EZEKIEL 40

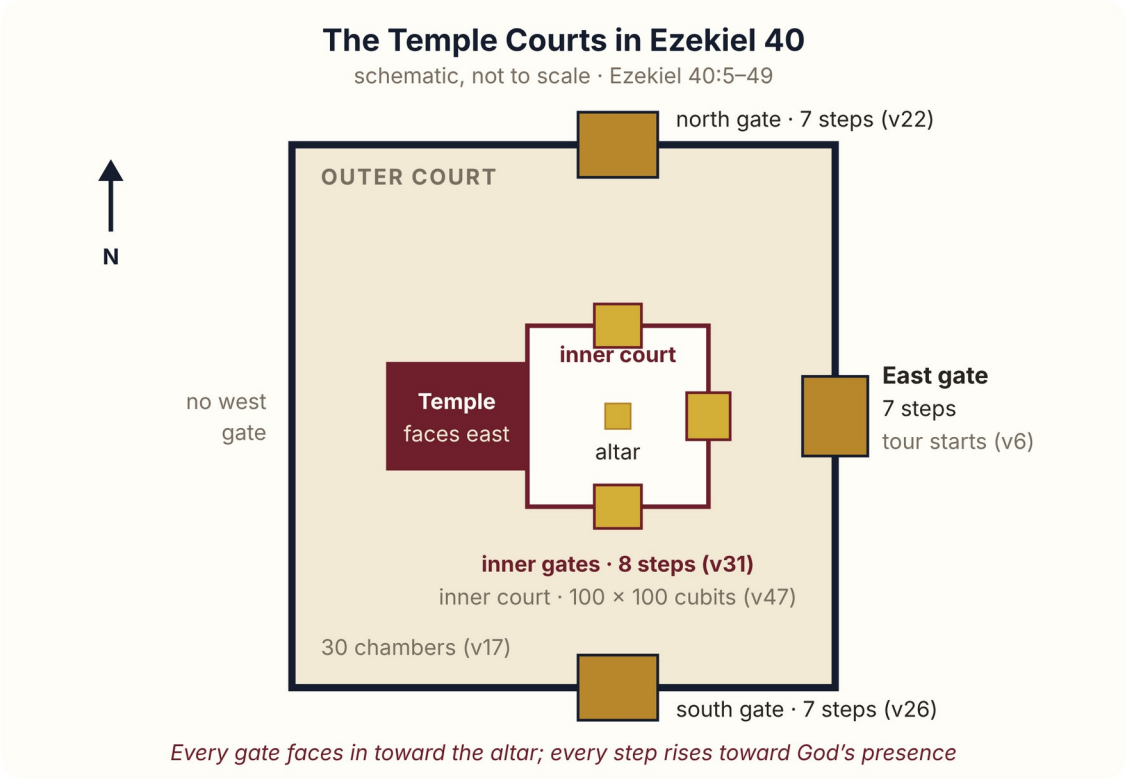
A New Temple Measured Out

> *“Son of man, see with your eyes, hear with your ears, and give attention to all that I am going to show you; for you have been brought here in order to show it to you. Declare to the house of Israel all that you see.”*
> EZEKIEL 40:4

Where Ezekiel has brought us

1. Ezekiel 40 is dated “in the fourteenth year after the city was taken” (v1), the twenty-fifth year of the exile — about 573 BC.

2. This vision runs to the end of the book (chapters 40–48) and is among the hardest passages in the Bible.



In the Visions of God

On a very high mountain, a man of bronze with a measuring rod gives Ezekiel his charge.

EZEKIEL 40:1

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.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik notes this is one of the last dated prophecies in the book. Passing on Clarke, he takes the high mountain as 'Mount Moriah, the mount on which Solomon's temple was built.'

WHAT IT MEANS

The date matters. If Ezekiel counted by the religious calendar, the tenth of the first month was the day Israel chose the Passover lamb (Exod 12:3).

mar'ah (מַרְאָה)
MAR'AH · "A VISION"

Mar'ah is a vision, a sight given by God. Ezekiel is brought into the land of Israel "in the visions of God" (v2) — the same kind of seeing that opened the book by the river Chebar (1:1).

The Wall and the East Gate

The measuring begins at the outer wall and the gate that faces east.

EZEKIEL 40:5

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.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik, passing on Taylor: 'Ezekiel is using the long cubit for all his measurements' — the rod was about ten feet long. Wiersbe, in Guzik: 'To measure property is symbolic of claiming it for yourself.'

