

Temple In The Millennial Kingdom As Described In Ezekiel

When I think about dying, I do not look forward to the possibility that our Lord may not rescue me from the physical pain associated with the process of dying. But I do look forward to that event. The apostle Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 5:6, 8 that believers should be encouraged about dying and going to heaven. He said,

Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord . . . we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord. 2 Corinthians 5:6, 8 (NASB)

So, I look forward to that glorious day when I will see the Lord. In this verse I notice that Paul does not mention seeing Adam, Eve, Moses, King David, the apostle John, or his mother or father. He only mentions the Lord. In heaven, we will be with the Lord!

Another event that I am looking forward to is the second coming of Christ, whenever that occurs. On that occasion we will descend from heaven with the Lord at His second coming. Zechariah 14:5 tells us that

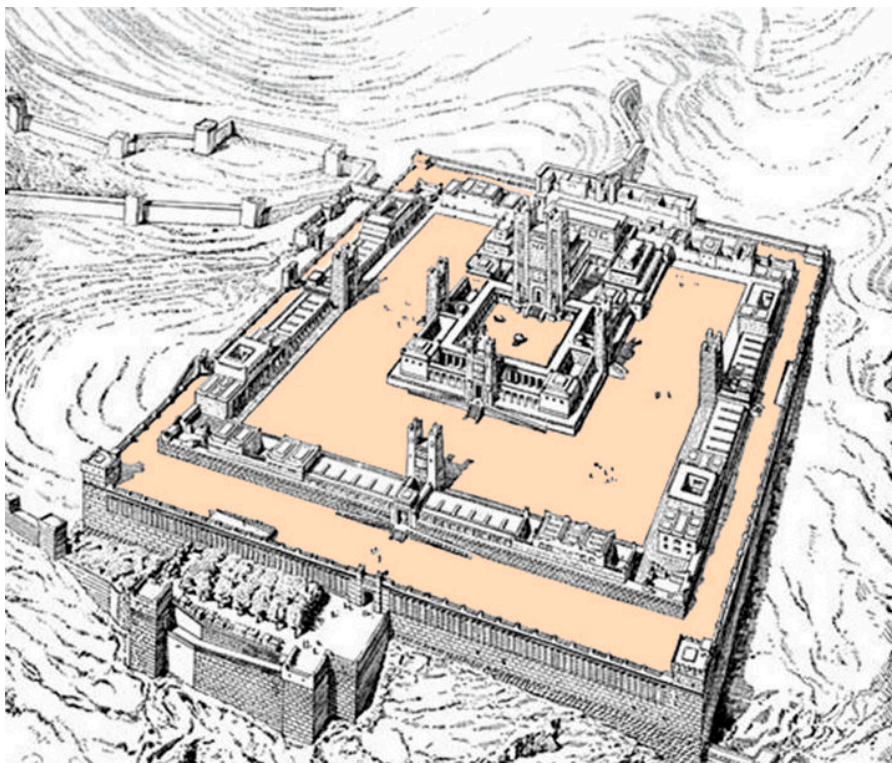
when our God comes, His holy ones will come with Him. The holy ones refers to both the holy angels and the saints of all the ages. So when the second coming occurs, we are told in Revelation 19:14,

And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. Revelation 19:14 (NASB)

Imagine dropping down in the sky toward the armies of the world and seeing Christ save Israel from utter destruction as He destroys the armies attacking Jerusalem.

The next exciting event will be the Sheep and Goat Judgment, also called the Judgment of the Nations. That judgment determines who will be allowed to enter

the millennial kingdom. So, who will be allowed to enter the millennial kingdom? The answer is the holy angels and the believers of all the ages. This will include the immortal believers from the time of Adam and Eve and the mortal believers who survived the tribulation. These are the ones who will enter the millennial kingdom. All of



Ezekiel's Temple In The Millennial Kingdom (Public Domain)

the unbelievers from the tribulation will be sent to hell, and then the millennial kingdom will begin.

