

Bro. Edmund Jezuit
Ezekiel's Vision of a New Temple

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Ezekiel's Vision of a New Temple

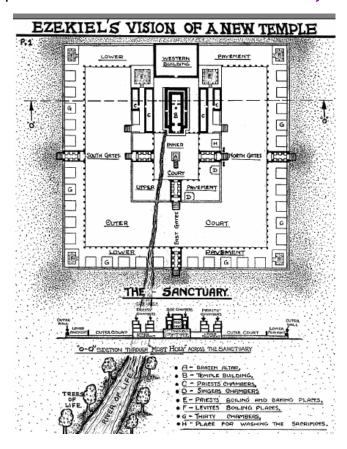
Brother Edmund Jezuit

Our subject is one to which we seldom refer, and yet it is one of the most remarkable visions recorded in Scripture. In fact, the last nine chapters of the book of Ezekiel are devoted to this unusual vision.

As we examine all of the various features of the vision, we discover that it beautifully portrays the establishment of God's kingdom on earth. Due to the scope of the vision - with all of its incredible detail - we will only be able to consider some of its outstanding features. Yet these highlights will reveal a wonderful, harmonious message.

Before we assign any spiritual values to our subject, it will be helpful to become acquainted with the physical features of this vision. Since "a picture is worth 1,000 words," we have provided a handout with two pages showing eight pictures worth 8,000 words!

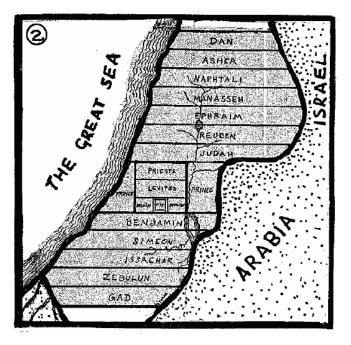
Handout page and box number references are shown in red throughout this text. Page 1 of the handout that shows the ground plan of the Sanctuary and the location of the Temple. Page 2 provides various details about the Sanctuary.



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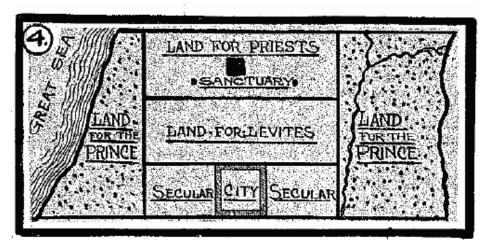
We read from Ezekiel 40:2-4: "In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Israel, and set me upon a very high mountain, by which was as the frame of a city on the south. And he brought me thither, and, behold, there was a man, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, with a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed; and he stood in the gate. And the man said unto me, Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart upon all that I shall shew thee; for to the intent that I might shew them unto thee art thou brought hither: declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel."

This vision centered around the land The prophet was Israel. transported to a high mountain. From this vantage point, he was observe all able to of the proceedings. What the prophet saw is shown on Page 2, Box 2. Ezekiel had a panoramic view of the Temple and its surroundings. He had no trouble identifying the landmarks with which he was familiar - the Great Sea, the Dead Sea, the Lake of Galilee, the River Jordan, and so on. But his attention was drawn to a parcel of land assigned to each tribe in Israel. He noticed Israel was divided into two parts, separated by a square



area of land. Seven tribes were north of this square (Dan, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim, Reuben, and Judah) and five tribes were south of the square (Benjamin, Simeon, Issachar, Zebulun, and Gad).

An enlarged view of the square is shown on Page 2, Box 4.





Those designated in this area were Priests and Levites. We identify this area by calling it the Sacred Square, simply because of the Priests and Levites who served in the Temple.

Notice the square was divided into three parts. The Priests occupied the upper portion and the Levites occupied the lower portion. The south end had a city with suburbs.

Ezekiel also noticed a portion of land was reserved for the "Prince," located to the left and right of this Sacred Square. Then his attention was drawn to a little square in the center of the land of the Priests.

