

fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence" (Jno. 18:36). If there ever was a just cause it was that of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was condemned to death even though he had done nothing wrong. But he told his disciples not to try to save him from his enemies, those who "fought against [him] without a cause" (Ps. 109:3), by resorting to violence.

So, we are to turn the other cheek, to go an extra mile, to give away one of our coats if we have two, to love our enemies. Nowhere is warfare or fighting deemed acceptable; indeed, Roman soldiers who became disciples were told to "Do violence to no man" (Lk. 3:14). As citizens

of a Kingdom "not of this world" the disciple of the anointed King of that Kingdom cannot participate in warfare being carried out by the kingdoms of men.

So the unavoidable conclusion is that there can be no 'just wars' in the current age. God has not sanctioned wars fought by the kingdoms of men against each other, even though He "ruleth in the kingdom of men" (Dan. 4:17). The disciples of Christ await the day of the Lord when the Lord Jesus Christ will lead the saints in bringing salvation to God's people and will exercise God's righteous judgements on the kingdoms of men, which will be destroyed and God's Kingdom established.



## Correspondence

*Comments on articles appearing in the magazine are always welcome, and should be addressed to the editor in whose section the article appears.*

## Ezekiel's visions of the Millennium

### The size of the temple

I am writing to comment on Brother Geoff Cave's articles in the above series under the headings "The sanctuary precincts" ([Feb. 2002, p. 63](#)) and "The temple" ([Mar. 2002, p. 96](#)), in particular regarding the size of the temple.

#### The wall

In Ezekiel 40:2 we are told that the prophet was given a vision of a structure "which was as the frame of a city". In verse 3 we read that the hand of Yahweh "brought [him] thither", that is, to this structure which was "as the frame of a city". Then a man appeared and "stood in the gate". He had "a measuring reed" in his hand which, being six cubits long, we assume would have been ten-to-twelve feet long (v. 5). The first feature the prophet's attention is focused on is "a wall on the outside of the house round about" (v. 5). We conclude that the prophet was at a gate in the wall of the city-like structure, which is now described as "the house". He is then taken to the east gate (v. 6), which Brother Cave depicts in his article (Fig. 1, [Feb. 2002, p. 63](#)).

The Hebrew for wall in verse 5 is *chowmah*, and the only other place where it occurs in Ezek-

iel's record of the temple is in 42:20. Here the prophet is again at the east gate, for we read in verse 15: "Now when he had made an end of measuring the inner house, he brought me forth toward the gate whose prospect is toward the east, and measured it round about". "It" here surely refers to the house. Even if we say "it" applies to the gate, the measurement given, which is in reeds (reeds is in the original Hebrew), establishes the size of the house. He measured the four sides "with the measuring reed" and each side was 500 reeds (vv. 16-19).

Then we read in verse 20: "He measured it [that is, the house] by the four sides: *it had a wall round about*, five hundred . . . long, and five hundred broad, to make a separation between the sanctuary and the profane place". The AV has "reeds" in italics between "five hundred" and "long", and, though "reeds" is not in the original, it is implicit from verses 16-19 that this is the unit of measurement. This is the conclusion that Brother Henry Sulley comes to in his book *The Temple of Ezekiel's Prophecy*, and I believe we should give careful consideration to this book, not only to the details of the temple but also to his excellent exposition of Scripture, which in itself should cause us to pay attention to his words.

#### Cubits or reeds?

In Figure 3 of his [February article](#) (p. 64), Brother Cave shows the cumulative total of the measure-