Isaiah 65:17-25 reveals that life during the millennial kingdom will be amazing. Verse 23 tells us that every mortal mother who is pregnant will successfully give birth to her children. No babies will be stillborn or deformed. Verse 20 says that every mortal person will live long because it describes anyone who dies at 100 years as a youth! Vineyard and crops will be extremely productive (v. 21). Crime will not exist (v. 22). Verse 25 reveals that the animal kingdom will be at peace. It says that the wolf will eat grass together with the lamb. The lion and ox will eat together, and the dust of the ground will be a snake's food. The same message is repeated in Isaiah 11:1-6. In fact, Isaiah 11:8 says that a child will play with the cobra and not be hurt. Isaiah 55:6-13 paints the picture of the life believers will enjoy in the millennial kingdom. This well-known passage tells us in verse 12 that believers will experience the following,

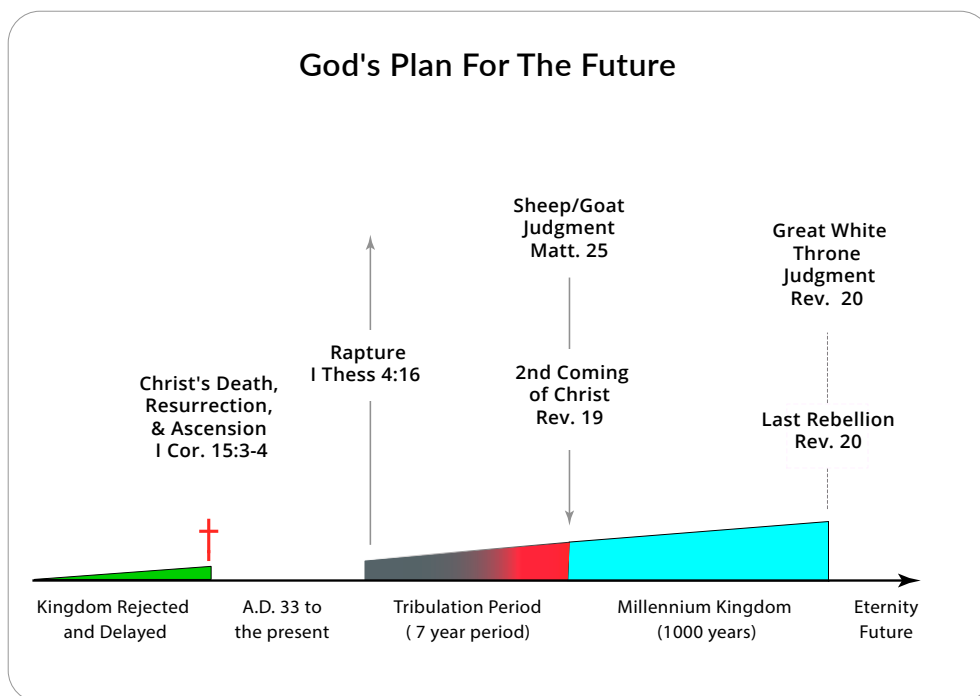
For you will go out with joy
 And be led forth with peace;
 The mountains and the hills will break forth into
 shouts of joy before you,
 And all the trees of the field will clap their hands.

Isaiah 55:12 (NASB)

In addition, Joel 3:18-21 paints a picture of Israel as a lush and productive land. There are other passages we could visit, but that gives insight into life in the millennial kingdom. The millennial kingdom cannot refer to the eternal state because Isaiah 65:20 reveals that people can die in the kingdom.

Overview of Ezekiel 40-48. Now I have a question. What will we find in the millennial kingdom? What else will we see and experience? Ezekiel 40-48 answers that question. It gives us unusual insight into the millennial kingdom as it focuses on worship in the kingdom and God's holiness and not the mortal human life, the animal kingdom, or the vegetation.

To be more specific, Ezekiel 40-48 describes the design of the millennial temple (40:5-42:20), the return of God's glory to the Holy of Holies in the temple (43:1-9), and the worship that every believer will experience in the kingdom (43:10-44:31). In addition, we will be introduced to the leadership that will rule and govern over the kingdom (45:1-46:24), a very unique river (47:1-23), Israel's new home (48:1-29), and Yahweh's presence (48:30-35). That is what we will discover in our next several studies.



Third Vision of Ezekiel. This study is from Ezekiel 40:1-42:20. It describes the temple in the millennial kingdom. But before we are given the descriptions of the temple, verses 1-4 give us an introduction to this new vision. Verses 1-2 say,

In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was taken, on that same day the hand of the LORD was upon me and He brought me there. In the visions of God He brought me into the land of Israel and set me on a very high mountain, and on it to the south there was a structure like a city.
Ezekiel 40:1-2 (NASB)

Verse 2 states that the prophet Ezekiel was given visions and placed upon a mountain in the land of Israel. We are told this occurred on the twenty-fifth year after some of the Israelites were exiled and on the tenth day of the month of Nisan. We are told that the prophecy was given at the beginning of the religious new year which would be the month of Nisan. He said the vision occurred on Nisan 10 in the twenty-fifth year after the exile. We discovered in Ezekiel 1:2 that the prophet was exiled near the river Chebar in the year 597 B.C. Therefore, the date of this prophecy is Nisan 10, 572 B.C.