WHAT IT MEANS

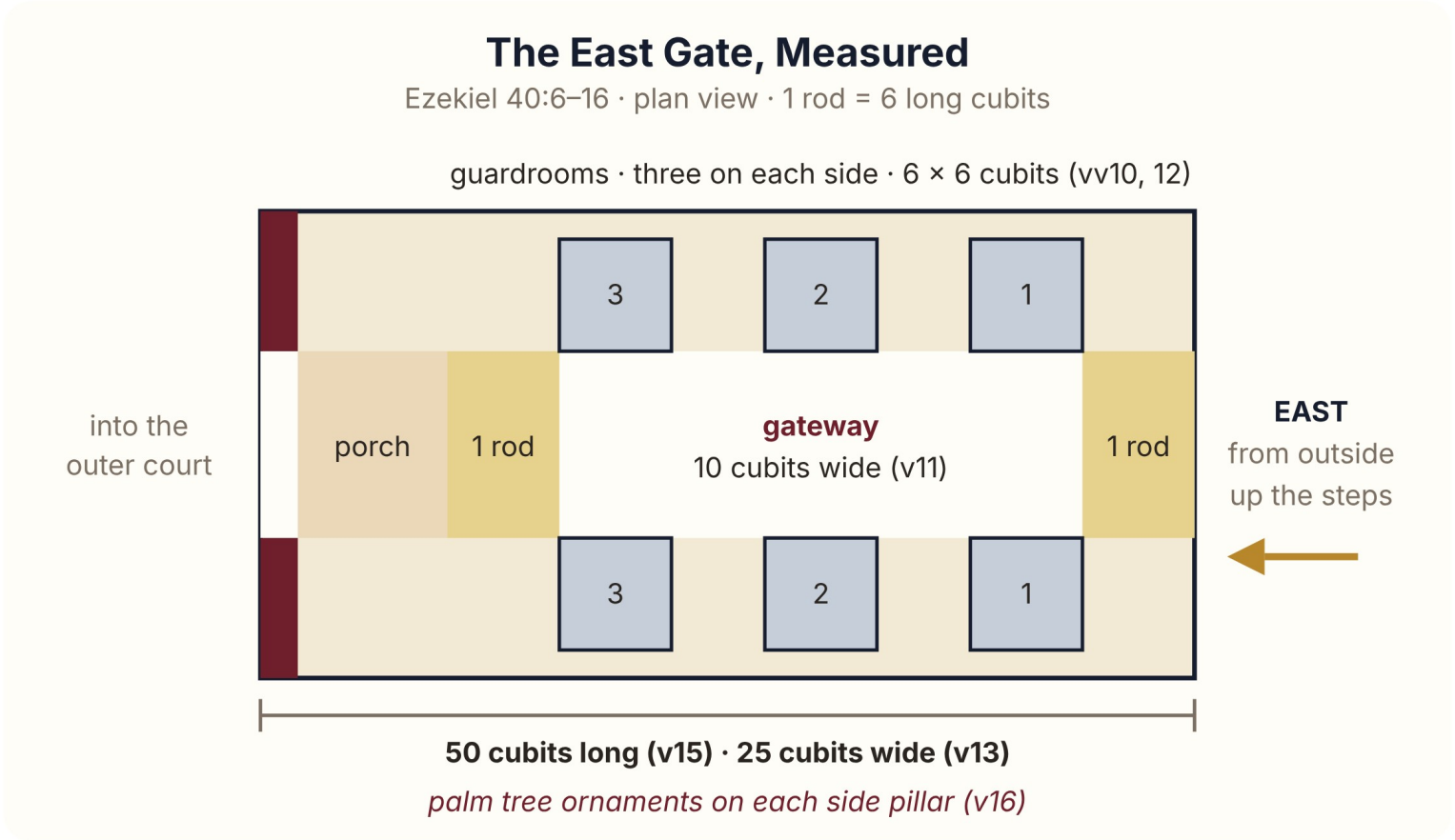
The tour starts at "the gate which faced east" (v6) — the very direction the glory of God left in 11:23 and the direction it will return in 43:1–5.

madad (מָדַד)

MADAD · "TO MEASURE"

Madad means to measure, to stretch out a line. It is the verb of the chapter — "he measured" again and again (vv5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13 and on).

The East Gate, Measured



The east gate in plan (vv6–16): thresholds, three guardrooms on each side, a porch, fifty cubits long and twenty-five wide.

The Outer Court and Its Gates

Thirty chambers, a pavement, and north and south gates built to the same measure.

EZEKIEL 40:17

Then he brought me into the outer court, and behold, there were chambers and a pavement made for the court all around; thirty chambers faced the pavement.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik passes on Poole's view that the thirty chambers were 'for the priests and Levites to lodge in.'