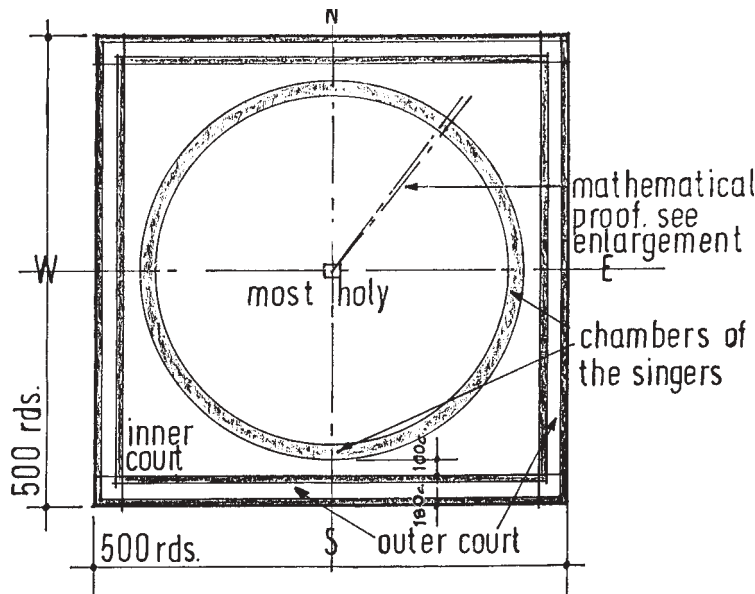


FIG. 1 PLAN OF TEMPLE

ments in his layout as being 500 cubits, but this is not in harmony with 42:15-20. He comments in his [March article](#) as follows regarding the use of reeds in this passage: "There are two possible explanations for this difficulty: either the Hebrew text has been corrupted, or the passage is describing another wall around the whole of the sanctuary", and has a Figure 7 showing a "possible extra wall" (p. 100).

However, is it right to conclude that the Hebrew text has been corrupted? If we say that it has been, then do we apply the same argument to 40:5, which speaks of the wall being one reed high, and say that it was one cubit, or two feet, high? But if we say that reeds is correct in 42:15, but that the passage applies to an additional outer wall and not to the wall of the temple, then we have a small temple 500 cubits square surrounded by a mile square wall twelve feet high and twelve feet deep apparently without any gates in it. Surely we should take the Scriptures as they stand and conclude that the temple itself is 500 reeds square.

At this stage it will be valuable to refer to the rule of measurement that Brother Sulley adopted in his book, summarised for us as follows:

"Brother Sulley employed the consistent rule, that all measures must be understood to be that of the original measuring stick held by the measuring angel (Ezek. 40:3,5), **unless stated to be otherwise**. That measuring stick was one reed long. Where smaller measures are intended, we find cubits, spans, or handbreadths in the text.

"An expositor who disregards this rule, is fabricating his own design, when he inserts or omits measures at his caprice.

"Wherever the word 'cubits' appears in italics in the Authorised Version it is not in the original Hebrew text. Ezek. 46:22 should therefore read 'courts joined of forty long and thirty broad', i.e. 40 by 30 REEDS according to the law of premise in Ezek. 40:

3-5".<sup>1</sup>

In the description in Ezekiel, we have an outer gate, which is forty cubits deep. This leads into a 100-cubits-deep outward court, then a further gate of similar dimensions that leads to an inner court (40:27,32,35). See Figures 1 and 2. On the

1. *A Handbook on the Temple of Ezekiel's Prophecy*, Christadelphian Scripture Study Service, 1985, p. 16. If this rule is applied to the description of the tribal cantons described in Ezekiel 48 then, as I argued in my letter "The extent of the land in the Kingdom" ([Sept. 2002, p. 341](#)), the measurement would be in reeds.

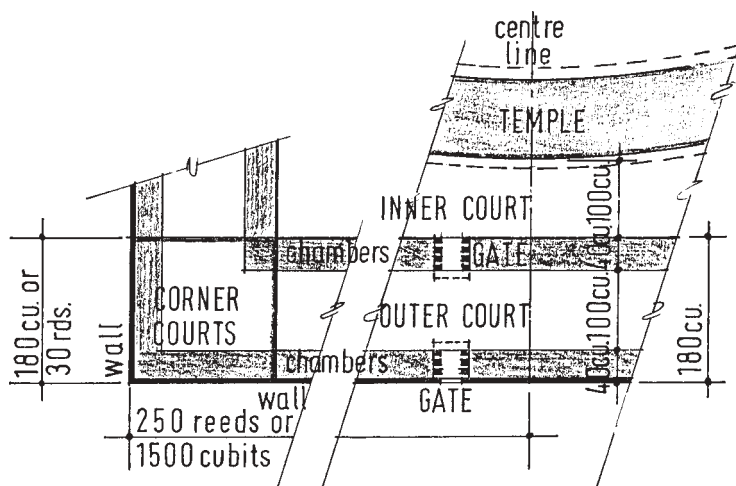


FIG. 2 ENLARGED BROKEN PLAN

### Mathematical proof that the temple of Ezekiel's prophecy is circular

On the premise that the building is circular, it follows that the chambers which comprise the building will diminish in width toward the centre. The width of the door on the *inside* is given in Ezekiel 41:3 as six cubits. But there is another dimension in this verse of seven cubits, and it is suggested that this applies to the width of an *outer* door (see [Fig. 3](#)).

