

Ezekiel 40:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And every little chamber was one reed long, and one reed broad; and between the little chambers were five cubits; and the threshold of the gate by the porch of the gate within was one reed.

Analysis

The 'little chambers' (Hebrew *טָא'*, ta') were guardrooms flanking the gate passage, three on each side. Their uniform dimensions—'one reed long, and one reed broad'—emphasize order and equality in service. These chambers housed gatekeepers who controlled access, examined credentials, and maintained sanctity. The five-cubit spaces between chambers allowed movement and supervision. The inner threshold 'by the porch of the gate within' marked another stage of approach. This architectural detail reflects theological truth: access to God involves progressive revelation and increasing holiness. The chambers' symmetry (three on each side) may symbolize completeness (numbers matter in Scripture—cf. three days, three persons in Trinity, three years of Jesus' ministry). Reformed theology sees these gatekeepers as types of church officers who guard doctrine, maintain discipline, and ensure orderly worship (1 Timothy 3:15, Titus 1:9).

Historical Context

Gatekeepers (Hebrew *שׁוֹעֲרִים*, sho'arim) were Levitical officials with significant responsibility. First Chronicles 9:17-27 details their duties: guarding thresholds, opening gates daily, maintaining treasuries, and protecting sacred vessels. David organized 4,000 gatekeepers (1 Chronicles 23:5) divided into 24 courses. These weren't menial servants but trusted officers preventing unauthorized access (2

Chronicles 23:19). The little chambers provided watchposts and storage for their equipment. Archaeological evidence from Israelite fortified cities shows similar multi-chambered gates with guardrooms. The five-cubit spacing between chambers (approximately 8.75 feet) allowed passage while maintaining surveillance. For the exiles, this vision promised restored order—proper worship with proper oversight, contrasting with the chaos and corruption that led to exile.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. Who are the 'gatekeepers' in your local church guarding sound doctrine and godly practice?
2. How do you respond to spiritual authority that examines your 'credentials' for approaching God—with gratitude or resentment?
3. What does the uniformity of the chambers teach about equality in faithful service despite differences in gifts?

Interlinear Text

וְכָל חֶבֶר	וְכָל חֶבֶר	וְכָל חֶבֶר	וְכָל חֶבֶר	וְכָל חֶבֶר	וְכָל חֶבֶר	וְכָל חֶבֶר
And every little chamber	reed	and one	long	reed	and one	broad
H8372	H7070	H259	H753	H7070	H259	H7341
וְכָל חֶבֶר	וְכָל חֶבֶר	וְכָל חֶבֶר	וְכָל חֶבֶר	וְכָל חֶבֶר	וְכָל חֶבֶר	וְכָל חֶבֶר
And every little chamber	were five	cubits	and the threshold	of the gate		
H996	H8372	H2568	H520	H5592	H8179	
וְכָל חֶבֶר	וְכָל חֶבֶר	וְכָל חֶבֶר	וְכָל חֶבֶר	וְכָל חֶבֶר	וְכָל חֶבֶר	וְכָל חֶבֶר
by	the porch	of the gate	within	reed	and one	
H681	H197	H8179	H1004	H7070	H259	

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 40:36 (Parallel theme): The little chambers thereof, the posts thereof, and the arches thereof, and the windows to it round about: the length was fifty cubits, and the breadth five and twenty cubits.