

Ezekiel 41:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

From the ground unto above the door were cherubims and palm trees made, and on the wall of the temple.

Analysis

The cherubim and palm trees carved 'from the ground unto above the door' and 'on the wall of the temple' indicate comprehensive decoration covering entire surfaces. The Hebrew מִקְרָךְ (miqqarqa, 'from the ground') to 'above the door' means floor-to-ceiling ornamentation—nothing plain or barren. This lavish decoration reflects God's beauty and glory. Cherubim represent divine presence and throne guardians (Exodus 25:18-22, Ezekiel 1:4-14), while palm trees symbolize righteousness, victory, and paradise (Psalm 92:12, Revelation 7:9). The combination creates Eden imagery—the temple as restored paradise where God dwells with humanity. Reformed theology emphasizes that while salvation is by grace through faith, proper worship should express God's beauty through excellence, not slovenliness. Beauty in God's house honors His character.

Historical Context

Solomon's temple featured extensive carvings: cherubim, palm trees, flowers, and open flowers covered walls, doors, and floors overlaid with gold (1 Kings 6:29-35). This required master craftsmen (1 Kings 7:13-14) and substantial resources. Ancient Near Eastern temples were lavishly decorated, but Israel's decorations avoided graven images (Exodus 20:4)—cherubim and botanical motifs, not deity representations. The Eden imagery deliberately recalled paradise lost (Genesis 3), promising restoration. Herod's later temple expansion added even more elaborate decoration, impressing even Jesus' disciples (Mark 13:1). However, external beauty without spiritual reality provokes judgment (Mark 13:2). The New Testament

emphasizes believers as living stones (1 Peter 2:5) and the church as God's temple (1 Corinthians 3:16)—spiritual beauty matters most.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. Does your life display 'floor-to-ceiling' devotion to God, or scattered patches of spirituality among worldly decoration?
2. How do you balance pursuing excellence in worship (beautiful temple) with avoiding empty externalism (whitewashed sepulchers)?
3. What Eden imagery (paradise symbols) marks your life as one being restored to God's original design?

Interlinear Text

מִן־הָרָאָה	לְעַד	מִעַל	בְּפָתָח	בְּכָרְבָּן	יְמִים
From the ground	H5704	H5921	unto above the door	were	cherubims
H776			H6607		H3742

בְּהַרְבָּנָה	לְ:	בְּלֹא	בְּעֵשֶׂב	מִן־	יְמִים
and palm trees	made	and on the wall	of the temple		
H8561	H6213	H7023	H1964		