Verse 3 also states that the doors have posts on either side of them of two cubits width. According to verse 1 there are also structural posts on either side of these of six cubits width. With doors of six cubits width the distance from centre to centre of the structural posts would be sixteen cubits, calculated as follows:

Door	6 cubits
Two doorposts	4 cubits
Half a structural post	3 cubits
Half structural post	3 cubits
<b>Total</b>	<b>16 cubits</b>

With the doors of seven cubits width the distance would be seventeen cubits (see [Fig. 3](#)).

If we set these doors out with seventy cubits centre to centre between the doors (see [Fig. 2](#)), it can be proved mathematically that the spans of the arcs relative to the radius of the temple are correct (see [Fig. 4](#) and further explanation below). We arrive at the seventy cubits as follows:

Length of wall of building (41:12)	90 cubits
Width of "place . . . left" (41:11) doubled	-10 cubits
Sides of doors (41:2) doubled	-10 cubits
<b>Total</b>	<b>70 cubits</b>

The dimension of 1,190 cubits in [Figure 4](#) is arrived at by deducting the appropriate figures from the distance from the centre of the house to the outside wall, which is 250 reeds (1,500 cubits), that is, half the 500 reeds length of the building (see main letter for this figure).

Distance from centre of house to outside wall	1,500 cubits
The outer court and the two gates as per main letter (Figs. <a href="#">1</a> and <a href="#">2</a> )	-180 cubits
The space between the inner court gate and the temple (41:13)	-100 cubits
The distance between the porch and the temple (40:49)	-20 cubits
The distance between the porch and the doors	-10 cubits
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,190 cubits</b>

The figures for the above calculation are shown diagrammatically in [Figure 4](#). For any given angle, the arc increases proportionally as the radius increases. With a circular building, the outer door with its posts will be greater in width than the inner door, shown as follows (where  $\chi$  stands for the width of the outer door):

$$\frac{1120 \text{ cubits}}{1190} = \frac{16 \text{ cubits}}{\chi}$$

Therefore:

$$\chi = \frac{16 \times 1190}{1120} = 17 \text{ cubits}$$

The ratio of the doors is in the exact proportion that the circular interpretation of the temple requires. This mathematical proof is based on Brother Sulley's book *The Temple of Ezekiel's Prophecy* and further details can be found in that book. [Figure 3](#) is a simplified plan copied from the book.

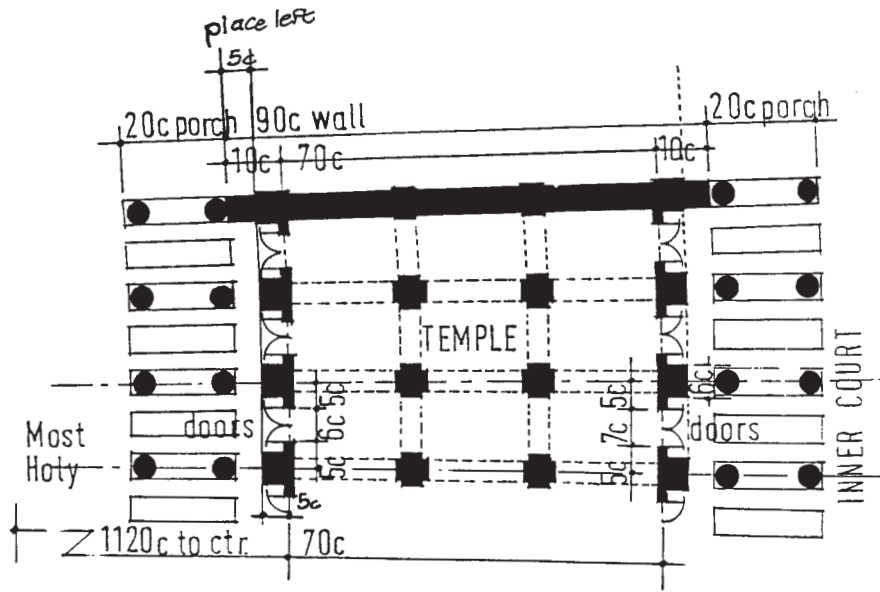


FIG.3 Simplified plan showing part of circular Temple  
c.denotes cubits

basis that the house is coextensive with the wall (see above), if we extend these chambers alongside the outer gates and the inner court gates to suit a building 500 reeds long, they fit exactly with the corner towers, which are described in 46:21-24. The AV gives the unit of measurement for these as cubits, but this is not in the original.