So, Ezekiel had a series of visions on that date. He was taken to a mountain in the land of Israel on which he saw a structure like a city. We will soon learn that this structure is the new temple in the millennial kingdom. Many people have tried to identify this mountain. But since the prophet does not tell us, no one knows positively. Yet, there are a variety of opinions such as Mount Hermon and Mount Zion. Some people have struggled with the idea that the millennial temple we are about to read about could fit on top of Mount Zion since it is too large for the mountain. Mount Zion is where Jerusalem sits today. But Revelation 16:20 tells us that at the end of the tribulation the mountains of the earth will disappear. That is, the earth will be flattened. Zechariah 14:9-10 adds that Jerusalem will rise up and be the only mountain on the earth. Micah 4:1 says that the

millennial temple will be chief over the mountains. That will be easy since all of the other mountains will have disappeared. So, I believe Ezekiel was taken to the mountain we call Zion. However, it will then be much, much larger.

Verse 3 now describes an angel. This angel could be the angel of the Lord, or a theophany, since he is called "Lord" in verse 1. He will give Ezekiel a tour of the millennial temple in this chapter and chapters 41 and 42. Verse 3 says,

So He brought me there; and behold, there was a man whose appearance was like the appearance of bronze, with a line of flax and a measuring rod in his hand; and he was standing in the gateway. Ezekiel 40:3 (NASB)

We are told this angel appears as a man and has a rod in his hand.

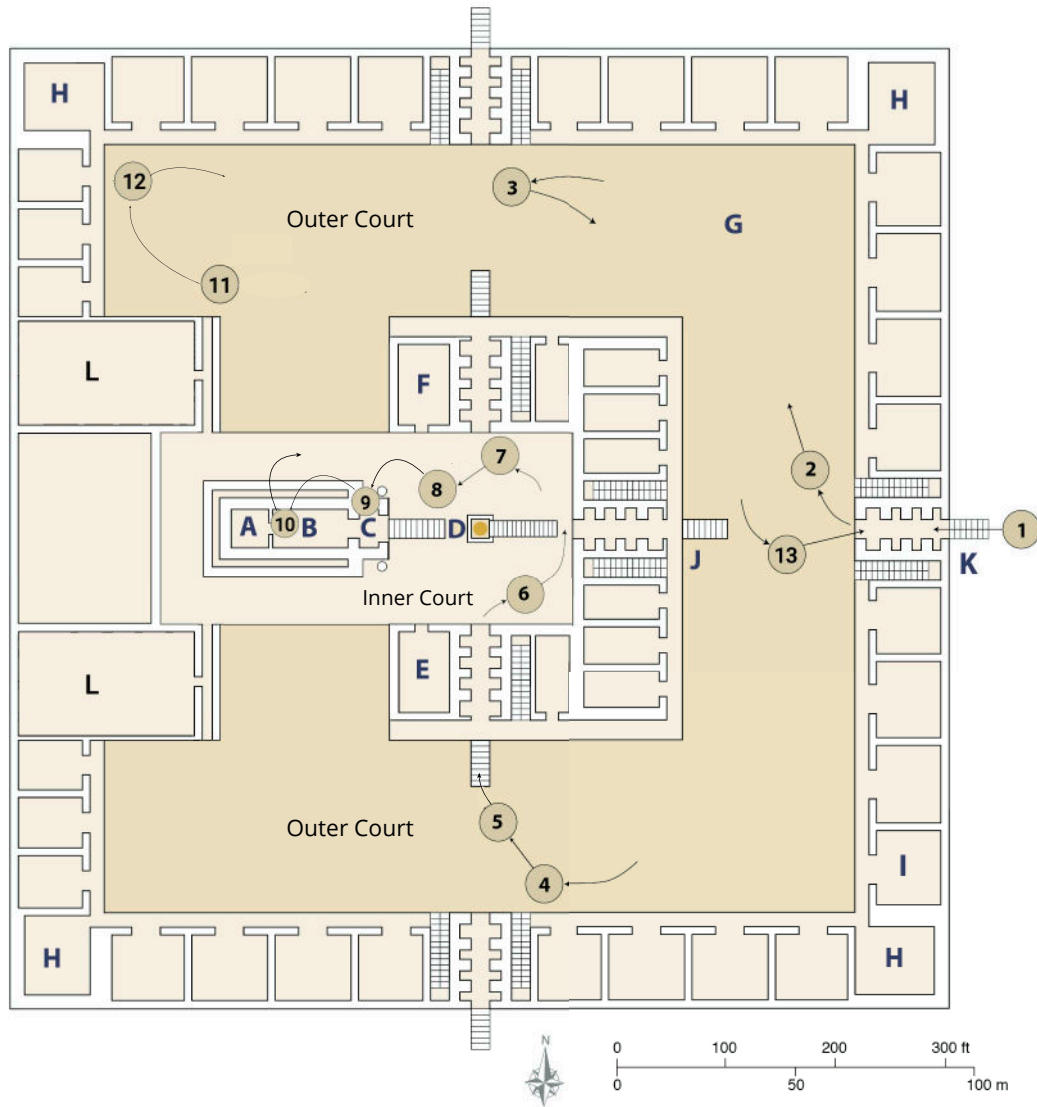
Verse 4 says that the prophet was told to reveal what he sees and hears to the house of Israel.

