. If you prayed that sincerely, then study the New Testament's Gospel of John. Choose Life, *whatever other people say!* Immediately begin looking for a Bible-believing church where you can be baptized, taught the Word, and disciplined by mature believers.

Some Jewish converts join Messianic congregations where some Jewish traditions are observed, and one might help you, though God's ultimate plan is to make of the Jew and gentile "*one new man*" (Ephesians 2:14-18) conformed neither to Jewish nor gentile traditions, but to Jesus. Many converts from Judaism join more conventional churches that place their primary emphasis on the preaching of all the Bible, and ideally have people of many ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds searching the Scriptures together, united in the love of Jesus—a grounding which can also help you find how to share your distinctively Jewish background in the community of faith. No church or congregation is perfect. Maybe one that believes God's Word *needs you* as a member to grow more fully into the pattern Jesus wants.



**FIGURE A-1**

***THE MEASUREMENTS OF EZEKIEL'S TEMPLE***

Numbers on the diagram indicate lengths in cubits and the chapter and verse where those measurements are given. Analysis based mainly on Block, *Ezekiel*, Vol 2, pp. 517-571.

[Back to Figure A-1 text reference](#)

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## ENDNOTES

1. ^A BBC newsmagazine article calls the Talmud “one of the most challenging religious texts in the world” (<https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-24367959>). According to MyJewishLearning.com, the answer to “what is the Talmud?” is “an intergenerational rabbinic conversation that is studied, not read.” It says its “difficulty...has necessitated and fostered the development of an institutional and communal structure that supported the learning of Talmud and the establishment of special schools where each generation is apprenticed into its study by the previous generation” (<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/talmud-101/>). A recent article in the Jewish online journal *Tablet* was entitled, “The Talmud’s difficulty is what Makes the Talmud ‘Talmudic’” (<https://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-life-and-religion/186339/daf-yomi-102>).

2. ^*The Third Beis HaMikdash* (“The Third Temple”) by Rabbi Yom Tov Lipmann Heller (transl. R. Eliyahu Touger, see Bibliography). This edition of Heller’s 1602 book *Tzuras HaBayis* (“The Form of the House”) was first published in English (along with the Hebrew) only in 2016. Heller says (pp. 10-11) he wanted to draw a plan to illustrate correctly the written commentary of his great 11<sup>th</sup> century predecessor Rashi. Clorfene (p.13) affirms Heller’s book as the first “complete” work on Ezekiel’s Temple, calling it “a great work of dialectic exposition,” but criticizing its reliance on “deductive reasoning” in contrast to the more “spiritual” and “intuitive” approach favored by Radak and himself—resulting in Heller’s failure (Clorfene says) to “stir a general response among the Jewish populace” of the sort undertaken today by people clamoring to see something built soon on the Temple Mount.

3. ^The NJPS translation of the overall temple dimensions in 42.15-20 follows Radak in saying the 500 cubit measurements are in *cubits, as measured with the measuring rod*, as opposed to Rashi’s reading of 500 *rods* (which would result in a temple of 3,000 cubits, or nearly a mile on each side.) See discussion on p.5 below and notes [1] and [19], and note [5] in Part 1. Also, the NJPS says the 50-cubit gatehouse dimension in 40.15 is a *horizontal* one (per Radak) rather than *vertical* one (per Rashi). (See discussion on p.6 below and note [22].) Most Orthodox and many Christian commentaries follow Rashi (and Heller) on these points, and on the “rods” vs. “cubits” issue, the *Jewish Study Bible* note (p. 1125) affirms Rashi’s “rods” (instead of the NJPS translation that study Bible is based upon.) Clorfene (p.126) claims Radak only saw the 500×500 *cubits* as being an initial condition, until the dead are raised from paved-over cemeteries, after which it would expand to 500×500 *rods*.

