

Ezekiel 42:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The chambers were in the thickness of the wall of the court toward the east, over against the separate place, and over against the building.

Analysis

The chambers were in the thickness of the wall of the court toward the east, over against the separate place, and over against the building. The Hebrew rochav (רֹחֶב, "thickness") emphasizes the substantial construction—these weren't flimsy additions but integral to the temple structure, built into the very walls. **The separate place** (gizrah, גִּזְרָה) appears repeatedly in Ezekiel's vision, referring to the restricted area around the temple proper, off-limits to all but priests performing sacred duties.

The positioning **over against** (literally "to the face of") the separate place indicates these chambers faced the most holy area, serving as transition zones between the outer court where laity assembled and the inner sanctum where only consecrated priests could enter. This architectural arrangement embodied the holiness code: gradations of sacred space protected God's transcendent holiness while providing access through proper mediation. The priests serving in these chambers stood, literally and figuratively, between the people and God's dwelling.

Historical Context

The term "separate place" (gizrah) occurs nine times in Ezekiel 41-42, always denoting the restricted zone around the temple building itself. In Solomon's temple, similar spatial distinctions existed (1 Kings 6-7), but Ezekiel's vision intensifies the separation between holy and common. This wasn't arbitrary

exclusivism but recognition that sinful humanity cannot casually approach the infinitely holy God. The priestly system, with its chambers, courts, and restricted areas, taught Israel that access to God required mediation, purification, and consecration. The New Testament reveals these spatial separations were shadows: Christ's death tore the temple veil (Matthew 27:51), opening direct access to God's presence for all believers (Hebrews 10:19-22). Yet the principle remains—we approach God on His terms, not ours, through the mediator Christ, not through presumption.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How do the 'separate places' in Ezekiel's temple teach us about God's holiness and our need for a mediator?
2. In what ways does Christ's priesthood fulfill and surpass the spatial separations of the Old Testament temple?

Interlinear Text

בָּרְכָּבָן	בָּרְכָּבָן	בָּרְכָּבָן	בָּרְכָּבָן	בָּרְכָּבָן	בָּרְכָּבָן
were in the thickness	of the wall	of the court	toward	the east	
H7341	H1444	H2691	H1870	H6921	H413
וְאַל	וְאַל	וְאַל	וְאַל	וְאַל	וְאַל
פָּנָן	פָּנָן	פָּנָן	פָּנָן	פָּנָן	פָּנָן
and over against	the separate place		and over against	the building	
H6440	H1508	H413	H6440	H1146	
לְשָׁכּוֹת:					
The chambers					
H3957					

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 42:1 (Parallel theme): 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.

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.