WHAT IT MEANS

The outer court is wide and ordered: a pavement running beside the gates, thirty chambers facing it, and a hundred cubits from each outer gate to the gate of the inner court.

chatser (חָצֵר)
CHATSER · "COURT"

Chatser is an enclosure, a courtyard — open space walled in. Ezekiel is brought "into the outer court" (v17), with a pavement and thirty chambers facing it.

The Inner Gates: Eight Steps Up

The inner gates match the outer gates but rise higher — eight steps instead of seven.

EZEKIEL 40:28

Then he brought me to the inner court by the south gate; and he measured the south gate according to those same measurements.

WHAT IT MEANS

Ezekiel is brought through the inner gates — south, east and north — and each one matches the outer gates in every measurement but one: it is higher.

maʿalah (מַעֲלָה)
MAʿALAH · "A GOING UP"

Maʿalah is a step or stairway — literally a going up. The outer gates were "reached by seven steps" (v22), but each inner gate says "its stairway had eight steps" (vv31, 34, 37).

Tables for Sacrifice

A rinsing chamber and eight tables for burnt, sin and guilt offerings stand at the gate.

EZEKIEL 40:38

A chamber with its doorway was by the side pillars at the gates; there they rinse the burnt offering.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik answers the question of sacrifices after the cross (Heb 10:10–14) this way: Old Covenant sacrifices never took away sin (Heb 10:4); they pointed to Christ.

WHAT IT MEANS

Why would there be animal sacrifices after Jesus offered Himself once for all? This is the hard question, and honest believers answer it differently.

ʿolah (עֹלָה)

ʿOLAH · "BURNT OFFERING"

ʿOlah is the burnt offering — literally an offering that goes up, wholly burned. Beside it Ezekiel names the sin offering and the ʾasham (H817), the trespass or guilt offering (v39).

Singers, the Sons of Zadok, and the Porch

Chambers for singers and priests, the altar at the center, and the porch of the temple.

EZEKIEL 40:44

From the outside to the inner gate were chambers for the singers in the inner court, one of which was at the side of the north gate, with its front toward the south, and one at the side of the south gate facing toward the north.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik, passing on Block, argues that the priests who "keep charge of the temple" were guards: 'While scholars commonly assume that cultic service is involved, this is probably incorrect.'

WHAT IT MEANS

Worship includes song — there are "chambers for the singers in the inner court" (v44).

sharath (שָׁרַת)
SHARATH · "TO MINISTER"

Sharath means to serve, to minister. The sons of Zadok are those "who from the sons of Levi come near to the LORD to minister to Him" (v46).

What to carry from this chapter

1

Dated in the ruins.

The vision comes “in the fourteenth year after the city was taken” (v1) — about 573 BC.

2

Measuring means claiming.

Wiersbe, in Guzik: ‘To measure property is symbolic of claiming it for yourself.’

3

God holds the rod.

Poole notes ‘the standard is not put into his hand’ — Ezekiel watches while the man measures (v5).

4

The tour starts east.

The guide begins at the east gate (v6), the way the glory left (11:23) and will return (43:1–5).

More to carry

5

Seven steps, then eight.

Maʿalah, a going up: the inner gates rise higher than the outer gates (vv22, 31).

6

Details matter.

Guzik says the command to see, hear, give attention and declare (v4) shows the details are not to be skimmed.

7

Memorials, not atonement.

Guzik reads the sacrifices of verses 38–43 as memorials of the cross, much like the Lord's Supper.

8

Zadok means righteous.

The faithful sons of Zadok "come near to the LORD to minister to Him" (v46).

Talk it through

1. The guide told Ezekiel to “see with your eyes, hear with your ears, and give attention.” Which parts of God’s Word are you tempted to skim, and why?

2. Ezekiel waited fourteen years in the ruins before this vision came. What do you do with the waiting when God’s rebuilding seems slow?

3. What does it mean to you that God measures what He claims? Where do you need Him to lay His measuring rod on your life?

4. The inner gates sit higher than the outer gates. What does the rising stairway teach about coming near to a holy God?

5. The sons of Zadok were the ones allowed to come near and minister. What does faithfulness look like for you when the men around you drift?

CLOSING

Ezekiel had watched God's house fall, and fourteen years later God showed him a new one, measured to the cubit. Every gate faces in toward the altar, and every step rises toward His presence. The ruins were never the end of the story; God already had the plans drawn.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

O·I·A study, slides and reflection journal: see the Ezekiel study page.