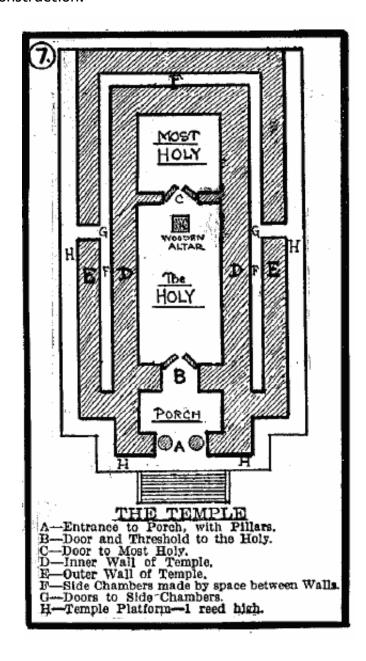
This little square is called the "Sanctuary," and in the Sanctuary stood the Temple. There was a great deal of activity going on within this Sanctuary. An enlarged view is shown on Page 1.



The dimensions of this Sanctuary measured about 750 feet per side - about 1½ city blocks - surrounded by a wall nine feet high. The Sanctuary had three levels shown in the section marked "O-O" through the Most Holy.

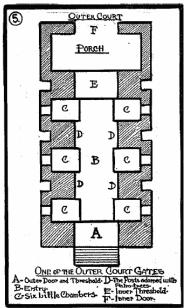
The Outer Court was the first level, and the second level was called the Inner Court. Then came the third level on which stood the most important building - The Temple - as designated by the letter "B." An enlarged view of the temple is shown on Page 2, Box 7. It had two rooms, a Holy and a Most Holy with double walled construction.







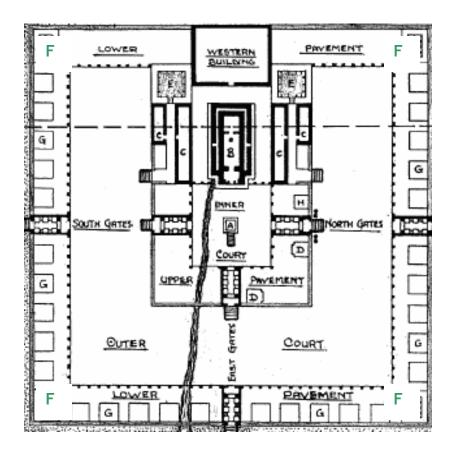
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Ezekiel saw three entrances to the Sanctuary marked by three huge gates located at the east, south and north sides.

The layout of these gates is shown on Page 2, Box 5. It had six little chambers marked letter "C" with a porch "F" leading to the Outer Court.

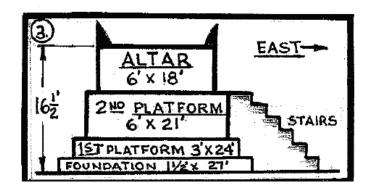
At the four corners of the Sanctuary were huge boiling places marked "F." Then on the south, north and east walls were 30 small chambers marked "G."



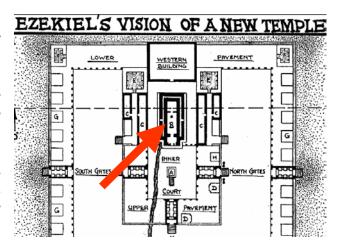
• A - BRATEN ALTAR.
• B - TEMPLE BUILDING.
• C - PRIESTS CHAMBERS.
• D - SINGERS CHAMBERS.
• E - PRIESTS BOILING AND BAKING PLACES.
• F - LEVITES BOILING PLACES.
• G - THIRTY CHAMBERS.
• H - PLACE FOR WASHING THE SACRIPIOES.

In the center of the Sanctuary stood a huge altar ("A"). This is enlarged on Page 2, Box 3. It rested on three large foundations. It was six feet high, 18 feet square with a combined height of 16½ feet.





Back to Page 1, the Temple designated by the letter "B" stood on the highest level. As Ezekiel viewed this beautiful Temple, the unexpected happened - water came pouring out of the south side of the Temple, running towards the east. Soon this trickle of water became wider and deeper until it finally became a great river. In looking back at the river, Ezekiel noticed trees on its banks. These were productive trees with fruit for food and leaves for medicine.



Then on the west or backside of the Temple stood the largest building in the Sanctuary on the second level called the Western Building.

