

Ezekiel 42:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then he brought me forth into the utter court, the way toward the north: and he brought me into the chamber that was over against the separate place, and which was before the building toward the north.

Analysis

The 'chamber that was over against the separate place' indicates purpose-built priestly facilities distinct from public areas. The northward orientation may signify approach from God's throne direction (Ezekiel 1:4, Psalm 48:2) or simply architectural arrangement. The Hebrew לִשְׁכָּה (lishkah, 'chamber') denotes a structured room for specific functions, not casual space. These chambers served holy purposes—eating sacrificial portions, storing offerings, changing vestments. The separation 'over against the separate place' emphasizes graduated holiness: sanctuary (most holy), priestly chambers (holy), outer court (consecrated), and beyond (common). Reformed theology sees this as typological: Christ's high priesthood provides access to God's presence while maintaining distinction between redeemed (set apart) and unregenerate (common). The church as royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:9) must maintain holy separation from worldly corruption (2 Corinthians 6:17).

Historical Context

Levitical law specified portions of offerings for priestly consumption (Leviticus 6:14-18, 26; 7:6-10). These 'most holy things' could only be eaten by priests in sacred precincts—not taken home or shared with non-priests. The chambers provided necessary infrastructure for this system. Archaeological evidence from

Israelite sanctuaries shows similar auxiliary buildings housing priestly functions. Solomon's temple had chambers for storing vessels, priestly garments, and temple treasuries (1 Chronicles 9:26-33, Nehemiah 10:37-39). The northern location may relate to ancient cosmology or simply practical architectural arrangement. For the exiles, who hadn't maintained proper priestly functions in Babylon, this detailed provision promised complete restoration of Levitical worship with all necessary facilities.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How do designated 'holy chambers' in the temple challenge contemporary Christianity's blurred lines between sacred and secular?
2. What spiritual 'chambers'—disciplines, habits, relationships—do you maintain exclusively for holy purposes?
3. As a believer-priest, how seriously do you observe distinctions between what is appropriate for spiritual consumption versus worldly indulgence?

Interlinear Text

וַיֵּצֵא נִי	אֶל	הַחֲצוֹן הַ	דֶּרֶךְ		
Then he brought me forth	H413	court	into the utter	the way toward	
H3318		H2691	H2435	H1870	
דֶּרֶךְ	הַצָּפוֹן:	וַיָּבֵא נִי	אֶל	הַלְשֵׁכָה	אֲשֶׁר
the way toward	the north	and he brought	H413	me into the chamber	H834
H1870	H6828	H935		H3957	
נֶגֶד	הַגִּזְרָה	וְאֲשֶׁר	נֶגֶד		
H5048	that was over against the separate place	H834	H5048		
	H1508				
וּבֵנָהּ	הַצָּפוֹן:	אֶל			
and which was before the building	H413	the north			
H1146		H6828			

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 40:20 (Parallel theme): And the gate of the outward court that looked toward the north, he measured the length thereof, and the breadth thereof.

Ezekiel 40:17 (Parallel theme): Then brought he me into the outward court, and, lo, there were chambers, and a pavement made for the court round about: thirty chambers were upon the pavement.

Ezekiel 41:1 (Parallel theme): Afterward he brought me to the temple, and measured the posts, six cubits broad on the one side, and six cubits broad on the other side, which was the breadth of the tabernacle.

Ezekiel 42:4 (Parallel theme): And before the chambers was a walk of ten cubits breadth inward, a way of one cubit; and their doors toward the north.

Ezekiel 42:13 (Parallel theme): Then said he unto me, The north chambers and the south chambers, which are before the separate place, they be holy chambers, where the priests that approach unto the LORD shall eat the most holy things:

there shall they lay the most holy things, and the meat offering, and the sin offering, and the trespass offering; for the place is holy.

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