Following the rule detailed above, that "all measures must be understood to be that of the original measuring stick held by the measuring angel (Ezek. 40:3,5), unless stated to be otherwise", we conclude that the towers are thirty reeds square. (The figure of forty reeds also given would apply to the height.) Thirty reeds equals 180 cubits. They would fit therefore exactly into the corners of the chambers to the outer gate and the inner gate because the cumulative total of the outer gate, the outer court and the inner gate is 180 cubits (Fig. 2). These corner courts occur in the four corners of the square building (46:22),

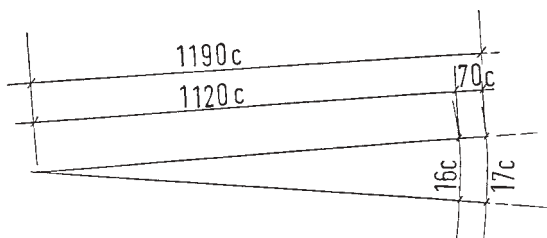


FIG. 4 DIAGRAM FOR MATHEMATICAL PROOF

so we conclude that the gates and the chambers surround the square, meeting exactly with the four courts at the corners (Figs. 1 and 2).

#### A circular temple

When we go into the inner court, we come to the temple, which is described in chapter 41. Having established that the outer building is a house nearly a mile square, it is reasonable to conclude that the temple is of considerable size, especially bearing in mind that it is to be a house of prayer for all nations whereas Solomon's temple was only for Israel. The indications are that this temple is circular. The first indication of this is in the description in 40:44-46 of the chambers of the singers, which are stated to be "in the inner court". The words "at the side of the east gate having the prospect toward the north" suggest a circular building, which is located "an hundred cubits eastward and northward" from the inner face of the inner gate (40:19). This is shown in Figure 1, which shows how only a circular building can face both north and east.

The second indication is to be found in Ezekiel 43:12: "Upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy". Here the word "round" means a circle, being derived from a word meaning 'to revolve', and is rendered "circuits" in Ecclesiastes 1:6. It can apply to a square building, and in fact is

used for the wall referred to above, which was square, but in 43:12 we are reading about something *round* the mountain. We need to consider this verse with Psalm 24:3: "Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD [Yahweh]? or who shall stand in His holy place?". The holy place is here associated with the hill of Yahweh, the mountain of Ezekiel 43:12, a hill surrounded by a circular building, subdivided into chambers, the dimensions of which are given in 41:5-11.

For those who are mathematically inclined, further proof that the temple is circular is given in the separate panel.

It is worthy of note that a place associated with the Garden of Eden, Havilah (Gen. 2:11), means 'a circle', as also does Galilee, where the Master grew up and carried out most of his ministry. The circle represents immortality, so it is fitting that the temple of the age when the Lord Jesus Christ and the immortal saints shall reign over the earth should be circular.

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In Part 4 of his series "Ezekiel's visions of the Millennium" ([Mar. 2002, p. 96](#)), Brother Geoff Cave raises at the end of the article the problem of whether the outer wall was measured in reeds or cubits (Ezek. 42:15-20). Brother Sulley seized upon the AV 'reeds' to argue that almost every measurement in the Ezekiel account was in reeds. A more perceptive reading, such as Brother Cave's, shows that all the measurements of the temple complex described to that stage were in cubits and would fit into a square with sides of 500 cubits. The only exception is in respect of the small chambers in each of the gatehouses, which are six cubits long and six cubits wide, the dimensions being expressed as "one reed" (40:6,7).

