

# Message Five

## The Vision of the Holy Building of God in Its Outstanding Features

Scripture Reading: Ezek. 40:1—42:14

### Outline

#### Day 1

- I. **God's eternal purpose is to have a building as a mingling of Himself with His chosen people (Ezek. 40:1—48:35; Matt. 16:18; 1 Pet. 2:5); whatever God does among His people and among the nations on earth is for His building; this is confirmed by the book of Revelation, which is parallel to the book of Ezekiel and concludes with God's ultimate building, the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2—22:5):**
  - A. *After the destruction of the temple built by Solomon (2 Kings 25:8-9), the temple was rebuilt by the captives who returned from Babylon (Ezra 3:6b-13; 6:13-15).*
  - B. *Later, this temple was replaced by Herod's temple, which was built in forty-six years (John 2:20); Herod's temple was destroyed in A.D. 70 by the Roman army under Titus (Dan. 9:26; Matt. 23:38; 24:2).*
  - C. *Neither the temple in Ezra's day nor the temple of Herod's time was the full recovery of the temple built by Solomon; however, the temple of Ezekiel's vision was a more than full recovery of Solomon's temple; although the temple itself was the same*

size as the one built by Solomon (Ezek. 41:2, 4; cf. 1 Kings 6:2), a number of details related to the gates, the courts, and the buildings around the temple in Ezekiel's vision indicate an enlargement over Solomon's temple.

- D. Thus, beginning with Abraham's tent, progressing to the tabernacle and then to Solomon's temple, and concluding with the temple in Ezekiel's vision, there is a continual progression in the enlargement of God's building in the Old Testament; this enlargement signifies a continual increase in the experience of Christ by God's people—cf. 1 Kings 6:2, footnote 1.
- E. God's spiritual building in the New Testament, which begins with Jesus Christ, the incarnated God, as God's tabernacle (John 1:14) and God's temple (2:19-21), advances to the church, the Body of Christ, as the enlargement of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23; 2:20-22), and consummates with the New Jerusalem as the ultimate manifestation and enlargement of God's building in eternity (Rev. 21:2-3, 15-17).
- F. Literally, the visions concerning God's holy building in Ezekiel 40–48 will be fulfilled in the restoration, when the restored Israel will rebuild the temple and the city of Jerusalem for their dwelling with God in the millennium.
- G. The spiritual significances of all the details should be applied to the New Testament believers as components of God's spiritual building, the church.

**II. Ezekiel saw the first vision, the vision of the appearance of the glory of the Lord, when he was thirty years of age, the age at which a priest begins to function (1:1); he saw the last vision, the vision of the holy building of God,**

twenty years later (40:1; cf. 1:2), at the age of fifty, the age of retirement for a priest (Num. 4:3); this indicates that to see the building of God, Ezekiel needed more maturity in life (cf. Ezek. 1:1, footnote 1):

## Day 2

- A. *The beginning of the year (40:1) indicates that the vision of God's building brings us to a new beginning.*
- B. *The tenth day of the first month was the day on which the people of Israel prepared the lamb for the passover (Exo. 12:3); this indicates that every new beginning in our Christian life is based on Christ, the Passover lamb (John 1:29; 1 Cor. 5:7), and His redemption.*

**III. To see the vision of God's holy building, Ezekiel was brought from the land of captivity to a high mountain, signifying the resurrection and ascension of Christ, in the land of Israel (Ezek. 40:2), a type of the all-inclusive Christ as the portion allotted by God to His people (Deut. 8:7; Col. 1:12), and in the city of Jerusalem; this was the right position, standing, and angle for Ezekiel to see such a vision.**

**IV. The man of bronze at the gate of the building is Christ (Ezek. 40:3); bronze signifies being tested by God's judgment (Num. 16:37-39; 21:8-9); having passed through God's judgment, Christ is fully qualified to measure (take possession of by judging) what belongs to God's building (Zech. 2:1 and footnotes).**

**V. “The man said to me, Son of man, look with your eyes, and hear with your ears, and set your heart on all that I show you, because for this purpose you have been brought here, that it may be shown to you. Tell all that you see to the house of Israel”—Ezek. 40:4:**

- A. While God was showing the vision of His building to Ezekiel, the prophet needed to have keen sight and to listen intently.*
- B. Also, in order to absorb the things that would be shown to him, he had to set his heart on them; then he would be able to declare to God’s people all that he had seen and heard—cf. 1 John 1:3.*

