



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

I was interested to read Brother Geoff Cave's articles on the temple of Ezekiel's prophecy, and his letter in reply to Brother Carlo Barbaresi ([Jan. 2003, p. 20](#)). I thought the letter was Scriptural and convincing. One factor which has not been addressed in the various items of correspondence concerns the whole concept of the temple. God does not change, and the pattern of His tabernacle was first given to Moses at Sinai, then repeated by the Deity in the same idiom to David, who passed it on to Solomon.

The foursquare principle has always applied to the things of God, and to Israel. Solomon's temple was built to the same basic design as the tabernacle. All subsequent temples were built to the same design. There was no hint of a circle in the pattern. Even Herod's temple, with all its additional extravagances, was the same basic design: porch, holy place, most holy place. The most holy was foursquare, not an open circle of buildings. The Lord Jesus Christ preached in Herod's temple and did not complain of its design or compare it with Ezekiel's prophetic writing. He said that not one stone would be left standing on top of another, but that was a punishment for Israel and not a condemnation of the temple design.

Brother Sulley would have the most holy place in the middle of a huge circle of buildings designed by himself, in the midst of which, on top of a mountain, was an altar the size of two tennis courts which was obviously impossible to use without some form of heat-proof conveyor mechanism. All this could be seen from afar. The most holy place could only be seen by the high priest, and it was certainly not the place for the altar, especially in this case where ordinary priests (albeit the sons of Zadok) would have to be constantly attending it and where a constant procession of animal carcasses would have to be dragged through it day by day.

The place for the altar was before the entrance to the holy place, not in the middle of the most holy place exposed to public gaze. The only difference between the temple described by Ezekiel and Solomon's temple was the laver, which is

not included at all in Ezekiel's writing. In place of the laver was a fountain of living waters issuing from the threshold of the temple and passing to the south of the altar.

I believe that Brother Cave's exposition is thoughtful and Scriptural, and not intended in any way to offer a confrontational approach to those who prefer the exposition of Brother Henry Sulley.

David Moore
Launceston, Tasmania

I would like to respond to Brother Geoff Cave's letter in the January 2003 *Testimony* ([p. 20](#)), replying to my letter of December ([p. 446](#)). It is good that we both agree that there will be a temple in the Kingdom age and that there will be animal sacrifices.

With regard to his table of comparison between Solomon's temple and the temple or inner house of Ezekiel 41, I note the points that he makes, but this is not the fundamental issue. The fundamental issue concerns the wall around the house and the gates. Brother Cave refers to this wall and states: "Brother Sulley uses the dimensions of this wall as his primary dimension to determine the size of the temple". This is not quite the case, however.

The basis for the size of the temple is the consistent rule which I quoted in my letter. The measuring reed was the measure used. Where no unit of measurement is given in the text, we take it to be reeds. The measuring angel was in a gate within the wall in what is described as "the frame of a city" in 40:2, and in the east gate within the wall in 42:15. The gate was integral with the wall and was fifty cubits deep and twenty-five cubits wide, with posts sixty cubits high, capped by arches. Moreover, there were chambers alongside the gates.

This was a *building*, which he measures as 500 reeds square. Even if the word 'reeds' was not in the original, we would conclude on the basis of the above rule that it was 500 reeds. You cannot separate the wall from the building. If you do it is a wall without gates. The magnitude of the building must therefore dictate our understanding of the inner temple, bearing in mind that it is

to be a house of prayer for all nations. Hence Brother Sulley's conclusions, which I endeavoured to explain in my earlier letter. This consistent rule applies to the extent of the land and the size of the temple, both of which are greater than those shown by Brother Cave.

In answer to an objector to his size for the temple, Brother Sulley wrote:

“... I may say that the question at issue is not whether the internal space of the Temple is square or round, but whether the Temple will be a small building 500 cubits square or a large building of 500 reeds square . . .

“The fact is that if the prophecy is taken to mean that the building is 500 cubits square, then there is no item in the specification providing for an enclosing wall at a distance from it. The theorists who speak of a Temple of 500 cubits surround it by a wall of 500 reeds in length, show that they perceive there must be a foursquare wall 500 reeds long to the Temple. Yet, quite out of harmony with their suggestion, the closing verses of the 42nd chapter of Ezekiel are sufficient evidence that this wall is part of the building described by him. There it is definitely stated that the house which Ezekiel saw, and which appeared to him like the frame of a city, was 500 reeds (or about one mile) square, for when the inside of the house was measured then the measuring angel measured *it* on the outside round about . . . Obviously also it may be said that a building 500 cubits square would not look like ‘the frame of a city’” (*The Christadelphian*, June 1923, p. 257).

Carlo Barbaresi
High Wycombe