As this vision developed, Ezekiel noticed the orientation of the sanctuary. It squared off with the four cardinal points of the compass. The entrance that led to the Temple faced the east. The Scriptures often refer to the points of the compass. The Psalmist makes reference to it in Psalms 75:6,7: "For promotion comes neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south, but God is the judge...". The implication is that north is associated with God's government on the earth. We doubt if the four points of the compass exist in heaven. The forces of earth cause the needle of the compass to point to the north. This is an unknown force that God established in His creation.

In the three most important buildings in scripture, the Tabernacle, Solomon's Temple, and Ezekiel's Temple all have their entrances facing east.



In passing, it is interesting to note that the Hebrews did not use the poles of the compass. Their orientation is spelled out in words. For example, when one faces east, they would use the word "before."

Face east = before Face west = behind Face north = left Face South = right

As we consider this vision with its many facets - its architecture, its actors, its sacrifices, and the fact that is was never built but instead merely a vision, it leads us to believe that it represents something future: The divine government during the millennium.

It is interesting to note how God can use a building to show His plans and purposes.

The Great Pyramid was built before Abraham was born, and its geometry portrays a Divine Plan.

The Tabernacle was the essence of simplicity, featuring the two rooms of the Holy and the Most Holy, a few animal sacrifices and simple rituals, showing how the Church is developed and prepared for rulership in the Kingdom.

The elaborate temple built by Solomon showed the Church in glory.

So this Temple of Ezekiel depicts the divine government during the millennium.

We have briefly reviewed the physical part of this remarkable vision, but more importantly, we are interested in the symbology and spiritual aspects.

In this vision, Ezekiel sees a man authorized to explain this vision. The question then is who is this important man? The prophet gives us a description in Ezekiel 40:3: "His appearance was like the appearance of brass (copper), with a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed, and he stood in the gate." A better translation says he had in his hand a measuring tape and a measuring rod.

Copper in scripture represents a justified human being, one who would have a standing in Christ. The gate represents Christ. So



in symbolic language, it means a man that is justified, who would have a standing in Christ.

This man is described elsewhere by <u>Ezekiel 9:2</u>: "...one man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side...and stood beside the brazen altar." Linen represents righteousness. The question is, who would qualify for this honored position? Who would have the proper credentials? The record reveals a man with the exact profile. This man is known as the Harvest Messenger. The records reveal this man as a prolific writer. He wrote over 50,000 book pages, which equates to 145 books - each book having 350 pages.

His message was directly related to the work of the hour. He made clear the message of the harvest. It was this man who explained the message of the coming Kingdom. This man also had some measuring devices, "a measuring tape and measuring rod." As we relate this to the Chart of the Ages, the tape represents the horizontal lines - the planes of existence; the rod represents the time periods - the worlds and ages. This man was able to measure God's timetables. He had a chronology yardstick. It was this man who forged the six Bible keys on the divine anvil. These keys that unlocked the secrets of the Gospel were authored by this man with the writer's inkhorn. He was divinely approved, divinely instructed, divinely authorized.

Outer

Wall

Now notice the three levels of this Sanctuary on Page 1:

The Outer Court on the lower pavement; The Inner Court on the upper pavement; and The Temple on the highest level.

By comparison, the Tabernacle

and Solomon's Temple stood on one level. Now these three levels in the Sanctuary correspond to three horizontal lines on the Chart of the Ages:

Plane N = Human perfection, corresponds to the Outer Court.

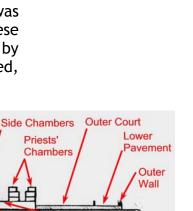
Plane L = Spiritual perfection, corresponds to the Inner Court.

Plane K = Divine nature, corresponds to the Temple Platform.



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Upper

Temple Platform

Pavement

Outer Court

ower

Pavement

Priests'

Chambers

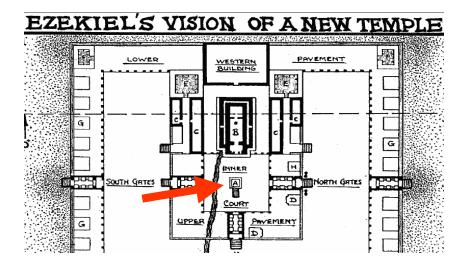
Upper

Pavement



We marvel at the simple structure of the Chart of the Ages. A few horizontal lines, a few vertical lines, a few connecting arcs and a few connecting pyramids all linked together with our alphabet, the "ABC's," covering world history of 7,000 years.