### **Day 3**

**VI. The wall around the house is for separating what belongs to God from what cannot belong to Him—Ezek. 40:5:**

- A. The thickness and height of the wall are both six cubits; thus, a cross section of the wall is a square six cubits by six cubits.*
- B. The number six signifies man, who was created on the sixth day; hence, the wall with a square cross section of six cubits signifies Christ Himself as an upright, perfect, and complete man.*
- C. Such a Christ is a separating line of God’s building; only what is included in Christ belongs to God’s interests and God’s building—Eph. 2:21; 1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 4:1.*

**VII. The gate is divided into four sections: an outer threshold (Ezek. 40:6), a passage (a court, v. 14), an inner threshold (v. 7), and a porch (vv. 8-9):**

- A. As the entrance to God’s building, the gate signifies Christ as the gateway for us to enter into God and into God’s interests,*

*God's building, and God's kingdom (John 14:6, 20; Rev. 21:21a); whereas the wall separates sinners from God, the gate brings people into God and into God's building.*

## **Day 4**

*B. The three guardrooms on each side of the gate (Ezek. 40:7, 10) signify that the guardrooms are a person, Christ Himself, who as the Triune God (three) became a man (six) and was "split" on the cross:*

1. Each of the six guardrooms is six cubits square and is thus the same in size as a cross section of the wall; this indicates that the Lord Jesus in His person and work is the guard of God's glory and holiness.
2. By passing through Christ as the gate, we are qualified to enter into God's building, which is full of God's glory and holiness.

*C. The width of the porch is six cubits, the number six signifying man, who was created on the sixth day; the length of the porch is eight cubits (vv. 8-9), the number eight signifying Christ's resurrection, which took place on the first day of a new week as a new beginning (John 20:1):*

1. These dimensions signify that the Lord Jesus as a man, who is the gate of God's building, is fully in resurrection.
2. They also signify that when we arrive at the porch, we are in resurrection, in a new beginning.

*D. The width of the entrance of the gate was ten cubits (Ezek. 40:11), the number ten here implying the Ten Commandments; this indicates that whatever the Ten Commandments require, the entry of the gate fulfills; the Lord Jesus as the "square," upright, and perfect man fulfilled all the requirements of the Ten Commandments, and He has become the gate for us to enter into*

*God's building—cf. Rom. 8:4.*

*E. The palm trees on the posts of the gates signify that Christ, the guard of God's holiness and glory, is the everlasting, victorious One, standing, bearing, sustaining, and prevailing; palm trees grow in the wilderness, are evergreen, and signify victory and everlasting power (Exo. 15:27; Rev. 7:9); Christ is the post that supports and bears God's building with a victorious, everlasting life—Ezek. 40:16.*

*F. There were six different sections, or areas, of pavement around the inside of the wall on the east, the south, and the north sides of the outer court, and on each section there were five chambers, giving a total of thirty chambers (v. 17); in addition to the thirty chambers on the pavement, there were four small courts, one at each corner of the outer court (46:21-24, v. 21 and footnote 1); these were places for the people to boil the sacrifices:*

1. The pavement, probably made of stone, signifies the standing of regeneration, which makes us stones (John 1:42; Matt. 16:18), as a separation from the dirt of the world (cf. Luke 15:22, footnote 7).
2. The chambers were dining places where the people ate the sacrifices, indicating that they were places for people to enjoy Christ as the sacrifices and offerings; (whereas the priests ate in the inner court [Ezek. 42:1-14], the people ate in the outer court).
3. After passing through the gate of God's dwelling place, we come to the outer court and enter into the chambers, where, standing on the "stones" of our regeneration, we eat and enjoy Christ, who is the reality of all the offerings—Heb. 10:5-10.

## **Day 5**

### **VIII. The details of the gates to the inner court (Ezek. 40:28-**

**37) were the same as those of the gates to the outer court, indicating that as we enter into the inner court, we repeat our experience of Christ; we experience the same Christ, but we experience more of Him (Phil. 3:8-10):**

- A. *At the entrance to the inner court there is another set of stairs (cf. Ezek. 40:22, 26), consisting of eight steps; this indicates that the more inward we progress in our experience of God's building, the higher we become.*
- B. *The number eight signifies resurrection; this indicates that if we would come into the inner court, we need to be in resurrection; all the natural life and the natural man must be repudiated and crossed out.*
- C. *A chamber, probably within the north gate of the inner court, was for the priests to wash the burnt offerings (v. 38); this indicates that at this point in our experience, we are ready to be a burnt offering for God:*
  - 1. When we pass through the gate to the inner court, we are in resurrection and on a higher level.
  - 2. Here, we are not merely the common people in the outer court; we have become the priests who are ready to minister to the Lord by offering the burnt offering, meaning that we are ready to be absolute for the Lord—Lev. 1:3, footnote 1.
- D. *The altar, which signifies the cross of Christ, is not only the center but also the circumference of God's holy building—Ezek. 40:47:*
  - 1. The cross is implied in the gate, in the eating of the sacrifices, in the boiling houses, and in the tables on which the sacrifices are slain (v. 39); thus, the cross spreads in every direction and to every corner of God's building; if we wish to

contact God and enjoy His riches in His house, we must pass through the cross.