4. ^The 2016 edition of Heller’s 1602 book (see [2] above) includes what it claims to be, for the first time in actual publication, an original temple fold-out diagram by R. Heller that it says he drew for inclusion in the 1602 book, but was for some reason only inserted later in a pocket as a supplement. To my knowledge, no Orthodox source published before 2016 that pays tribute to Heller, and follows his written commentary, acknowledges actually having seen this drawing. Rabbi Eisemann’s ArtScroll commentary (*Ezekiel*, p.xxxviii) mentions R. Heller’s “description” but not his *drawing*.

5. ^The diagram in the *ArtScroll Stone Edition Tanach* (see Bibliography) that I find to resemble R. Heller’s plan is on page 2042. The biggest single difference between this and the Hastings plan adapted for my diagrams in Parts 1 and 2 is that its temple is smaller, and not an exact square. The Hastings plan measures 500×500 cubits, the Heller/ArtScroll plan 312×317 cubits. (The reason for this is discussed on page 5 and note [19] below.) The ArtScroll plan’s caption does not mention R. Heller, just saying it shows the temple “as closely as possible to the way *Rashi* must have understood it.” That caption refers the reader for more details to the ArtScroll Ezekiel commentary, *The Book of Yechezkel*,

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3<sup>rd</sup> Ed., by Rabbi Moshe Eisemann (see Bibliography). In his commentary, Rabbi Eisemann attributes (on page [xv] of Appendix X) this plan not to R. Heller, but to a Rabbi Moshe Ivier who lived from 1721 to 1771, according to a note on R. Eisemann's p. xxxvii. (Eisemann says a Mr. Gershon Goldman and Rabbi Shea Brander polished R. Ivier's plan for publication by ArtScroll.) As said in note [4] above, R. Eisemann mentions R. Heller, but not any diagram by him. Rabbi Heller's plan (based, according to Heller, on Rashi's earlier commentary) seems almost identical to the one in the later Art-Scroll Tanach and the Eisemann commentary, but is now claimed to have been drawn over 100 years before R. Ivier was born! Apparently Heller's earlier drawing was not known to the ArtScroll editors, who could hardly have seen the new 2016 Heller edition with its newly published 1602 plan (assuming the drawing is authentic, of course).

6. ^In defense of directing this "Christian midrash" particularly to Jewish readers, while Christians follow Paul in applying promises God made to "Israel" to the church, there are places in the N.T. where the phrase "*house of Israel*" is clearly used to distinguish the Jewish people from gentiles: by Jesus in Matt.10:5-6 and 15:24; and by Peter in Acts 2:36. Also see Acts 7:42 and 13:16b, and Heb. 8:8,10; though the Acts 7 and Heb. 8 examples are O.T. quotations from Amos 5.25 and Jer. 31.31-34.

7. ^I emphasize the "pattern" because it is emphasized by God in His ch. 43 commission to Ezekiel. This "pattern" is explained in Parts 1 and 2, and my *Ezekiel's Temple: A Scriptural Framework*. However, some priestly ordinances of this temple are discussed on pp. 57-8 of the latter work.

8. ^In regard to the "do them" at the end of Ezekiel's commission, this is covenant language associated with a new covenant—an eternal "*covenant of peace*" (Ezek. 36.26-7, 37.26, see Frontispiece)—that Ezekiel is displaying in characteristically symbolic form—having a new sovereign administration, sealed in blood (the blood of Jesus, typified by the sacrifices on Ezekiel's altar in his ch. 43), and new covenant responsibilities for the New Israel in the "law" of Jesus conveyed through His New Testament Apostles. See the "*new covenant*" as expressed in Jer. 31.31-4, where the people's fulfillment of their covenant responsibilities is ensured by their having God's law put "*in their hearts*" and written "*on their hearts*," also with the same covenant promise formula, "*I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*" Compare to the Sinaitic covenant (Ex. 24.3-8) where the people pledge to "do" God's commandments in gratitude for God's presence and provision, ratified with blood—"Behold the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you according to all these words" (v.8). "Do" in this covenant perspective means fulfill all the new responsibilities, not "build" something.