Now let us turn our attention to the center of the Sanctuary on Page 1. Here we find a huge altar marked by the letter A.



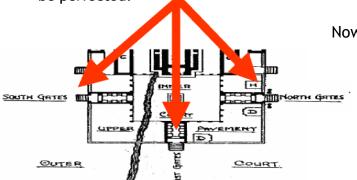
It is in the mathematical center of the Sanctuary. All the gates are in line with this altar. It stood on three foundations. The base foundation measured 1½ feet by 27 feet square. The second platform was three feet by 24 feet square. The third platform measured six feet by 21 feet square. Placed upon this array of foundations was a copper altar measuring six feet high and 18 feet square. Adding all the dimensions gives a height of 16½ feet.

This altar occupies the most prominent location - the center of the Sanctuary. What a beautiful picture of the ransom. As the hub of God's plan of salvation, everything revolves around the ransom. All doctrines must square with the ransom. All the gates are in line with the altar, picturing how men must recognize the ransom sacrifice of the Lord before they obtain life. The altar's great height of 16½ feet shows the greatness of the ransom. It will be held in high esteem throughout eternity.

Now we turn our attention to the six gates. These were huge and measured 20 feet wide, 40 feet high, and 80 feet long. The construction of the gate is shown on Page 2, Box 5. Each gate had a threshold shown by the letter "A," a porch shown by "F," and six little chambers with windows marked by "C."

The Outer Gate could picture man's journey toward perfection. In olden times, large structures had special gates for entry with guards. Anyone who wished to enter had to satisfy the guards with proper credentials to enter. These little chambers marked "C" could represent the tests that mankind must pass through before they are accepted. Passing these tests, mankind will reach the porch, "F," representing resurrection and perfection. As they leave this gate, mankind will find itself in the Outer Court - the plane of human perfection - ready to enjoy life.

Page 1. Each gate had steps leading to the Outer Court. There were seven steps to the Outer Gate, showing progression. Each step of "1,000 years long" leads to the Millennial Age - the seventh step - for a total of 7,000 years. This is also shown on our Chart of the Ages. At the end of the Millennial Age, mankind will be perfected.



Now let us leave the Outer

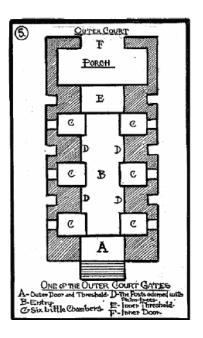
Court to a higher level - the upper pavement. To reach this level, one must go through another gate. There were three gates on this elevation in line with

the Outer Gates. The entrance to this gate was reached by eight steps. But notice this gate's position - it is reversed from the Outer Gate. The porch faces the outer court. This is the position of the Inner Gates. Now the fact there were eight steps to the Inner Gates instead of seven for the Outer Gates would indicate a higher level or plane - a spiritual plane, one step higher than the human plane. The angels live on this spiritual plane. They will be joined by the Great Company, who will dwell on this plane. These eight steps remind us of the Psalmist, who compares man with angels in Psalms 8:5: "Thou hast made man a little lower than the angels." The outer gate with its seven steps relates to man.

On this same plane of the inner court on the west side, we find the largest building in the Sanctuary known as the Western Building. The size of this building strongly suggests a large



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population of spiritual creatures. The scriptures suggest an innumerable number, which we could translate into millions.

Notice something interesting - from this Western Building, it is not possible to see the altar in the center, facing east. This would indicate that these spiritual creatures, angels, would have no direct connection with the altar that represents the ransom.

Then the size of this Western Building would suggest it to have many rooms. This would indicate that the spiritual world would have different ranks or levels. And the Bible so states - thrones, dominions, powers, cherubim, seraphim, and more.

Another interesting observation is the fact that this Western Building faces the Temple, implying that these angels are in harmony with the "Temple Class."

Now let us look at the east gate. It is different from all other gates. First, it is the only gate in line with the Temple. Second, the door of this gate is closed. Ezekiel speaks of this gate when he said when the glory of the Lord went through, it was closed. This presents a beautiful picture. The glory of the Lord is the Church. The east gate represents our Lord. This is the only gate that leads to the Temple. When the last member of the Church is glorified through Christ, that gate - that opportunity - will be gone forever. But the north and south gates will never close. These will always be opened, showing the difference between immortality and mortality. Those who go through the east gate - the Church - will not again see death.

