Ezekiel 41

The Holy Place:
The Table Before the LORD

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION

"These were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so."
Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

God brought Ezekiel right up to the door of the most holy place and told him what was inside. The walls were strong, the rooms were ordered, and everything was carved with cherubim and palm trees — God's holy presence and God's life side by side. At the heart of it stood a table before the LORD.

Ed Smith · Started 20 October 2026

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00 The Text

EZEKIEL 41 (KJV), MARKED

Gold God — His character & actions | Green Command / instruction | Sky Key repeated word
Rose Sin / warning | Violet Promise / blessing | Amber Time / place / contrast

1 Afterward he brought me to the temple, and measured the posts, six cubits broad on the one side, and six cubits broad on the other side, which was the breadth of the tabernacle.

2 And the breadth of the door was ten cubits; and the sides of the door were five cubits on the one side, and five cubits on the other side: and he measured the length thereof, forty cubits: and the breadth, twenty cubits.

3 Then went he inward, and measured the post of the door, two cubits; and the door, six cubits; and the breadth of the door, seven cubits.

4 So he measured the length thereof, twenty cubits; and the breadth, twenty cubits, before the temple: and he said unto me, This is the most holy place.

5 After he measured the wall of the house, six cubits; and the breadth of every side chamber, four cubits, round about the house on every side.

6 And the side chambers were three, one over another, and thirty in order; and they entered into the wall which was of the house for the side chambers round about, that they might have hold, but they had not hold in the wall of the house.

7 And there was an enlarging, and a winding about still upward to the side chambers: for the winding about of the house went still upward round about the house: therefore the breadth of the house was still upward, and so increased from the lowest chamber to the highest by the midst.

8 I saw also the height of the house round about: the foundations of the side chambers were a full reed of six great cubits.

9 The thickness of the wall, which was for the side chamber without, was five cubits: and that which was left was the place of the side chambers that were within.

10 And between the chambers was the wideness of twenty cubits round about the house on every side.

11 And the doors of the side chambers were toward the place that was left, one door toward the north, and another door toward the south: and the breadth of the place that was left was five cubits round about.

12 Now the building that was before the separate place at the end toward the west was seventy cubits broad; and the wall of the building was five cubits thick round about, and the length thereof ninety cubits.

13 So he measured the house, an hundred cubits long; and the separate place, and the building, with the walls thereof, an hundred cubits long;

14 Also the breadth of the face of the house, and of the separate place toward the east, an hundred cubits.

15 And he measured the length of the building over against the separate place which was behind it, and the galleries thereof on the one side and on the other side, an hundred cubits, with the inner temple, and the porches of the court;

16 The door posts, and the narrow windows, and the galleries round about on their three stories, over against the door, cieled with wood round about, and from the ground up to the windows, and the windows were covered;

17 To that above the door, even unto the inner house, and without, and by all the wall round about within and without, by measure.

18 And it was made with ⇄ cherubims and ⇄ palm trees, so that a ⇄ palm tree was between a ⇄ cherub and a ⇄ cherub; and every ⇄ cherub had two faces;

19 So that ★ the face of a man was toward the ⇄ palm tree on the one side, and ▲ the face of a young lion toward the ⇄ palm tree on the other side: it was made through all the house round about.

20 From the ground unto above the door were ⇄ cherubims and ⇄ palm trees made, and on the wall of the temple.

21 The posts of the temple were squared, and the face of the sanctuary; the appearance of the one as the appearance of the other.

22 ▲ The altar of wood was three cubits high, and the length thereof two cubits; and the corners thereof, and the length thereof, and the walls thereof, were of wood: and he said unto me, ★ This is the table that is before the LORD.

23 And the temple and the sanctuary had two doors.

24 And the doors had two leaves apiece, two turning leaves; two leaves for the one door, and two leaves for the other door.

25 And there were made on them, on the doors of the temple, ⇄ cherubims and ⇄ palm trees, like as were made upon the walls; and there were thick planks upon the face of the porch without.

26 And there were narrow windows and ⇄ palm trees on the one side and on the other side, on the sides of the porch, and upon the ⇄ side chambers of the house, and thick planks.

Marked in the text

- **v1** he brought me to the temple
- **v1** ⇄ measured *(every occurrence)*
- **v3** Then went he inward
- **v4** ▲ This is the most holy place
- **v5** ⇄ side chamber *(every occurrence)*
- **v6** three, one over another, and thirty in order
- **v7** so increased from the lowest chamber to the highest
- **v12** the separate place at the end toward the west
- **v13** an hundred cubits long
- **v16** cieled with wood round about
- **v18** ⇄ cherub *(every occurrence)*
- **v18** ⇄ palm tree *(every occurrence)*
- **v18** ▲ every cherub had two faces
- **v19** ★ the face of a man
- **v19** ▲ the face of a young lion
- **v22** ▲ The altar of wood was three cubits high
- **v22** ★ This is the table that is before the LORD
- **v23** the temple and the sanctuary had two doors
- **v24** two turning leaves
- **v25** ★ cherubims and palm trees, like as were made upon the walls

Marks are drawn on the KJV text. Quotations in the notes are from the NASB95, so their wording may differ from the KJV above.