9. ^See especially Matthew 15:1-9, 22:23-32, and 23:1-36.

10. ^See the discussion of Karaite Judaism at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karaite\\_Judaism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karaite_Judaism). Reportedly Jews emigrating to Israel from India, for example, have arrived without any understanding of rabbinic halakha, and have needed to be specially educated. One of the explanations put forward for their ignorance, besides the theoretical possibility of apostasy, is that there really was no "oral Torah" to begin with independent of the written one. (There are only a few thousand Karaites today in Israel and the U.S., but in the 11th-12th centuries they were a significant Jewish minority.)

11. ^Mitchell Schwarzer, "The Architecture of Talmud," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Dec. 2001, pp. 474-487.

12. ^Ibid., pp. 480-1.

13. ^Ibid., pp. 474, 477.

14. ^Barry W. Holtz, "On Reading Jewish Texts," in *Back to the Sources*, pp. 18-19.

15. ^David Stern, "Midrash and Jewish Interpretation" in the *Jewish Study Bible*, p.1863 (italics in original).

16. ^*Middot* 2.5. In *Middot* 5.4 the same rabbi admits to forgetting the purpose of what may possibly be another temple chamber

17. ^Ezra 3.2 concerns the altar, which is not only of special interest in Ezekiel 43, but is also one of

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the three things he supposedly inspired in the Second Temple (see note [19] below.) It seems hard to believe Ezra would have laid so much emphasis on following Moses if he knew of Ezekiel's vision or thought it applicable to the new work in Jerusalem. And Ezra 6.18 concerns the organization of the priests and levites, which again is not only of particular interest to Ezekiel (Ezek. 43.18 – 45.5) but is tied into the use of his central altar (43.18-27). It seems inescapable to conclude that either Ezra didn't know Ezekiel's writings, or he did not consider them applicable.

18. <sup>^</sup>Leen Ritmeyer, *The Quest: Revealing the Temple Mount in Jerusalem* (Jerusalem: Carta, 2006). A costly but beautiful book that anyone interested in the temples should own.

19. <sup>^</sup>Rabbi Steinberg, *The Third Beis HaMikdash*, pp.22-25 explains Rashi's (and Heller's) understanding that the 6-cubit-high wall Ezekiel mentions in 40.5 encloses a 500 rod (3,000 cubit) square. The east outer gate described in the very next verse, 40.6, sounds like it takes one into the temple's outer court, but in this arrangement Rashi and Heller need to assume there is an approximately 2/3 mile gap between that gate and the inside of the outer court itself, which floats off-center far inside it! (See R. Heller's *Third Beis HaMikdash*, p.28). There's no hint of this huge gap in Ezekiel's text, where one assumes a person going through the gate in 40.6-15 comes immediately into the outer court. Clorfene's *The Messianic Temple* (pp. 53-56) seems, like Heller's book, to ignore the problem; he says on p. 53 that the east gate of 40.6 is not a gate of the temple itself, though it must be (if it's an outer gate of the larger "Temple Mount," there would need to be an unmentioned, presumably identical gate 2/3 mile inside of it.) Based on Ezek. 43.7-9, Rabbi Steinberg says this unmentioned gap is so "the Jewish people will not live in such close proximity to the [actual temple] and...be prevented from contaminating it, and the Divine Presence will thus dwell among them forever" (Steinberg, p.24). Rabbi Fisch (p.291) cites a passage from the liturgy for the second day of Sukkot in defense of Rashi's 500 rod interpretation, but I think this a one good reason why the outer wall measured at the end of ch. 42 must be understood as 500 *cubits* (per Radak, NJPS)—not rods.