But those using the north and south gates - the world - will always be mortal.

We now come to the most important building in the Sanctuary: The Temple. It stood on an elevation all of its own - the highest level in the Sanctuary. The Temple had but one entrance, on the east side. To reach this level, it was necessary to climb stairs. Now Ezekiel does not inform us how many stairs there were, like he did with the stairs to the gates. In this omission we discover a hidden truth. This shows the varied steps to glory by individual church members. No two saints have the same path to glory. Some finish their course in 30 years, others in 50 years. No two courses are alike.

In order to appreciate the internal layout of the Temple, look at Page 2, Box 7. The Temple had a porch and two rooms, the Holy and the Most Holy. Surprisingly, there was no furniture in either of these rooms except a small wooden altar overlaid with gold in the Holy. We recall that the Tabernacle had four pieces of furniture and Solomon's Temple had 24 pieces of furniture.

Another interesting feature was the doors to these rooms. These were swinging doors. Generally doors open in one direction, but with these doors, one could go in and out in both directions. The Tabernacle had veils. Solomon's Temple had folding doors. These swinging doors remind us of Jacob's ladder. We recall Jacob's dream. He saw a ladder reaching from earth to heaven with angels ascending and descending. This was a picture of the interchange between heaven and earth in the Kingdom. So these swinging doors aptly picture the interchange between heaven and earth in the Kingdom.

The rooms in the Temple's Holy and Most Holy were twice the size of those in the Tabernacle. The Holy here measured 30 feet by 30 feet by 60 feet. The Most Holy here was a 30-foot cube.

This Temple building beautifully represents God's finished New Creation. The Holy no longer represents the spirit begotten condition as shown in the Tabernacle, but rather it pictures the memory of the spirit begotten condition, as shown by the wooden alter overlaid with gold. The Church will always remember that they were human at a previous time, represented by the wood. The Most Holy represents the divine nature in all of its fullness and glory and honor.

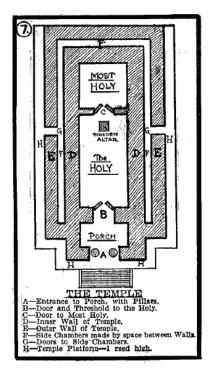
The Temple was decorated in a very unusual way. Look at Page 2, Box 6. The walls were made of cedar upon which was carved cherubs and palm trees overlaid with gold. This design was repeated throughout the porch, Holy and Most Holy, and the doors.

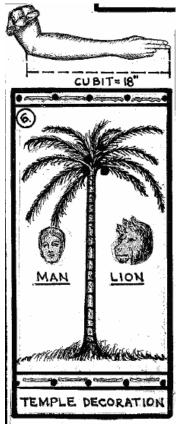
There were two faces: the face of a man and the face of a lion, facing the palm tree. These simple decorations illustrate the special work of the temple class - the Church - in the millennium.

The palm tree in scripture represents an upright, righteous man. The lion represents God's attribute of justice. The man's face represents the attribute of God's love. As we develop the picture, we see that the Kingdom work will largely be controlled by divine justice and divine love with Justice (Lion) on the right and Love (Man) on the left, observing the palm tree. These



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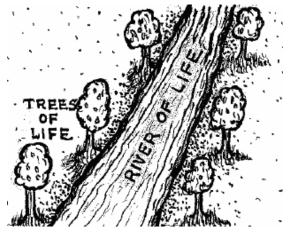
attributes will be active, watching, instructing, and promoting the growth of man - the palm tree.

Now we come to the dramatic part of the vision! See Page 1. Suddenly the prophet saw water coming out of the base of the Temple rushing towards the east. It became wider and deeper, and soon developed into a river! What a sight! Soon a man appears and begins measuring this water in four different places, 1000 cubits apart, using his body as a measuring device.

First the water was ankle deep, then knee deep, then waist deep, and finally over his head - deep enough to swim in it. How beautifully this portrays how the waters of Truth will be poured out on all mankind, not all at once, but gradually as expressed in Habakkuk 2:14: "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as waters cover the sea."

