

Ezekiel 40:49

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The length of the porch was twenty cubits, and the breadth eleven cubits; and he brought me by the steps whereby they went up to it: and there were pillars by the posts, one on this side, and another on that side.

Analysis

The length of the porch was twenty cubits, and the breadth eleven cubits; and he brought me by the steps whereby they went up to it: and there were pillars by the posts, one on this side, and another on that side.

This verse is part of Ezekiel's elaborate vision of the restored temple (chapters 40-48), describing architectural details with precision. The porch (ulam) refers to the entrance hall or vestibule before the main sanctuary. The measurements—twenty cubits (approximately 30 feet) in length and eleven cubits (approximately 16.5 feet) in width—establish sacred proportions that reflect divine order and symmetry.

The mention of steps (ma'alot, ascents/stairs) signifies approaching God requires elevation, both physical and spiritual. The pillars (ammudim) flanking the entrance echo Solomon's temple with its famous pillars Jachin and Boaz (1 Kings 7:21), representing stability and strength. While these details might seem tedious, they serve profound purposes: they demonstrate that **God cares about details** in worship, that restoration will be concrete and real, and that the future temple will surpass even Solomon's glory. Every measurement speaks of God's ordered, intentional presence dwelling among His people.

Historical Context

Ezekiel received this vision around 573 BC while in Babylonian exile, with Jerusalem's temple destroyed and its treasures plundered. For exiled Israelites who had lost everything, these detailed architectural plans served as hope that God had not abandoned His purpose to dwell among them. The measurements deliberately echo and expand upon Solomon's temple (1 Kings 6-7), suggesting continuity with the past and enhanced glory in the future. When exiles returned and built the Second Temple (516 BC), it disappointed those who remembered Solomon's glory (Ezra 3:12). Yet Ezekiel's vision pointed beyond any physical structure to a reality that would only be fulfilled in Christ—the true temple of God's presence (John 2:19-21)—and ultimately in the New Jerusalem where God dwells directly with His people without need of a temple building (Revelation 21:22).

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. Why does God give such detailed architectural specifications, and what does this reveal about His character?
2. How do physical details in worship spaces help or hinder our spiritual encounter with God?
3. What does the requirement of ascending steps to approach God teach about the nature of worship and holiness?
4. How do we balance appreciating symbolic meaning in these details while recognizing Christ as the ultimate temple?
5. In what ways does attention to 'small' details in spiritual disciplines reflect reverence for God's presence?

Interlinear Text

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 3:12 (Parallel theme): Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

Ezekiel 40:34 (Parallel theme): And the arches thereof were toward the outward court; and palm trees were upon the posts thereof, on this side, and on that side: and the going up to it had eight steps.

Ezekiel 40:31 (Parallel theme): And the arches thereof were toward the utter court; and palm trees were upon the posts thereof: and the going up to it had eight steps.

Ezekiel 40:37 (Parallel theme): And the posts thereof were toward the utter court; and palm trees were upon the posts thereof, on this side, and on that side: and the going up to it had eight steps.

2 Chronicles 3:17 (Parallel theme): And he reared up the pillars before the temple, one on the right hand, and the other on the left; and called the name of that on the right hand Jachin, and the name of that on the left Boaz.

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