01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · EZEKIEL 41:18 (KJV)

18 And it was made with ⇄ cherubims and ⇄ palm trees, so that a ⇄ palm tree was between a ⇄ cherub and a ⇄ cherub; and every ⇄ cherub had two faces;

Setting

The tour continues in the same vision of the twenty-fifth year of the exile (40:1). Ezekiel has passed through the outer gates and the inner court and stands at the porch of the temple itself (40:48–49). Now the guide takes him into the building where God dwells. Ezekiel was a priest who never got to serve in Solomon's temple; in this vision he is brought inside.

Structure

- vv1–2 — **the nave:** "Then he brought me to the nave" (v1) — the holy place — and the guide measures its entrance and its length and width.
- vv3–4 — **the inner room:** "Then he went inside" (v3). The guide measures the inner room, twenty cubits by twenty, and says, "This is the most holy place" (v4). Ezekiel watches from the doorway.
- vv5–11 — **the side chambers:** "The side chambers were in three stories" (v6), thirty in each story, resting on ledges rather than cut into the temple wall. They "were wider at each successive story" (v7). The walls are thick and the foundation is raised a full rod (v8).
- v12 — **the western building:** "The building that was in front of the separate area" (v12) at the west — seventy cubits wide and ninety long, with walls five cubits thick.
- vv13–15 — **the overall measure:** the temple is a hundred cubits long, and the separate area with its building another hundred (v13); the front is a hundred cubits wide (v14).
- vv16–20 — **the paneling and carvings:** thresholds, windows and galleries "were paneled with wood all around" (v16). "It was carved with cherubim and palm trees," and "every cherub had two faces" (v18) — "a man's face toward the palm tree on one side" and "a young lion's face toward the palm tree on the other side" (v19), from the floor to above the entrance (v20).
- vv21–22 — **the wooden altar:** "The altar was of wood, three cubits high" (v22). The guide says, "This is the table that is before the LORD" (v22).
- vv23–26 — **the doors:** "The nave and the sanctuary each had a double door" (v23), each with two swinging leaves (v24), carved with cherubim and palm trees like the walls (v25), with a wooden threshold at the porch.

Repeated words

measured (vv1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 13, 15); side chambers (vv5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 26); cherub / cherubim (vv18, 20, 25); palm tree(s) (vv18, 19, 20, 25, 26); a hundred cubits (vv13, 14, 15); door / doors / doorway (vv3, 11, 23, 24, 25); wood (vv16, 22, 25).

Contrasts

the guide went into the most holy place (v3) ⟷ Ezekiel stayed outside. The nave, forty cubits long (v2) ⟷ the most holy place, a perfect square (v4). Stone walls of great thickness (vv5, 9) ⟷ wood paneling and carvings inside (v16). The man's face (v19) ⟷ the young lion's face (v19). An altar (v22) ⟷ called a "table" (v22). The temple burned in 586 BC ⟷ a temple carved with life and guarded by cherubim.

Chapter theme (my words)

God brought Ezekiel right up to the door of the most holy place and told him what was inside. The walls were strong, the rooms were ordered, and everything was carved with cherubim and palm trees — God's holy presence and God's life side by side. At the heart of it stood a table before the LORD.

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · EZEKIEL 41:19 (KJV)

19 So that ★ the face of a man was toward the ⇄ palm tree on the one side, and ▲ the face of a young lion toward the ⇄ palm tree on the other side: it was made through all the house round about.

Into the nave (vv1–2)

The guide brings Ezekiel into the holy place. Guzik treats this as a real room with real dimensions; it is the same size as the holy place of Solomon's temple, forty cubits by twenty (1 Kgs 6:2, 17). As a priest, Ezekiel could stand here.

The most holy place (vv3–4)

Then the guide went in alone. Guzik explains why Ezekiel didn't follow: he was a priest but not the high priest, and only the high priest could enter the most holy place, once a year (Lev 16:2; Heb 9:7). The room is twenty cubits square — the same as in Solomon's temple (1 Kgs 6:20). Notice what is *not* described: no ark, no mercy seat, no veil. When the glory returns in chapter 43, God Himself fills the house. For Christians this room carries great weight: the veil that kept men out was torn when Christ died, and the way into the holy place is now open through His blood (Matt 27:51; Heb 10:19–22).

The side chambers (vv5–11)

Three stories of thirty rooms wrap around the temple. Wright, in Guzik: "The description of the side rooms (Ezekiel 41:5-11) is difficult to follow." The rooms rest on ledges, so no beam is driven into the temple wall itself — as in Solomon's temple (1 Kgs 6:6). Guzik cites scholars who think these rooms stored tithes, gifts and temple vessels. Block, in Guzik: "The massiveness of the walls is remarkable; both inside and outside walls are thicker than the width of the rooms." Guzik's conclusion: "Ezekiel did not see a spiritual building, but a carefully engineered and strongly built structure."