20. <sup>^</sup>This is very vague. The mere existence of an altar of burnt offering in the inner court seems not to require Ezekiel. David long before was given the plan that Solomon followed, incorporating that feature. My conjecture is that the thing of interest about the altar ascribed to Ezekiel is his 12×12 altar hearth (see 43.15). Since the Tannaim understood the comparable dimension in the Herodian Temple to have been 24×24 (Middot 3.1), they developed their theory that the altar was supposed to be measured not across each side, as the text *seems* to say, but from the center of the altar outward, entitling them to say Ezekiel's "12×12" is the same as *Middot's* "24×24"—all contrived to make the two altars agree, based on the preconceived notion to be discussed in note [27] below. To buttress this, R. Eisemann (p.679) even says Ezekiel's altar is to be "visualized as comprised as four quarters" or "quadrants," although Ezekiel just says it is "square" (see note [40] in Part 1 and note [36] in Part 2.) (As explained there, the dashed lines crossing the altar in my cover illustration were simply intended to show that the altar has the same axes of symmetry as the overall temple, as other commentators have observed.)

21. <sup>^</sup>Rabbi Heller, *The Third Beis HaMikdash*, pp. 11-14. His main argument (from Rashi) is that Israel was ideally meant to build Ezekiel's plan exactly upon returning to Jerusalem, but the people's imperfect repentance only "merited" them "license" from God to incorporate these three aspects into the Second Temple. But how can Israel be said to "merit" even those three things from the God who sent them to exile in Babylon and destroyed their First Temple for the abominations characterized in Ezek. 8? God's promise ultimately to restore them was not based on their "merit," but His mercy—Ezekiel's chapters 16, 20, and 22-24 make that clear—for the sake not of Israel, but for the sake of His holy name (36.22). Heller also hints (p.13) that those allowed elements could enable Israel to "prepare somewhat" for the ultimate Temple to come when their *teshuvah* warrants it. But how do the four

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corner courts in the wrong place, or the altar four times too big, or the strange closed wicket of the sanctuary's door "prepare" for anything? They would all have to be ripped out.

22. ^Rabbi Heller, *The Third Beis HaMikdash*, pp.34-38. Block (*Ezekiel*, Vol. 2, p.522) shows how the internal walls and chambers of the outer gates add up to 50 cubits in length.

23. ^Rashi's commentary on Ezekiel 40.15, quoted in Heller, *The Third Beis*, p. 35. Rabbi Heller says (p.38) that "we can still accept Rashi's explanation despite the textual anomaly. There was certainly a deep, hidden reason why the text was written this way, for there is neither a small nor a large element in this awesome vision that does not have an underlying reason of untold depth." I say "Amen" to that last part. Every element of the temple is a witness to something neither Ezekiel nor his contemporary readers could have comprehended—Israel's coming Messiah, Jesus (Yeshua).

24. ^See Philip J. King and Lawrence E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001) pp. 232-5. Archaeological findings of the past decade suggest these six-chambered gates at Hazor, Gezer, and Megiddo may date more to the times of King Ahab, which would have been even closer to the time of Ezekiel.

25. ^Based on the way Rashi and Heller split the temple gatehouses down the middle and spread them against the courtyard side walls, the overall temple dimensions must be reduced drastically. Heller gives his resulting derivation of 312 cubits in the N-S direction on his p. 89. It takes him all the way to his p. 269 to derive his 317 cubit figure for the E-W direction.

26. ^Other Orthodox diagrams based on Heller's besides the *ArtScroll Stone Edition Tanach* and R. Eisemann's commentary, include the Ezekiel commentaries of Rabbis Joseph Breuer (p.356) and A.J. Rosenberg (Vol. 2, p.xxii), *The Messianic Temple* by Clorfene, *The Third Beis HaMikdash* by R. Steinberg, and the R. Luzzatto *Mishkney Elyon* book (see Bibliography). Proponents of these Orthodox diagrams have pointed to the "man" portrayed in it, in which the disposition of secondary buildings they place within the outer court, together with the central sanctuary, take on the appearance, they say, either of a priest with hands raised in blessing or (from above) a worshiper prostrate in prayer (e.g., see Clorfene, *The Messianic Temple*, p. 116). This hardly seems proper for God's temple; I Chron 29.1 (NJPS) says "the temple is not for a man, but for the LORD God." Christians may think of 2 Thess. 2: 4, where Antichrist usurps a place for himself within the temple of God. *Secrets of the Future Temple (Mishkney Elyon)* by R. Luzzatto (p.34) explains how in Jewish mysticism the ten invisible *sefirot*, or "emanations" of God can be envisioned as having "the same essential structure of 'head, body, arms, and legs'" as the "man" they see in Ezekiel's plan. Interestingly, the *Mishkney Elyon* book has a frontispiece comparable to mine quoting Ezekiel's chapter 43 commission to convey the vision to the house of Israel, but it omits, with a series of dots indicating the omission, any mention of the temple's exits and entrances. (Perhaps he thinks his "man in the temple" more important than that.)

