

Large Not Small Temple

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There are some who claim that the Temple in the Kingdom as described by Ezekiel in the last few chapters of his prophecy, will be a small building, and not a large one at all, and the real Temple will be made up of people, a spiritual house, so there will not be a need really for a big temple. For example, in the useful Commentaries by Albert Barnes – a contemporary of Dr John Thomas, he states that the temple is 500 cubits square, and then it has precincts of 500 reeds outside. Cubits and Reeds are terms of measurement translated from the Hebrew.

Ezekiel 40:3 and 5 explain that the temple was measured with a measuring reed: *And he brought me thither, and, behold, there was a man, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, with a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed; and he stood in the gate.*

...And behold a wall on the outside of the house round about, and in the man's hand a measuring reed of six cubits long by the cubit and an hand breadth. A cubit is normally the measurement from elbow to the fingertip. But here in this description a larger cubit is used. The Reed as a measurement corresponds to about 12 feet or 3.5 metres. A cubit here being about 2 feet, or 0.58 of a metre



Thus Barnes in his Notes is saying that the temple is 291m square.

This is almost exactly the same length as the famous QE2 ship here pictured:

This gives us some idea of how big some say the temple

of the future will be. In other words, quite small. If we imagine a central building located in Jerusalem about 300m square it would



look from one angle the same length as the Houses of Parliament in London UK, which is 300m long façade.

This building proved to be too small for the UK

parliamentarians, and a new building nearby was built to enable lobbying and debates to take place. On top of this, there is the Treasury which is nearly the same size, and countless other buildings used for the administration of the country.

However the Temple in the Future Kingdom which will be built in Jerusalem, will not be for the administration of just one nation, but all nations.

Isaiah 56: 7 Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.

That the Temple of the Future will be used also as an administration centre for issuing laws and decrees is clear: Micah 4:1,2 *But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.*

This passage makes clear as well, of the sheer amount of people who will travel to this metropolis. Describing people as flowing – like a river, not a trickle of people who enter in the UK parliament most

days. The Temple being a House of Prayer for all people, but also as a administrative centre, of justice and judgement. A Central Court of Law.

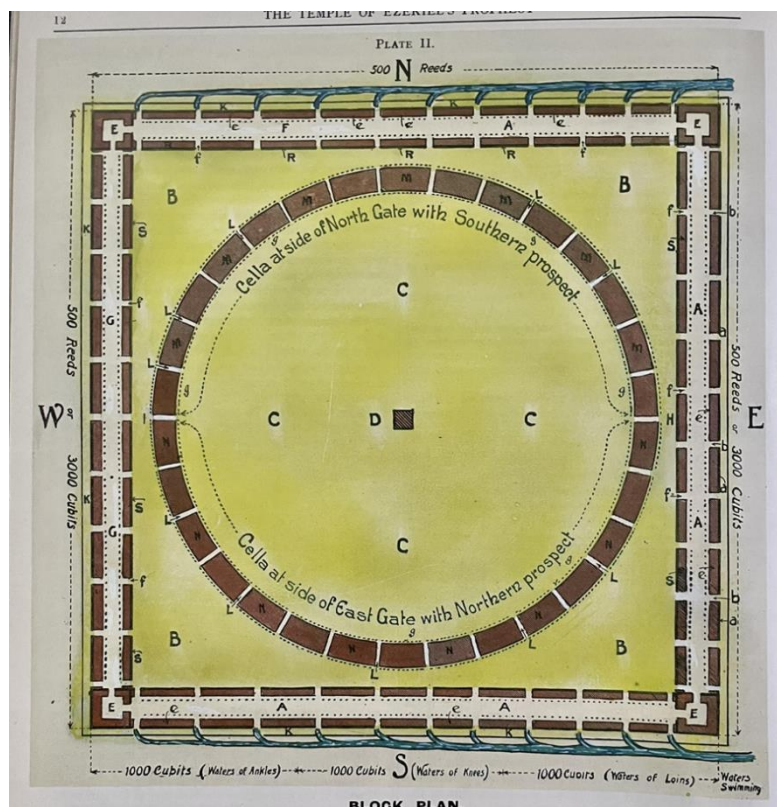
So why would people think that this Multi-Purpose Central Building to be used for Worship, Administration and Law – for all nations in the world, would be smaller in size than what is required for just one nation? We are given the measurements of the outer court in chapter 42:16 – 20, describing it 500 reeds square. That is 1750 metres, over a mile. An enormous structure. *Critics say the word reed should be cubit. but here the debate is described:*