Millennial Temple Described (40:1-42:20).

Now beginning with verse 5, the description of the millennial temple begins to be revealed. Verse 5 says,

And behold, there was a wall on the outside of the temple all around, and in the man's hand was a measuring rod of six cubits, each of which was a cubit and a handbreadth. So he measured the thickness of the wall, one rod; and the height, one rod. Ezekiel 40:5 (NASB)

Immediately, the prophet was told the angel measured a wall that surrounded the temple using a rod that was six cubits. Each cubit is defined for us as one cubit and a hand-breadth long. This is a royal cubit. There were two kinds of cubits. Typically a cubit was 18 inches. It was measured from the tip of the middle finger to the point on the elbow. The royal cubit was 21 inches. It added a hand-breadth or 3 inches to the 18 inches. The hand-breadth was the distance across the knuckles. So, the thickness and height of the wall was 21 inches. Therefore, the length of the angel's rod was 10.5 feet. Now we need to remember this for it will be used many times. Finally, we should notice that we are not told how the wall was constructed. All that was important is the height



Ezekiel's Temple In The Millennial Kingdom (Used by Permission of Crosswalk, edited.)

and thickness.

Before we leave this verse, I should add that the act of measuring the wall and other parts of the temple symbolizes ownership. The description of the temple is also going to help us understand what an amazing sight this temple will be. In fact, the temple and everything associated with it will be incredibly greater than any of the seven wonders of the ancient world. The wall is the first part of the temple that was measured. It was the first thing that Ezekiel was shown on his tour of the temple.

The East Gate (40:6-19). The next part of the

millennial temple that the prophet was shown is the eastern gate. In the Old Testament the directions of east, north, south, and west were always relative to Israel. So, the eastern gate would face due east. As the angel and Ezekiel entered through this gate they would have immediately seen the entrance to the front of the temple. This is the gate through which the Messiah, Jesus Christ, will enter the temple in the millennial kingdom.

This gate is described in verses 6 through 19. We are not going to take the time to read all of the verses. Instead, I will summarize some of the key features of the eastern

Temple Plan

The labels below are arranged from the innermost, and most sacred, area and moving outward. It must be borne in mind that “temple” can have two quite distinct references: it can refer generally to the entire “temple” complex, including the outer gates and court; in its more “strict” reference the “temple” is the innermost structure itself, which has a single (eastern) entrance and contains the Most Holy Place.

	Reference	Explanation
A	41:4	The “Most Holy Place.”
B	41:3	The inner room of the temple.
C	42:2	The entrance to the temple.
D	43:13–17	The imposing altar; although the number of stairs is not given, the entire altar structure is about 16 feet (4.9 m) tall, so many steps would have been required. This area of the inner court was accessible only by priests—not even the prince was permitted entry.
E	40:46	Chamber for Zadokite priests.
F	40:45	Chamber for “priests who have charge of the temple.”
G	40:17–19	The outer court, with its 30 chambers in the outer wall (40:17).
H	46:21–24	The temple “kitchens,” one in each corner of the outer court.
I	40:17	The 30 outer chambers.
J	46:2	The “prince’s gate”: from its threshold he worships on each Sabbath while the priests bring the offerings into the inner court.
K	43:1	The main east gate, through which “the glory of the God of Israel” returns to his temple (cf. 10:19; 11:22–23).

Used by Permission of Crosswalk.

gate. Before I go further, please notice in the diagram of the temple grounds the circle with the number “1” in the middle. That is where the angel and Ezekiel start the tour. The circles show the path they took.