From another standpoint, these four measurements 1000 cubits apart represent the four quartermarks of love. The last quarter in which one could swim would represent perfect love. This will be

a requirement if mankind obtains life.



While this torrent of water increases in volume and speed, another dramatic development occurs. Ezekiel observes trees sprouting on either side of the river, not just shade trees, but productive and useful fruit trees. The prophet is told that this fruit would be for food and the leaves would serve as medicine to heal. Here the Lord in this simple way is showing the restitution blessings. The world's hunger will be

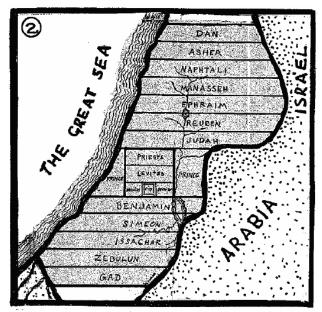
satisfied, and they will be healed from the awful disease of sin.

Note the origin of the river - it is from the Temple, represented by the Church in glory - the great antitypical Temple. God is the great fountain of life. His blessings flowed to our Lord Jesus, who in turn became our fountain of living water. The Church in turn received this living water, and they will be the instruments through which this water of life will flow to mankind.

Since the vision portrays the divine government in the millennium, we would expect that somewhere in this vision the conditions be shown, and they are in a most unique way. See



Page 2, Box 2.



Here we find the assigned places for all the tribes, but we discover that each name of the twelve tribes is significant and full of meaning. Each name portrays a condition that will exist in the Kingdom.

We begin with Judah. This name means "Praise." This will be manifest in the Kingdom. Those released from death will praise God for His marvelous plan.

The name Rueben means, "Behold a son." How appropriate! Mankind will give honor to God's son, who will become their father.

Ephraim means "Doubly fruitful." This refers both to the earth and its people. The prophet Isaiah speaks of the earth being fruitful when the curse is removed. The people will be fruitful as well, in the works of righteousness.

The name Manasseh means, "Causing forgetfulness." God will cause the sins of mankind to be forgotten in that day. We read in Isaiah 43:25: "I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions. I will not remember thy sins."

The name Naphtali means "Wrestling." Mankind will fight down - wrestle - against their evil tendencies. It will require great effort on their part to reach the goal of perfection.



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Asher means "Happy." As man continues down the highway of holiness, he will contrast his previous condition in that evil world. The result could only be happiness.

The name Dan signifies "Judge." The Millennial Age is a day of judgment. Mankind will realize they are on trial and only obedience will bring them life.

Benjamin has the meaning of "Son of the right hand." Mankind will recognize our Lord as the right hand. Peter speaks of this in 1 Peter 3:22: "Who has gone to heaven and is on the right hand of God, all subject to Him."

The name Simeon means "Hearing." Mankind's ears will be unstopped and they will hear clearly the words of the prophet as in <u>Isaiah 35:5</u>: "The eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped."

The name Issachar means, "Bearing reward." Man's obedience in the Kingdom will bring them a reward of life. Read David in Psalms 58:11,12: "So that a man shall say verily there is a reward for the righteous."

The next name Zebulun signifies "Dwelling." Mankind in the millennium will dwell in peace. The prophet Isaiah records this promise in <u>Isaiah 32:18</u>: "And my people shall dwell in sure dwellings in quiet resting places."

The last name Gad means "Fortune." Mankind will indeed inherit a fortune - everlasting life, if obedient.

Then comes the final picture portrayed by Isaiah with animals and a child in <u>Isaiah 11:6</u>: "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them."

But notice in this picture one creature is missing. Isaiah tells us who it is in <u>Isaiah 65:25</u>: "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock..." (now for the missing creature!) "...but as for the serpent, dust shall be his food." One cannot exist with dust as food. In the old writings, the word "dust" denotes ruin or destruction. David spoke of his enemies "licking the dust." There will be no place for the greatest of all deceivers, that old serpent, the Devil. His destiny is well documented in the book of Revelation.

So as we review this marvelous vision observed by Ezekiel, he, like Daniel, did not comprehend, as the understanding was sealed



until the time of the end. Then only the wise and watching would understand.