27. ^I have not been able to find an explicit statement of this in R. Heller's *Third Beis*. The closest may be on p. 188 where he says the Second and Future temples "will parallel each other." But all through the book Heller takes some statement from *Middot* about the Second Temple as normative for Ezekiel's one, unless there is some obvious reason that would be impossible to apply. This principle is clearly stated by the 18<sup>th</sup> century Rabbi David Altschuler: "Elements that Ezekiel did not explain" will be "similar" to the Second Temple, and there is an "obligation to make all the Temples equivalent in every way possible." (Introduction to Binyan HaBayith in *Metzudath David*, cited in Clorfene, *The Messianic Temple*, p.10.)

28. ^Rabbi Yom-Tov Lipmann Heller, *The Third Beis HaMikdash*, pp.245-248.

29. ^The following is based on an Ezekelian cubit of approximately 20.5 inches (see Daniel I. Block, *Ezekiel*, Vol. 2., p.517.) According to the 2015 *International Building Code* (p. 279) corridors serving

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fewer than 50 occupants—which might be true of the particular corridors Rabbi Heller is concerned with—may be 36 inches wide (1.76 cubits, or one and three quarters times wider than what he allows for those corridors.) Corridors serving areas with over 50 occupants must be at least 44 inches wide, or 2.15 cubits, with greater widths in exit corridors from assembly spaces (including “places of religious worship” might be presumed to have. A building official would need to study carefully how many occupants from what types of spaces might be channeled into Heller’s corridors. The only smaller exception would be for rooms housing mechanical or electrical equipment that are accessed only by maintenance personnel, which can be 24 inches (1.17 cubits)—perhaps R. Heller would claim the temple priests should fall into that category and appeal for special leniency. The need for wheelchair ramps at steps might be obviated by the consideration that “maimed” priests could not serve, but they would still be required at steps serving the public in the outer court. The latter areas would also require handicap accessible toilet facilities. All this is a bizarre anachronism, of course, but would NOT BE if Ezekiel’s plans were to be translated into an actual building that needed a permit for its construction. I do not know if the U.S.-sponsored I.B.C. is under consideration for adoption in Israel, but it is presently in effect in Abu Dhabi, Saudi Arabia, and Afghanistan.

30. ^Daniel I. Block (*Ezekiel*, Vol. 2, p.528) says of the non-mention of any such wall that “the absence of any reference to it at least raises the possibility that these gates were symbolic.”

31. ^The obvious differences in temple layouts between Ezekiel’s in Fig. 1 and the Herodian Temple of *Middot* in Fig. 2 show that no walls separating the courtyards can be supplied by silence. In fact, the temples are so different that the principle in note [27] would appear to have very limited application.

32. ^Rabbi Heller, *The Third Beis HaMikdash*, pp. 167-222. (Since the published text includes English translations and some diagrams, the number of Hebrew pages alone would be significantly less.) Note Radak’s admission (p.234) that he did not understand the cells, and his willingness to leave this to Elijah and the Messiah. I do not mean to blaspheme here in my reference to the oil change, but to face this issue in the earthy, practical manner of the Talmud and what I have seen of rabbinic Judaism, which are said to be nothing if not practical in acknowledging mundane realities.