2. The death on the cross was the release of God (Luke 12:49-50; John 12:24) and the termination of man and all negative things (Rom. 6:6; Heb. 2:14; 9:26-28; Gal. 6:14; Eph. 2:14-15); in Christ's death God passed through death in man to be released, and man died in God to be terminated.

## Day 6

### **IX. Whereas the altar signifies the cross, the temple signifies both Christ (John 2:19-21) and the church, the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 3:16; Eph. 2:21):**

- A. *The cross, Christ, and the church are the central subject not only of the New Testament but also of the entire Bible; that the altar stands in front of the temple indicates that we cannot have the church apart from the cross; we can have the reality of the church only after we have passed through the cross.*
- B. *All that we do and say in our life and work should be through the cross and by the Spirit to dispense Christ into others for the building up of the Body of Christ.*
- C. *The elevation of the temple was ten steps higher than that of the inner court and twenty-five steps higher than the elevation outside the temple (Ezek. 40:49, 22, 31); this indicates that the further inward we proceed in our experience of God's building, the higher we rise.*
- D. *The fact that Ezekiel does not give us the measurement of the pillars indicates that they signify a supporting strength that is unlimited and immeasurable; thus, the two pillars by each post signify Christ as God's witness (two) bearing the house of God with a strength that is unlimited and immeasurable—cf. John 3:34; Phil. 4:13.*



- E. *The entrance of the porch measured fourteen cubits (Ezek. 40:48), the entrance to the outer temple (the Holy Place), ten cubits, and the entrance into the inner temple (the Holy of Holies), six cubits (41:3); this indicates that the further inward we progress in our experience of God's building, the narrower the way becomes; the closer we are to the Lord, the more we will be restricted by Him (cf. Matt. 7:13-14).*
- F. *The number six in relation to the thickness of the wall (Ezek. 41:5) signifies the humanity of the Lord Jesus as the standing strength of God's dwelling place; in the tabernacle the boards of acacia wood standing upright also signify the humanity of the Lord Jesus (Exo. 26:15); as a proper human being, the Lord Jesus is the standing and supporting wall of God's building.*
- G. *The thirty side chambers for expression (Ezek. 41:6) are based on the thirty chambers for enjoyment (40:17); we can express Christ only to the extent that we have enjoyed Him; our enjoyment of Christ eventually becomes the fullness, the expression, of Christ (Eph. 3:16-19).*
- H. *The side chambers becoming wider as they go up (Ezek. 41:7) indicates that as we go higher with the Lord, we become broader and richer in our experience (cf. Eph. 3:18); this indicates that the experience of God's holy building is progressive.*
- I. *All the parts of the building related to the temple were paneled with wood (Ezek. 41:16); wood signifies the uplifted humanity of Jesus; in God's building in Ezekiel, the primary material is the crucified, resurrected, and ascended humanity of Jesus.*
- J. *On all the wooden paneling, cherubim and palm trees were carved (vv. 18-20):*
1. *Cherubim signify the glory of the Lord manifested upon the creatures (10:18;*

Heb. 9:5), and palm trees, which grow in the wilderness and are evergreen, signify the victory of Christ and the everlasting and ever-existing power of Christ.

2. The carving of the palm trees and the cherubim on the walls indicates that the victory of Christ and the glory of the Lord have been “carved” into our being through sufferings—cf. Col. 1:24.
3. In Ezekiel 1 the cherubim had four faces (vv. 6, 10), but in the carvings on the walls they had only two faces—the face of a man and the face of a lion, signifying and expressing victory in humanity—41:19.
4. The fact that between every two cherubim there was a palm tree (v. 18) signifies that as parts of God’s building, we manifest the victory of Christ in the manifestation of the glorious image of Christ (cf. 2 Cor. 2:14-16; 3:18).

*K. The incense altar standing in the temple was made only of wood, signifying the humanity of Jesus—Ezek. 41:22:*

1. In the tabernacle and in the temple there were the incense altar and the table of the bread of the Presence, but here in Ezekiel the altar is also the table, the altar being for us to offer Christ as incense to God for His satisfaction, and the table being for God to prepare Christ as food for our satisfaction—v. 22.
2. The altar of wood was put in a place of wood paneling carved with cherubim and palm trees, indicating that if we are those who manifest the glory and victory of Christ, we will have the altar-table for God and us to have fellowship together in Christ; here God is satisfied by the incense we offer in Christ, and we are satisfied by the food supplied by God in Christ.