Since this was only a vision, it is possible that the Lord may make His vision into a reality and have it actually built in the Kingdom. It could be an everlasting monument of God's great love for mankind.

I could picture the buildings being made of fine white marble, as marble denotes great strength and stability. Solomon's Temple was made of white marble. This marble would have a scarlet vein running through it, representing the ransom sacrifice. What a building project that would be for mankind in the millennium, with Ezekiel as the project's Chief Executive Officer!

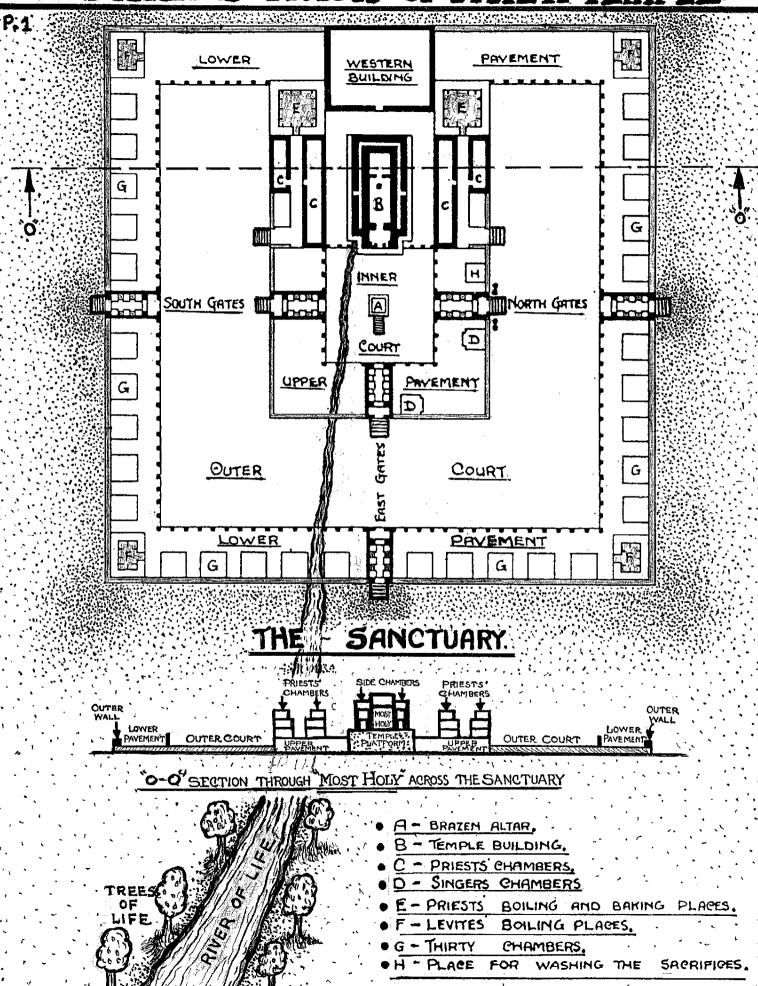
We like Daniel and Ezekiel also have seen a vision, as recorded by Habakkuk. This was a vision that was hidden until the time of the end. It has now spoken and has been "made plain upon tables" so all could read it fluently. And how simple the format: a few vertical and horizontal lines with connecting arcs and a few pyramids to spell out 7,000 years of man's history. Those who have responded to this heavenly vision have gone through the east gate - gone past the great altar - ransom sacrifice - have climbed the Temple steps. Most of the church members have entered into the "temple" condition. When the last of the feet members reach their goal, the great antitypical Temple will be complete. The east gate will be closed forever, and it is then that the lifegiving river will begin to flow as fully described in Ezekiel 47:1-12. This river could aptly be named Restitution River.

This same river is described by John the Revelator in <u>Revelation</u> 22:1: "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb."

In <u>Ezekiel 47:12</u>, the prophet reports trees growing on either side. Their fruit shall be for food and their leaves for medicine. Thus in beautiful symbology the great work of restitution is portrayed. This sin-sick and starving world will be nourished and healed.

"For out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

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2 In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Is'ra-el, and set me upon a very high mountain, by which was as the frame of a city on the south.

3 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.

4 And the man said unto me, Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart upon all that I shall shew thee; for to the intent that I might shew them unto thee art thou brought hither: declare all that thou seest to the house of Is'ra-el.

