

# Ezekiel 40:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And behold a wall on the outside of the house round about, and in the man's hand a measuring reed of six cubits long by the cubit and an hand breadth: so he measured the breadth of the building, one reed; and the height, one reed.

## Analysis

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The measuring begins with a wall surrounding the temple complex—physical separation between sacred and profane. The Hebrew גָּדר (gader, 'wall') emphasizes boundary and protection. The measuring reed's specification—'six cubits long by the cubit and an hand breadth' (approximately 10.5 feet using the longer 'royal cubit')—establishes the standard for all subsequent measurements. This precision reflects God's character: exact, unchanging, holy. The wall's dimensions—'one reed' in breadth and height (forming a perfect square in cross-section)—symbolize stability and perfection. Reformed theology sees this wall as representing God's preservation of His church—separated from the world, protected by divine decree. As Paul writes, God has 'set a wall of partition' (Ephesians 2:14) that Christ removes between Jew and Gentile, but maintains between His people and the world (2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

## Historical Context

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Ancient temples featured enclosure walls defining sacred precincts. Archaeological excavations of Near Eastern temples reveal outer walls separating holy ground from common areas. Solomon's temple had similar distinctions—outer court, inner court, Holy Place, and Most Holy Place (1 Kings 6-7). The wall's thickness and height prevented unauthorized access, reflecting Levitical regulations about

approaching God's presence (Numbers 1:51, 18:7). After the exile, Nehemiah rebuilt Jerusalem's walls before proper worship resumed (Nehemiah 6-7), demonstrating that security and sanctity go together. The 'cubit and a hand breadth' (approximately 21 inches) was the royal or long cubit used in monumental architecture, distinguishing this from common measurement. This suggests the temple's royal character—God is the ultimate King dwelling among His people.

## Related Passages

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**Psalm 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

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1. How does the wall's separation between sacred and common challenge cultural pressure to blur distinctions between church and world?
2. What 'walls' does God establish in your life to protect holiness and prevent compromise?
3. How do we maintain healthy separation without falling into self-righteous isolation?

## Interlinear Text

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וְהִנֵּה הַ H2009	חֹמֶת הַ H2346	מִחְצֵי H2351	לְבַתְּרוּ H1004	סְבִיבָה H5439	סְבִיבָה H5439
יָד H3027	וְבָנְיוֹ H376	קְנָתָה H7070	שְׁמֵשׁ H4060	קָאָמָה H520	קָאָמָה H520
וְבָנְיוֹ H2948	כִּי-מִדָּה H4058	אֶת H853	רֶבֶבֶת H7341	כְּבָנָה H1146	קְנָתָה H7070
אֶת H259	וְבָנְיוֹ H6967	קְנָתָה H7070	אֶת H259		

## Additional Cross-References

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**Ezekiel 42:20** (Parallel theme): He measured it by the four sides: it had a wall round about, five hundred reeds long, and five hundred broad, to make a separation between the sanctuary and the profane place.

**Isaiah 26:1** (Parallel theme): In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.