*L. The function of the “doors” in the church (v. 23) are to let the positive persons and things in and to keep the negative persons (cf. Matt. 7:15; Acts 20:29) and things out; the fact that each door had two swinging leaves (Ezek. 41:24) indicates that the doors in the church should be flexible.*

*M. The fact that the palm trees were carved on the walls next to the windows indicates that victory and everlasting power and strength always go together with spiritual air and divine light; this means that our victory and power are related to the life-giving Spirit; if we enjoy the life-giving Spirit, we will also enjoy Christ's victory, power, and strength.*

**X. The holy chambers, located on both the north side and the south side, are buildings that connect the inner court with the outer court—42:1:**

*A. The chambers on the pavement in the outer court are for the people to eat the offerings, whereas the holy chambers are for the priests to eat the offerings and also to place and store the offerings and to lay their priestly garments (vv. 13-14); whereas the offerings signify Christ as our enjoyment, the priestly garments signify Christ as our expression (Exo. 28:2).*

*B. In the holy chambers we reach the highest peak of spiritual experience; to live in the holy chambers is to live in Christ (Phil. 4:13), to eat the offerings in the holy chambers is to eat Christ (John 6:57), and to wear the holy garments is to wear Christ for His expression (Rom. 13:14, 12).*

*C. Like the side chambers, the holy chambers are of three stories (Ezek. 42:3), indicating that they correspond to the fullness, the expression, of Christ (41:6); the priests enjoy Christ to such an extent that the height of their chambers equals the height of the fullness of Christ (cf. Eph. 3:16-19).*



# WEEK 5 — DAY 1

## Morning Nourishment

Ezek. 40:1-2 In the twenty-fifth year of our captivity, ...the hand of Jehovah was upon me...In the visions of God He brought me into the land of Israel and set me down upon a very high mountain, and on it to the south there was a structure like a city.

Rev. 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.

The three previous sections of Ezekiel, concerning the glory of the Lord (ch. 1), the judgment of God (chs. 2—32), and the recovery of the Lord (chs. 33—39), are all for the holy building of God (chs. 40—48). God's eternal purpose is to have a building as a mingling of Himself with His chosen people. Whatever God does among His people and among the nations on earth is for His building. This is confirmed by the book of Revelation, which is parallel to the book of Ezekiel and concludes with God's ultimate building, the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2—22:5). (Ezek. 40:1, footnote 1)

## Today's Reading

After the destruction of the temple built by Solomon (2 Kings 25:8-9), the temple was rebuilt by the captives who returned from Babylon (Ezra 3:6b-13; 6:13-15). Later, this temple was replaced by Herod's temple, which was built in forty-six years (John 2:20). Herod's temple was destroyed in A.D. 70 by the Roman army under Titus (Dan. 9:26; Matt. 23:38; 24:2). Neither the temple in Ezra's day nor the temple of Herod's time was the full recovery of the temple built by Solomon. However, the temple of Ezekiel's vision was a more than full recovery of Solomon's temple. Although the temple itself was the same size as the one built by Solomon (Ezek. 41:2, 4; cf. 1 Kings 6:2), a number of details related to the gates, the courts, and the buildings around the temple in Ezekiel's vision

indicate an enlargement over Solomon's temple. Thus, beginning with Abraham's tent (see footnote 1 on Gen. 13:18), progressing to the tabernacle and then to Solomon's temple, and concluding with the temple in Ezekiel's vision, there is a continual progression in the enlargement of God's building in the Old Testament. This enlargement signifies a continual increase in the experience of Christ by God's people (cf. footnote 1 on 1 Kings 6:2). God's building in the Old Testament prefigures God's spiritual building in the New Testament, which begins with Jesus Christ, the incarnated God, as God's tabernacle (John 1:14) and God's temple (John 2:19-21), advances to the church, the Body of Christ, as the enlargement of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23; 2:20-22), and consummates with the New Jerusalem as the ultimate manifestation and enlargement of God's building in eternity (Rev. 21:2-3, 15-17).