The western building and the overall plan (vv12–15)

A large building fills the western end, behind the temple. Its use isn't given. The temple and its yard each measure a hundred cubits — a pattern of order and completeness. Those who hold a literal view, like Guzik, see in this precision a real building yet to stand in Jerusalem. Those who read the vision symbolically see the perfect order of God's dwelling with His people, fulfilled in Christ and the new creation (John 2:19–21; Rev 21:16).

Cherubim and palm trees (vv16–20)

The walls are paneled in wood and carved from floor to ceiling, like Solomon's temple (1 Kgs 6:29). Here each cherub has two faces, a man and a young lion. In chapter 1 the living beings had four faces (1:10; compare 10:14 and Rev 4:7); Guzik notes that only two of the four are shown here. A flat carving may simply show the two faces turned toward the palms. Block, in Guzik: "In these figures aspirations of life and prosperity (palm) and security (cherubim) coalesce." Cherubim guarded the way to the tree of life in Eden (Gen 3:24); the palm trees picture fruitfulness and life. In this temple, the guardians and the life stand side by side.

"The table that is before the LORD" (vv21–22)

A wooden altar, three cubits high — too small for animal sacrifice. Guzik identifies it as the altar of incense standing in the holy place, picturing the prayers of God's people (Ps 141:2; Rev 8:3–4). Others take it as the table of showbread, since the guide calls it a "table," and some see both ideas joined in one piece. Either way, it stands "before the LORD" — a place of fellowship and prayer in His presence.

The doors (vv23–26)

Double doors, each with two folding leaves, carved like the walls. Guzik argues that this level of detail points to a literal temple. Trapp, quoted by Guzik, applies the doors spiritually: "Understand hereby the means of grace, and ministers dispensing the same, whereby souls are brought home to Christ." Jesus said, "I am the door" (John 10:9).

Word study (Hebrew)

- **nave / temple — *hekal* (H1964):** a palace, temple; the holy place.
- **most holy — *qodesh* (H6944):** holiness, a holy thing; doubled, "holy of holies."
- **side chamber — *tsela*ʿ (H6763):** a side, rib; a side room.
- **wall — *qir* (H7023):** a wall.
- **separate area — *gizrah* (H1508):** a separate place, an enclosed yard.
- **galleries — *ʾattiq* (H862):** a ledge, terrace, gallery.
- **paneled — *sachiph* (H7824):** paneled, overlaid (used only here).
- **cherub — *kerub* (H3742):** a cherub, guardian of God's holiness.
- **palm tree — *timorah* (H8561):** a palm-tree ornament.
- **young lion — *kephir* (H3715):** a young, strong lion.
- **altar — *mizbeach* (H4196):** an altar, a place of offering.
- **table — *shulchan* (H7979):** a table.
- **door — *deleth* (H1817):** a door, a leaf of a door.

Cross-references

Gen 3:24; Exod 25:23–30; Exod 30:1–8; Lev 16:2; 1 Kgs 6:2–6; 1 Kgs 6:20; 1 Kgs 6:29–35; Ps 92:12–13; Ps 141:2; Ezek 1:10; Ezek 10:14; Matt 27:51; John 2:19–21; John 10:9; Heb 9:3–7; Heb 10:19–22; Rev 4:7; Rev 8:3–4; Rev 21:16.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · EZEKIEL 41:22 (KJV)

22 ▲ The altar of wood was three cubits high, and the length thereof two cubits; and the corners thereof, and the length thereof, and the walls thereof, were of wood: and he said unto me, ★ This is the table that is before the LORD.

Command to obey — come in through the open door

Ezekiel had to stand outside the most holy place. I don't. Jesus has opened the way, and I'm told to "draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith" (Heb 10:22). I'll stop living at the doorway and come in — daily, honestly, boldly.

Sin to confess — treating holy things lightly

God told Ezekiel exactly where he could stand and where he couldn't. I confess that I sometimes rush into God's presence casually, or let the open door make me careless about holiness. Access is free, but it was bought with blood.

Warning to heed — strong walls, empty room

This temple had thick walls and beautiful paneling — but its whole meaning depended on God being in it. A man can rebuild the outside of his life — a job, an apartment, a clean record — and still leave the inner room empty. For the men I disciple: sobriety and good habits are walls; Christ has to be in the center.

Promise to trust — life and guarding together

Cherubim and palm trees on every wall: God's holiness guarding, God's life growing. The righteous "will flourish like the palm tree" (Ps 92:12). To the man who feels his life is dead wood, God carves life into the very walls of His house — and He guards what He plants.

Example to follow — the table before the LORD

At the center of the holy place stood a small wooden altar, "the table that is before the LORD" (v22). My life needs that same center: a place of prayer and fellowship before Him every day, more important than anything else in the house.

Worship

Holy, holy, holy — a room no man could enter, and now a door flung open by the blood of Jesus. He is the God whose presence fills the most holy place, guarded by cherubim, surrounded by life. I worship

Him at the open door.

Prayer

Lord, thank You that I don't have to stand outside. Through Jesus' blood I come into Your presence. Make my heart a holy place where You are at the center. Let my prayers rise like incense before You. Carve Your life into me, guard what You plant, and draw the men I serve through the open door into Your presence. Amen.