The Massoretic, the official or received Hebrew text, in 42:16-19 has for each of the outside walls, "five hundred reeds with the measuring reed". This would seem to be conclusive. But at least four uncertainties arise:

- 1 Why the discrepancy between buildings which fit a 500 cubit square and a surrounding wall of 500 reeds?
- 2 Why does verse 20 not mention the units? It simply has "five hundred long, and five hundred broad".
- 3 Why do some modern versions boldly show all measurements in cubits and others have "reeds" in italics in verse 20?

- 4 Finally, there is the curious scribal error of the Massoretic text of verse 16. The error can be demonstrated in English. The Hebrew word for 'cubits' may be transliterated as *amot*, whilst that for 'hundreds' is *maot*. Whilst the text of verse 16 clearly means "five hundreds [*maot*]", it actually has *amot*, transposing two letters and literally reading "five cubits reeds". The Massoretic text has a marginal note saying that the word *amot* here should be read as *maot*. It would be an easy mistake to make if one were typing fast but an odd mistake for a skilled scribe writing carefully.

One of the texts which the AV and later translators 'diligently compared' was the Septuagint, the early Greek version written by Greek-speaking Jews in Alexandria in the late third century B.C. Their translation of Ezekiel 42:16-20 gives the unit of measurement as "cubits with the measuring reed". The final part of their verse 20 is: "... and the circumference of the parts round about, a space of five hundred cubits eastward, and a breadth of five hundred cubits, to make a division between the sanctuary and the outer wall". This introduces another problem whilst clearly stating 'cubits'; hence the hesitation of later translators. Did the Massoretic scribe have a word 'cubits' in the scroll from which he was copying?

A most important feature of both the Bible text and the Septuagint is that the purpose of the outer wall was "to make a separation between the sanctuary and the profane place" (v. 20). Among the so-called Dead Sea Scrolls was a late find which its editor/translator, the late Yigael Yadin, dubbed 'the Temple Scroll'. One of its sections describes a future temple which has a distinct 'family resemblance' to the other temples but has significant differences. The Scrolls version has three concentric walls, all of square plan, all related to separating the sacred from the profane and of progressively increasing sanctity inwards. What Yadin called the 'inner court' contains the equivalent of all the features described up to Ezekiel 42:15. Each outer wall has twelve gatehouses, and between them the wall is lined with chambers, as in Ezekiel's vision.

The plan in the scroll shows smaller dimensions than those of Ezekiel's vision. Yadin surmised that this smaller temple was intended to be built by men when the situation in Israel improved, possibly solely for the use of the sect, whilst the scroll sect believed that the temple of Ezekiel's vision was to be built for all the re-

deemed at the end of time. An interesting point is that the largest dimension given in the scroll, that for each face of the outermost wall, is 1,600 cubits—cubits not simplified into reeds.

The Ezekiel original was, of course, by far the oldest of the texts. Some three hundred years later came the Septuagint, and nearly two hundred years after that came the sectarian scrolls. The latter were written within a comparatively short period, which ended presumably about A.D. 70. The Ezekiel and Septuagint texts continued to be copied by hand until the invention of printing, and the Hebrew text continues to be copied by hand for synagogue scrolls.

The reason for the discrepancy in Ezekiel 42:16-20 between the Hebrew and the Septuagint, and for the curious mistake in the Hebrew of verse 16, can only be a matter for speculation. It is most unlikely that 'official' scribes would even acknowledge the existence of the sectarian scroll, but no doubt they were aware of its contents. Perhaps a copyist of Ezekiel, influenced by the phrase "to make a separation between the sanctuary and the profane place", confused the dimensions of the wall surrounding the temple complex and a much larger outer protective wall.

Brother Frank Jannaway says that the early brethren generally accepted that "the form of the predicted temple was of a square building measuring 500 cubits each way . . . surrounded by a huge wall 3,000 cubits square [that is, 500 reeds]" and shows a plan which he says "is simply typical of many others" (*Christadelphian Answers*, p. 158). Apparently the objection against the 'small temple' theory, that it would be too small to be "an house of prayer for all people" (Isa. 56:7), came very early. Brother Jannaway quotes a remark by Brother Thomas that "it is not to be supposed that literally all the world will go up to Jerusalem at one time" (*ibid.*, p. 160). Brother Jannaway adds that, with the outer surrounding wall, the total enclosed area would be the same as with the circular suggestion.

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