Literally, the visions concerning God's holy building in Ezekiel 40 through 48 will be fulfilled in the restoration, when the restored Israel will rebuild the temple and the city of Jerusalem for their dwelling with God in the millennium. The spiritual significances of all the details should be applied to the New Testament believers as components of God's spiritual building, the church. (Ezek. 40:1, footnote 1)

At the very beginning of Ezekiel 40—48, we are told the time of the vision—the year, the month, and the day [40:1]. If we compare the year mentioned here with that mentioned at the beginning of the first chapter, we will see that there is a difference of twenty years. The vision of the appearance of the glory of the Lord which Ezekiel saw in chapter 1 was seen in the fifth year of the captivity [v. 2]. The vision of the building of God's house which he saw in chapter 40 was in the twenty-fifth year of the captivity. There is a difference of twenty years, which is not a short time. We need to remember that when Ezekiel saw the first vision, he was thirty years of age [1:1], the age at which a priest began to function. When he saw the last vision, he was fifty years of age, the age of retirement for a priest. This is very meaningful, for it indicates that to see the building of God Ezekiel needed more maturity in life. (Life-study of Ezekiel, p. 209)

Further Reading: Life-study of Ezekiel, msg. 19

# WEEK 5 — DAY 2

## Morning Nourishment

Ezek. 40:1-2 ...At the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month, ...in the visions of God He brought me into the land of Israel and set me down upon a very high mountain, and on it to the south there was a structure like a city.

4 ...Son of man, look with your eyes, and hear with your ears, and set your heart on all that I show you....Tell all that you see to the house of Israel.

Ezekiel saw the visions at the beginning of the year, in the first month. The first month indicates a new start. This indicates that with us in our experience, the building of God must have a new start. When we see something regarding the building up of the church, this is a new start in our life.

The record speaks also of the tenth day. According to Exodus 12:3 the tenth day of the first month was the day that the people of Israel prepared the lamb for the Passover. This surely points to Christ, our Passover, for our redemption. From this we see that whenever we have a new beginning in our Christian life, it must be based on Christ and His redemption. (Life-study of Ezekiel, p. 211)

## Today's Reading

Now we need to consider the place to see the vision. Ezekiel did not see the vision concerning the building of God in the land of captivity. Rather, he was brought back to the holy land, the land of Israel (Ezek. 40:2). Since this land signifies Christ, to be brought back to the land of Israel is to be brought back to Christ. In addition to being brought back to the land of Israel, Ezekiel was brought to a high mountain, signifying a place of resurrection and ascension. When we come back to Christ, we may sense in our spirit that we are in an elevated place, that is, in the resurrected and ascended Christ. Furthermore, Ezekiel was brought back to Jerusalem.

In order to see something properly, we need the right position, the right standing, and the right angle. If we are wrong either in position or in standing, we will not be able to see.... If we want to see God's building, we need to be on the mountain in Jerusalem.

Ezekiel was not the only person who saw the vision of God's building. In the book of Revelation the apostle John told us that he was carried away in spirit to a high mountain to see the holy city, New Jerusalem (21:10).

If Ezekiel had remained in Babylon in the captivity, he could not have seen the building. Likewise, if he had been on a plain and not on the mountaintop, he could not have seen the vision of God's building. Therefore, if we would see this vision, we need to grow up and to go up. This means that we need maturity in life and that we need to be on the high mountain. Then we will be able to see the building of God.

Before Ezekiel saw the vision of the building, he saw the vision of a man. Unlike the man in Ezekiel 1, this man did not look like electrum but instead looked like brass (Ezek. 40:3).... In chapter 40 He is not on the throne; He is at the gate of the building, measuring. In the Bible to measure means to judge and take possession.

After a certain thing has been judged, it can stand any kind of test or examination. It can also withstand further judgment. The Lord Jesus is such a person. He passed God's judgment, and now He has become a test to others. Because He was able to stand all kinds of tests, examinations, and judgments, He is fully qualified to measure everything, including the building of God. By His judgment He measures what belongs to God's building.

Ezekiel 40:4 [indicates that]...while God was showing the vision of His building to Ezekiel, the prophet needed to have keen sight and to listen intently. Also, in order to absorb the things that would be shown to him, he had to set his heart upon them. Then he would be able to declare to God's people all that he had seen and heard. (Life-study of Ezekiel, pp. 211-213)

Further Reading: Life-study of Ezekiel, msg. 19



# WEEK 5 — DAY 3

## Morning Nourishment

Ezek. 40:5 Now there was a wall all around the outside of the house, and in the man's hand there was a measuring reed six cubits long, each cubit being a cubit and a handbreadth. So He measured the thickness of the structure, one reed; and the height, one reed.

Eph. 2:21 In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord.

In Ezekiel 40—48, a section on God's building, three main things are covered: the holy temple, the holy city, and the holy land. The temple, the city, and the land are all holy. It is significant that Ezekiel begins not from the outside but from the inside.... In His economy God always begins from the inside, not from the outside. We see an indication of this in 1 Thessalonians 5:23, which speaks of our "spirit and soul and body."