1. The apparent impossibility of finding an explanation of Ezekiel's specification in harmony with the measure of five hundred reeds, has caused some to think the Hebrew ought to be altered so as to read cubits instead of reeds, in chapter XLII. 17-20. It will be seen that there is no reason for this suggestion in view of the explanation now given. The alteration is also urged because the Septuagint translation reads *cubits* not reeds. In this case the choice must be made between the Septuagint translation and the Hebrew. The Septuagint translation cannot be said to have equal authority with the accepted copies of the Hebrew Scriptures. The fact that the word "reeds" is found in the Hebrew is *prima facie* evidence that this is the correct reading. First, because there is no Hebrew copy of the Scriptures which reads "cubits," and, secondly, it is more reasonable to suppose that an error has crept into the Greek translation than into the Hebrew text. It is the universal rule in all textual criticism to accept the most unlikely reading as the correct one, if found in the text. With translators it is different; there is often a disposition to "amend the text" where the meaning is obscure.

The substitution of "cubits" for "reeds" in the text places on the horns of a dilemma those who suppose that the sanctuary is a small building, five hundred cubits square, surrounded by an enclosing wall measuring five hundred reeds. If we read "cubits" for the enclosing wall, then there is no other wall specified round the sanctuary at a distance from it; if, on the other hand, it be said that there is a 500 reed wall surrounding the sanctuary, then there is no measure of 500 cubits for fixing the size of the sanctuary within this area. The measure of 500 reeds, therefore, must be the outside wall of a building whose interior superficies is filled with courts and chambers. Since the measuring reed is said to be in the hand of him who "measures," the only method by which it is possible to draw a consistent plan of the building described in Ezekiel is to note that in all parts of the specification where cubits are not mentioned the verb "he made," or "he measured," applies. Thus wherever the word "reed" does not appear in the text it must be implied or understood. The absurdity of substituting the word "cubits" for "reeds," which is found in the Hebrew text of chapter XLII. will be seen more clearly when we consider the measurements for the setting out of the Holy Oblation and the city specified in the forty-eighth chapter of Ezekiel. See Chapter VI. Section I.

When the exiles rebuilt Solomon's Temple after it had been destroyed by the Babylonians, they were hampered through lack of funds, that they were not able to rebuild it to the same wonderful specification as the previous. So we can read In Habakkuk 2:3,9 *Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing? The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts.*

The next Temple was built to replace this small; one. It was built by a man called Herod who was a half Jew. He built it really for his own glory. The glory of God never entered that place. Jesus described it as a den of thieves. It also measured about 300m along the Royal Stoa, a long Colonnade where the doctors of the law argued all day. Going back to the words of the Prophet Haggai, he is saying that when the new Temple of the future will be built, all previous temples – including Herod's Temple will be nothing in comparison , The glory of the latter house will be greater than the former. So therefore it follows that it must be much larger.



In chapter 47, the prophet Ezekiel in vision is told to notice another wonderful feature of the advanced architecture. Under the portals of the many various gates, small rivers flowed, exiting the Holy Mount, as they ran down the sides of the hill, from the Spring at the top. As he traversed along the building, he was told to measure the depth of the accumulating water every 1000 cubits – 580 metres – See above picture.

In verse 5 we read *Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over.*

If the building was small say as long as the Houses of Parliament with so much water pumping out a succession of rivers from underneath it, such a building would be structurally unsound, and there would be hardly any space for other exits and entrances for the millions of people flowing unto it. The only way such a wonderful water feature being incorporated, without interfering with the huge volume of people, is to have an enormous foursquare frontage, surpassing anything which is normally built in the cities of today.

Indeed this is what is described in chapter 40 of Ezekiel: verse 2: *In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Israel, and set me upon a very high mountain, by which was as the frame of a city on the south.*

This is no ordinary city building, or even a grand palace, this building is described as a frame of a city, giving us the idea of a size, a building the size of a city, and framed by immense mile long porticos. A building which will be designed for multipurpose use, and will always be full of people, but able to deal with the ebb and flow of millions of people. Zechariah 14:16 *And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.*

Brother Terry