Leen Ritmeyer (*The Quest*, p.396) says of comparable cells in the Second Temple that, “this honeycomb-like structure may have added constructional stability to this huge building complex, and doubles as repositories of vessels and supplies for the Temple ritual.” As to this second possibility, the need for narrow ladders and floor openings to connect the three levels would have rendered them inefficient for storing any but the lightest, smallest objects. The fancy new computerized drawing in Chaim Clorfene’s temple book (p.94) portrays these ladders as spiral staircases, which would further restrict the size and weight of objects that could be moved in and out of the upper cells; moreover, the six-foot diameter floor openings they would require would make lateral movements around them from cell to cell on the upper floors virtually impossible. Personally, I think access to the upper cells could only be for the purpose of inspecting and maintaining the structure itself. The lower buildings to the rear and sides of the main sanctuary would seem to offer far better possibilities for storing items.

33. ^Schwarzer, “The Architecture of Talmud,” op. cit., pp. 480-1, 484.

34. ^Shaye J.D. Cohen, “Judaism to the Mishnah” in H. Shanks (Ed.), *Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., (Washington, DC: Biblical Archaeology Society, 2011), pp. 234-8.

35. ^See Robert Goldenberg, “Talmud,” in *Back to the Sources*, p.163.

36. ^Michael L. Brown, *Answering Jewish Objections to Jesus, Vol. 5: New Testament Objections* (San Francisco: Purple Pomegranate Productions / Jews for Jesus, 2009), pp. 51-78. One example Brown discusses is Ex. 23.2, where rabbinic interpretation changes the biblical injunction “not to follow the majority to do evil” to “follow the majority.” In rabbinic law, it is believed that a simple majority of rabbis can overturn any plain sense of a Scriptural verse, even if prophets the equal of Elijah

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voted with the minority (Brown, p. 65). Brown (p. 66) quotes Rabbi Yannai in the Jerusalem Talmud: “Had the Torah been given in the form of clear-cut decisions, Israel would have had no leg to stand on.” (Could this type of thinking have anything to do with Jesus’ remarks about the Pharisees of His day making the laws of God void for the sake of their human traditions? (See Matt. 15 and 23.)

37. ^See Schwarzer, “The Architecture of Talmud,” op. cit., p.582 and Michael L. Brown, *What Do Jewish People Think about Jesus?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2007), pp.76-9. Brown refers to Yehoshua Y. Neuwirth, *Shemirath Shabbath: A Guide for the Practical Observance of Shabbath* (Jerusalem / NY: Philip Feldheim, 1995), 1:103. Brown (pp. 76,79) that despite the “legal casuistry,” for “the great majority of traditional Jews, the Sabbath is welcomed with joy and expectation every week.”

38. ^Robert Goldenberg, “Talmud,” in *Back to the Sources*, p. 171.

39. ^The ArtScroll Stone Edition Tanach (p.1479) says that “technically, David did not sin” in the matter of Bathsheba and Uriah. It says that since he sinned “only” against God, his “wrong conduct” did not “violate the *letter* of the law” (emphasis in orig.). On p.746 it says that “technically, Bath-sheba could not be considered a married woman.” Similarly, on pp. 92-3, it calls what Joseph’s “good and righteous” brothers did in selling him into slavery has to be called a “misdeed” rather than a “sin,” because “they truly wanted only to do the right thing,” and “their misdeed had a good outcome.”

40. ^Joel Rosenberg, “Biblical Narrative,” in *Back to the Sources*, esp. pp. 50-52. In Dr. Rosenberg’s analysis, the Eden narrative in Genesis 3 is “a parable of human maturation” (p.57) with nothing about a Redeemer typified in the crushing of the serpent’s head. (Neither the liberal *Jewish Study Bible* nor the Orthodox *ArtScroll Stone Edition n Tanach* at Gen. 3.15 has a hint of a Redeemer to come. The former (p.16) says the serpent in Eden should not, as “in some later Jewish and Christian” thought, be identified with Satan, and (p. 18) our “innate human appetite for evil does not require an act of messianic redemption to be healed.” Job 19:21-22 is understood by Christians as saying Job believed he would, at the last day in his own flesh, see his “Redeemer” vindicate him. The *Jewish Study Bible* (pp. 1529-30) translates the verse to say Job knew his legal human avenger would eventually do his work, but he wished he could live to see it. The ArtScroll Tanach (pp.1644-5) translates the verse as Christians do, with a capital-R “Redeemer,” but offers no explanatory note.