The first item we need to see concerning the temple is the wall. The temple has a wall on all four sides. The wall is for separation, separating what belongs to God from what cannot belong to Him. It separates what should belong to God and what should never belong to God. The wall is thus a separating line.

The measurement of the wall indicates that it signifies Christ Himself as a separating line. Whatever is within Christ belongs to God's interests and to God's building, but whatever is outside of Christ is excluded from God's interests and God's building. In a city of millions of people, we can know who is of God and who is not of God by Christ as the separating line. Whoever is in Christ belongs to God, and whoever is outside of Christ is separated from God. In other words, whoever belongs to Christ is within the wall, and whoever is outside of Christ is outside of the wall. (Life-study of Ezekiel, pp. 214, 216)

## Today's Reading

The measurement of the wall is quite unusual. I do not think that through all the centuries of human history, there has ever been such a wall. This wall is six cubits high and six cubits thick. If we could look at a cross section of the wall, we would be looking at a square six cubits by six cubits. The number six refers to man, who was created on the sixth day. Since the wall is six cubits high and six cubits thick and since six is the number of man, we may say that the wall signifies the Lord Jesus as a square, upright, perfect, and complete man. As a square, upright, perfect, complete, and even resurrected man, Christ is the separating line. Because He is square and upright, He is fully qualified. In Him there is no imperfection; with Him there is nothing lacking and nothing crooked. Rather, with Him everything is straight, upright, perfect, and complete. Again I say, such a man is the separating line.

If only the Lord Jesus were such a man, we would be excluded. We are not square, straight, or upright. We surely are not perfect or complete. Although we are so short, we should not try to imitate Christ. It is impossible for any fallen human beings to imitate Christ, the One who is square, upright, perfect, and complete.

When we come to the Lord Jesus and compare ourselves with Him, we are exposed and condemned. For example, in Luke 2 we see that when the Lord Jesus was a child of twelve, no matter how much He was for His Father, He still obeyed His parents. Young people, you are not obedient to your parents while you are seeking after your Father's interests, but the Lord Jesus was obedient. From this one example we can realize that the life history of the Lord Jesus is a condemning factor to us.

Praise the Lord that He is not only the wall but also the gate. As the wall He excludes us and condemns us, but as the gate He brings us into God's building. If we are in the sphere of God's building today, it is because Christ as the gate has brought us in.

Christ is our gate, our door. In John 14:6 the Lord Jesus tells us that He is the way to the Father. Apart from Him, no one can come to the Father. Christ is the gateway for us to enter into God and into God's interests, God's building, and God's kingdom.... Ezekiel...saw the details concerning Christ as the gate. (Life-study of Ezekiel, pp. 216-217)

Further Reading: Life-study of Ezekiel, msgs. 19-20

# WEEK 5 – DAY 4

## Morning Nourishment

Ezek. 40:10 And there were three guardrooms on one side and three on the other side of the gate...; and the three of them had the same measurement...

Rom. 8:3-4 ...God, sending His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin and concerning sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.

[In Ezekiel 40 each] gate [of the temple] is composed of four sections: the outer threshold [v. 6], the passage [a court with guardrooms (v. 14)], the inner threshold [v. 7], and the porch [vv. 8-9]. There are three thresholds, which are the outer threshold, the inner threshold, and a passage between these two which may be considered a hallway. The middle part, the passage, is also called a threshold, but as a help to our understanding we may use the word passage. Thus, here we have the outer threshold, the passage, the inner threshold, and the porch. The porch is somewhat like a lobby to the temple. By passing through the outer threshold, the passage, the inner threshold, and the lobby, one can enter into the temple. (Life-study of Ezekiel, p. 218)

## Today's Reading

Ezekiel 40:10 says that in this passage are six little chambers. Some of the better translations use the word guardrooms. These are the rooms where the guards stay to protect the temple. Each of these guardrooms is six cubits square and is thus the same in size as a cross section of the wall. This indicates that the Lord Jesus in His person and work is the real guard of God's glory and holiness.

If there were no wall, sinful people would be able to enter into the temple, and that would be an insult to God's glory and holiness. Whereas the wall separates sinners from God, the gate brings people into God and into God's building. In

order to be the gate, the Lord Jesus had to fulfill all the requirements of the Ten Commandments. He was a square, upright, and proper man, able to fulfill the Ten Commandments, and now He Himself is the guardrooms of God's glory and holiness.... By passing through Christ as the gate, we are qualified to enter into God's building, which is full of God's glory and holiness.

The six guardrooms are divided into two groups of three. Again we have the number three signifying the Triune God, who became a man and was "split" into two. This indicates that the guardrooms are a person, Christ Himself.