In verses 6-19, we are told the steps to the eastern gate (circle #1) were one rod or 10.5 feet in width. Then after someone climbed the seven steps (v. 20, 26), they would have stepped onto the threshold and seen an 87.5 foot long hallway that is 10.5 feet wide (v. 11, 15). They would have also seen three guard rooms on each side of the hall. Each guard room will be 10.5 square feet wide and 10.5 feet high (v. 6, 21, 25). At the end of the hall there will be a porch that is about 14 feet in depth and 37 feet wide (v. 8). In addition, there will be pillars and open windows (v. 9, 10, 14, 16, 21, 24, 25-26). This inner hall will be decorated with palm trees (v. 22, 26).

The Outer Court (40:17-19). Then Ezekiel and the angel stepped out of the porch onto the outer court (circle #2). The outer court surrounded the temple building. At that point they would have seen thirty chambers in the surrounding wall. Ezekiel would have also seen the entire temple one hundred cubits or 175 feet in length in front of him.

The North Gate (40:20-23). Next, Ezekiel saw the northern gate (circle #3) which will have the same identical description as the eastern gate.

The South Gate (40:20-23). Then Ezekiel saw the southern gate (circle #4) facing south which will have the same identical description as the eastern gate.

Gates Inside the Inner Court (40:28-43). In verses 28-43 we are told that Ezekiel entered the inner court of the temple by climbing the steps (circle #5) on the south side of the temple building. This gate and the eastern and northern gates will be identical to the outer gates, except that these gates will have eight steps and not seven (v. 22, 26, 31, 34, 37). After Ezekiel climbed the steps, he would have stood on the inner court of the temple (circle #6).

It is important to notice that verse 39 says that there were two tables (circle #7) on the inner court for the slaughtering of the burnt, sin, and drink offerings. Since we will learn more about the offerings in chapters 43 and 45, I will

not discuss the offerings now. Later we will consider the important question of why will there be sacrifices in the kingdom since Christ has already died for our sins and the Mosaic law is obsolete today. However, I will just quickly add that they will serve as a memorial for Christ’s death much like the Lord’s Supper is for us today.

Chambers For the Priests (40:44-47). Ezekiel’s next stop in the tour was the chambers for the priests (circle #8) in the millennial kingdom. They are described in verses 44-47. Two types of chambers existed for the priests. Verse 45 says the chamber on the north side of the inner court will be for the Levitical priests who will have charge of the temple. In the Old Testament era, some Levites were the caretakers of the temple building and other Levites performed the priestly or pastor-like functions. Verse 46 tells us that the priestly chamber on the south part of the inner court was for the sons of Zadok. They were the priests who taught the Scriptures and performed the sacrifices. We will learn more later about Zadok in chapters 44 and 48.

The Temple Porch (40:48-49). Then Ezekiel was taken to the entrance or “door” of the temple (circle #9). The entrance was 14 cubits wide or 24.5 feet wide with a five-foot pillar on each side. The porch will be 20 cubits wide and 12 cubits deep or 35 feet wide and 21 feet deep. That is a large entrance porch.

The Holy Place or Nave (41:1-2). The next stop on Ezekiel’s tour was the Holy Place or the nave (circle #10). The width of the Holy Place was 20 cubits and the length will be 40 cubits, or 35 feet wide and 70 feet long. This is the room where the priests will enter daily to perform their priestly duties.

The Holy of Holies (41:3-4). Then Ezekiel was taken into the Holy or Holies (circle #10). The NASB calls it the Most Holy Place. It will be 20 cubits square or 35 feet square. This was the room that the high priest entered on the Day of Atonement to make sacrifice for himself and the nation of Israel once a year.

The Temple Side Chambers (41:5-12). Then the angel showed Ezekiel thirty side chambers along the outside of the porch, the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies. These chambers existed on three different levels or stories.

The purpose for these chambers is not explained, but they may symbolize the trinity.

Temple Building (41:13-15). The temple building itself included the porch, the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies. Ezekiel discovered that the entire temple will measure 100 cubits in length or 175 feet in length. The width of the temple actually includes the restricted area. It had the same measurements as King Solomon's temple (1 Kings 6-7).

Decorations and Furnishings (41:16-26). The temple building had latticed windows. The windows will be covered. The rooms will be paneled with wood (v 16). Other notable characteristics of the temple included decorations of cherubim, palm trees, and lion's faces on the walls. The doors to the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies will be double doors and not curtains.

Conclusion. So why are we given this information about the temple? Amillennialists say that it is symbolic of the church in the New Testament. If so, then why are we given so much detail? Surely, symbolism does not require so much detail! The reason for so much detail is that they are needed to build the future temple in the millennial kingdom. This is God's plan for His temple.