41. ^Rabbi Heller, *The Third Beis HaMikdash*, p.5.

42. ^Joel Rosenberg, “Biblical Narrative,” in *Back to the Sources*, p. 32.

43. ^*Jewish Study Bible*, p.105.

44. ^Luzzatto, *Secrets of the Future Temple (Mishkney Elyon)*, pp. 14-15. That book attempts to explain Ezekiel’s Temple in terms of number mysticism, for example when the dimension of 32 crops up, it is because the number value of the Hebrew word *kabod* (the Divine Presence) is 32, and it is also the sum of 10 (for the ten *sefirot*, or “emanations” of God) and 22 (for the 22 Hebrew letters) (See Clorfene, p.142).

45. ^The comparison is only in terms of the sight of overwhelming human carnage, and not meant to suggest they were comparable either in magnitude or in a moral sense. As Rabbi Fackenheim pointed out (Emil L. Fackenheim, “Jewish Faith and the Holocaust: A Fragment,” <https://www.commentary-magazine.com/articles/jewish-faith-and-the-holocaust-a-fragment/>), Hiroshima was at least a “rational” attempt to end a terrible war, while the Holocaust was “evil for evil’s sake.”

46. ^*Jewish Study Bible*, p.1308. The *ArtScroll Stone Edition Tanach* (pp. 1454-5) gives no more assurance that eternity is in view at the end of David’s psalm.

47. ^I have not yet found the exact quotation and will include it in a later revision if possible. In Jason M. Zurawski’s article, “Hell on Earth: Corporeal Existence as the Ultimate Punishment of the Wicked in Philo,” he summarizes (p.204) Philo’s belief in “punishment consisting in continuing in death.” Hell, Philo thought, “for the wicked, is a life, trapped on earth in the body, with no possibility

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of escape, eternal separation from the divine.” See <https://www.academia.edu/4300387/Hell-on-Earth-Corporeal-Existence-as-the-Ultimate-Punishment-of-the-Wicked-in-Philo-of-Alexandria-and-the-Wisdom-of-Solomon>.

48. ^See *Genesis Rabbah* 2:2. *The Jewish Study Bible* (p.13) says that “to modern people, the opposite of the created order is ‘nothing,’” but “to the ancients, the opposite of the created order was something much worse than ‘nothing.’” It was an active, malevolent force we can best term ‘chaos.’”

49. ^In my *Ezekiel’s Temple: A Scriptural Framework*, p. 73, I cite New Age labyrinths as “counterfeits” of Ezekiel’s pattern. I was referring to New Age labyrinths in churches, schools, and public places where people are encouraged to spend time walking to induce a sort of mindless self-hypnosis, and even spiritual communion with “the eternal feminine” or vague higher “powers” through the Jungian “collective unconscious.” In particular see Lauren Antress, *Walking a Sacred Path: Rediscovering the Labyrinth as a Spiritual Tool* (NY: G.P. Putnam’s Sons / Riverhead Books, 1995). I lost a client once by writing a letter to the editor warning about the dangers of neo-paganism when one was installed at their local church. (I don’t think just walking a labyrinth is evil, but I say be careful, and use the opportunity to speak to other “walkers” about the biblically authorized ways of communing with God through His word, prayer, and the sacraments of His church!) But in this present work I have used the labyrinth in a totally different way, not as something one might seek out to walk on for psychic renewal or spiritual meditation, but simply as an example of following a single path through threatening complexity to release, as a metaphor for following Jesus as He leads safely through all our trials to heaven.