Within the gate is the entry of the gate, which is exactly ten cubits wide [v. 11]. It is significant that the opening of the entrance is ten cubits in width. In the Bible the number ten first refers to the Ten Commandments. Whatever the Ten Commandments require, the entry of the gate fulfills. The width of the entry is exactly the span of the Ten Commandments. This indicates that the Lord Jesus fulfilled all the requirements of the Ten Commandments. When we are faced with the Ten Commandments, we are excluded by them. However, the Lord Jesus was able to fulfill every commandment, and He has become the gate for us to enter into God's building.

There are six different sections, or areas, of pavement, and on each section there are five chambers. This means that there are thirty chambers [v. 17]....In addition to the thirty chambers on the pavement, there are four small courts, one at each corner of the outer court. These four courts at the four corners are places for boiling the sacrifices. In modern terms, these are kitchens, places for cooking food [that] ...are used...by the people. Whereas the priests eat in the inner court, the people eat in the outer court.

Outside of these kitchens, these cooking places, are some chambers. These chambers are for eating, ... [like a] dining room, a place for eating the food prepared in the kitchen....After we pass through the gate, we come to the outer court and enter into the chambers to eat, to enjoy, Christ, who is the reality of all the offerings. (Life-study of Ezekiel, pp. 220-221, 218, 226-227)

Further Reading: Life-study of Ezekiel, msgs. 19-20

# WEEK 5 – DAY 5

## Morning Nourishment

Ezek. 40:31 And its porches were toward the outer court, and palm trees were upon its posts, and its steps had eight steps.

Phil. 3:10-11 To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if perhaps I may attain to the out-resurrection from the dead.

As we enter into the inner court, we also ascend higher. At the entrance to the inner court, there is another set of stairs, consisting not of seven steps but of eight [cf. Ezek. 40:31, footnote 1]. Outside on the street there are seven steps leading up to the gate of the outer court....From this we see that entering into the inner court means that the more inward we travel, the higher we become.... When we pass through the gate into the inner court, we are fifteen steps higher than the people who are outside the wall.

The number seven signifies completion, and the number eight signifies resurrection. This indicates that if we would come into the inner court, we need to be in resurrection. All the natural life and the natural man must be repudiated and crossed out. (Life-study of Ezekiel, p. 230)

## Today's Reading

In the inner court we repeat our experience of Christ. We experience Christ again by passing through another gate. We experience the same Christ, but we experience more of Him. This ushers us into the inner court.

In the outer court there is some enjoyment through the boiling and the eating, but there is no service, no ministry to the Lord. But when we pass through the gate to the inner court, the ministering begins immediately.

There is a chamber, probably within the north gate of the inner court, for the priests to wash the burnt offerings (Ezek. 40:38)....The chamber is only for

washing the burnt offering. This indicates that at this point in our experience, we are ready to be a burnt offering for God. Only when we are in resurrection and on a higher level, are we ready to be absolute for God.... Here in the inner court begins the life that is for God.

Looking at the plot plan of the temple compound [Life-study of Ezekiel, p. 215], we can see that no matter through which gate we enter, we will arrive at the altar. When God comes from the temple to meet man, He likewise arrives at the altar. Therefore, the altar is not only the center of the universe but also the meeting place of God with man and of man with God....God and man met together on the cross in the way of death.... God, however, cannot be affected by death....The death of Christ on the cross was a wonderful release to God and a wonderful termination to us. We all need this vision of the altar.... The riches of God were released [on the cross], and all the negative things were terminated there.

Throughout the holy building of God, we can see the cross—at the main gate, on the pavement, at the boiling places in the corners, and at the tables in the inner court. The cross, therefore, is not only the center but also the circumference. The cross spreads in every direction and to every corner. After we have been saved, we will meet the cross everywhere. We do not experience the cross once for all—we experience the cross again and again. Those who pursue the Lord will meet the cross at every turn....They [may] meet the cross through their children, ...their spouse, or through illness, ... [through] the church or through the co-workers. The reason that the cross is everywhere is that we must go through the cross in order to contact God. Thank the Lord that God gives us the cross and that the cross gives us God. The ones who love God the most and experience Him the most are the ones who have gone through the cross.

The all-inclusive death of Christ worked out a mingling which brought man into God. In that death God died in man to be released, and man died in God to be terminated. (Life-study of Ezekiel, pp. 230-231, 236-239, 241, 244)

Further Reading: Life-study of Ezekiel, msg. 21

# WEEK 5 — DAY 6

## Morning Nourishment

Eph. 3:16-17 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man, that Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith...