50. ^*The Jewish Study Bible*, p.35. The same study Bible (p.18) appears to state the contrary, namely that in Judaism, “the practice and study of Torah renew intimacy with the God of Israel and lead to eternal life.” One asks, how much *Torah practice* is sufficient to accomplish this? The Good News of the Gospel is that no amount of law-keeping is sufficient to secure our eternal peace and salvation, only trust in the One who lived out the law for us. In 1998, Rabbi Moshe Eisemann, who has often been quoted in these pages, told a Jewish symposium (<https://jewishaction.com/opinion/rabbi-moshe-m-eisemann/>) that “a shallow Judaism that embraces ever expanding areas of surface observances... without a deep and carefully thought out appreciation of the values which the *mitzvos* express, we may distort our Judaism beyond recognition.” Later in the same speech the rabbi laments how a new line of kosher vegetables allows Orthodox homemakers to skip the “hours of painstaking and frustrating *bed-ikok* [examinations for insects]” that the Talmud requires, but also “rids us of much of the *yir’as cheit* [fear of sin]” the mitzva was designed for. God gave Israel a holiness code, which the rabbis elaborated ad infinitum, but the New Testament tells us that “*The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ*” (John 1:17). Paul explains that the law was good and holy, but “*weak through the flesh*” (Rom. 8:3) until Jesus came to obey it *in the flesh for us*. “*Come unto me,*” Jesus says, “*all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest unto your souls*” (Matt. 11: 28-9.)

51. ^Fulfilling the “shepherd” of Ezekiel, Jesus is the farthest thing from an “impersonal” God, who gladly leaves the 99 sheep in the fold to seek and save the one that is lost (Luke 15:4-7.) In note [19] above we saw how Rabbi Steinberg considers it a good thing for the outer wall of the Temple to be 3,000 cubits on a side (as the Orthodox opinion has it) because the large space between that wall and the 312×317 cubit temple inside it would prevent Israel from living “in such close proximity” to it as to contaminate it and drive away the Divine Presence.” That stands in opposition to the personal God revealed in Jesus, who called His disciples “*friends*” (John 15:15), and did not discourage them from touching Him (John 13:25, 20:27; 1 Jn. 1:1), who welcomed little children and laid His hands on them (Matt. 19: 14-15)

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52. ^William Greenhill, *Ezekiel*, p.795. Greenhill writes, “Those who have humbled themselves for their former sins, are fit to be spiritual mathematicians. The house of Israel must first be ashamed of her iniquities, and then, ‘measure the matter.’”

53. ^*Hilchot Melachim* 11:4. On pp. 3-5 of Part 1, I explained how Jesus’ north-south trips between Jerusalem and Galilee were an Ezekelian “sign-act” portraying symbolically His gathering of the “lost sheep” of Israel as their Davidic shepherd, fulfilling Ezekiel’s joining of the two sticks of Ephraim and Judah in his ch. 37. All of Part 2 showed how Jesus built His church—the New Temple—upon Himself (its rightful place) according to the prophecies of Ezekiel, Isaiah, and all the law and prophets.

54. ^As Rabbi Eisemann well states (*The Book of Yechezkel*, p.xx), “...God’s *Shechinah* rests ultimately on His people, not on their architecture. His purpose is Man, not man’s temples.”

55. ^In my understanding, these things are prophesied in the New Testament, principally in the “falling away” or “apostasy” in 2 Thess. 2, where Antichrist rises in influence within God’s Temple of the Church, and in Rev. 11, where John is told not to “measure” the outer court of the Temple (the “visible church” mentioned on p.4 of Part 2), which has been “given to the Gentiles”—i.e., to the unbelieving apostates of 2 Thess.—for a prescribed season before the return of the Lord.

56. ^R. Moshe Eisemann, *The Book of Yechezkel*, p.xxxix.

57. ^Radak (R. David A. Kimhi), *Commentary on Yechezkel* 43.10, quoted in R. Heller’s *The Third Beis HaMikdash*, p.4.