19 ...That you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.

After we pass the altar, we come to the temple. The temple is composed of three main sections: the porch, the outer temple, which is called the Holy Place, and the inner temple, which is called the Most Holy or the Holy of Holies. In addition, ...side chambers surround the entire building of the temple.

Ten steps lead up to the porch (Ezek. 40:49).... We can see that the compound of the temple has three levels: the first level in the outer court, the second level in the inner court, and the third level in the temple....The street outside the wall is on a level even lower than that of the outer court. If we count from the street outside of the wall of the compound of the temple, there are four levels, with the street as the first level, the outer court as the second, the inner court as the third, and the ground floor of the temple as the fourth.

The further inward we proceed in the temple, the higher we rise....The temple is altogether twenty-five steps above the level of the street....From the level of the street to the level of the temple should be fifteen cubits. (Life-study of Ezekiel, pp. 249, 251)

## Today's Reading

From the steps we go on to the two pillars. We need to differentiate the pillars from the posts of the temple (Ezek. 41:21). The posts are square, whereas the pillars are round. While the measurements of the posts are given, they are not given concerning the pillars. The fact that Ezekiel does not give us the measurement of the pillars indicates that they must be unlimited. Thus, these pillars signify Christ as God's witness bearing the house of God with a strength

which is unlimited and immeasurable.

After we pass through the porch, we come to the outer temple. The entrance to the outer temple measures ten cubits (41:2). The first entrance, that of the porch, measures fourteen cubits, but the second entrance to the outer temple measures ten cubits. This indicates that the further inward we progress, the more narrow the way becomes. As we will see, the entrance into the inner temple is even narrower, measuring six cubits. According to 41:2 there are five cubits on the sides of the doors. This indicates responsibility in testimony.

As the side chambers which surround the house increase in height, they also increase in breadth....As the side chambers go higher, they also become broader. This indicates that as we go higher with the Lord, we also become broader and richer in our experience.

The holy chambers are connecting buildings which connect the inner court with the outer court. These chambers are located both on the north side and the south side (42:13). The important point is that the holy chambers are for the priests to eat the offerings. We have seen that the chambers on the pavement in the outer court are for the people to eat the offerings. Now we see that the holy chambers are for the priests to eat the offerings and also to place and store the offerings. It is here that the priests lay their priestly clothing (v. 14).

It is here in the holy chambers that one reaches the highest peak of spiritual experience. To live in the holy chambers is to live in Christ. To eat the offerings in the holy chambers is to eat Christ. To wear the holy garments is to wear Christ. From this we see that in the holy chambers we live in Christ, we enjoy Christ, and we express Christ.

The holy chambers, like the side chambers, are of three stories (Ezek. 42:5-6). In height they are equal to the side chambers, indicating that they correspond to the fullness of Christ. The priests enjoy Christ, wear Christ, store Christ, and possess Christ to such an extent that the height of their chambers equals the height of the side chambers, which signifies the fullness of Christ. (Life-study of Ezekiel, pp. 251-255, 269-270)

Further Reading: Life-study of Ezekiel, msgs. 22-23



# WEEK 5 — HYMN

## Freed from self and Adam's nature

### The Church — Her Building

840

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It consists of four staves of music. The lyrics are written below the notes. Chord symbols are placed above the notes. The lyrics are: 1. Freed from self and A - dam's na - ture, Lord, I would be built by Thee With the saints in - to Thy tem - ple, Where Thy glo - ry we shall see. From pe - cu - liar traits de - liv - er, From my in - de - pen - dent ways, That a dwell - ing place for Thee, Lord, We will be thru all our days.

**2.** By Thy life and by its flowing  
I can grow and be transformed,  
With the saints coordinated,  
Builted up, to Thee conformed;  
Keep the order in the Body,  
There to function in Thy will,  
Ever serving, helping others,  
All Thy purpose to fulfill.

**3.** In my knowledge and experience  
I would not exalted be,  
But submitting and accepting  
Let the Body balance me;  
Holding fast the Head, and growing  
With His increase, in His way,  
By the joints and bands supplying,  
Knit together day by day.

**4.** By Thy Spirit daily strengthened  
In the inner man with might,  
I would know Thy love surpassing,  
Know Thy breadth and length and height;  
Ever of Thy riches taking,  
Unto all Thy fulness filled,  
Ever growing into manhood,  
That Thy Body Thou may build.

**5.** In God's house and in Thy Body  
Builted up I long to be,  
That within this corporate vessel  
All shall then Thy glory see;  
That Thy Bride, the glorious city,  
May appear upon the earth,  
As a lampstand brightly beaming  
To express to all Thy worth.

