

THE TEMPLE IN SECOND-TEMPLE JUDAISM (EXCLUDING EARLY CHRISTIANITY)

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1. The Temple in Prophetic Prediction

In the context of Israel's exile and the destruction of Solomon's Temple, the prophet Isaiah predicts that a second Temple would be built when the people have been restored to the land (Isa 2:2-3; 44:28; 56:7; 60:7, 13; 66:20-21). In Isa 2:2-3, the prophet says that "in the latter days" the rebuilt Temple would become an international religious center, where the nations will be instructed. (The same prophecy is found in Micah 4:1-2.) According to Isa 56:7, the rebuilt Temple would become a house of prayer for the nations. In the context of the restoration and the establishment of the new covenant, Jeremiah prophesies that the priests would continually serve at the Temple offering sacrifices (33:18). Ezekiel predicts that at the restoration God's dwelling place will be with the people (37:27), and receives a vision of the new Temple to be built after the restoration (40-48). Every aspect of Ezekiel's plans for the second Temple sounds normal until in 47:1-12 he says that a river originating in the temple and will flow eastward towards the Dead Sea, which makes the temple appear almost surreal. (See Joel 3:18 for the same idea of a water flowing from the Temple.)

2. The Second Jerusalem Temple

Solomon's Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BCE. After years in exile, King Darius allowed some Jews to return to Judea in order to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple. The second Temple underwent many partial renovations and even a complete dismantling and rebuilding until its destruction by the Romans in 70. Unfortunately, information on the history of the second Temple is meager and spotty.

2.1. The Pre-Herodian Temple

The second Temple underwent many partial renovations and even a complete dismantling and rebuilding until its destruction by the Romans in 70. Unfortunately, information on the history of the second Temple is meager and spotty.

The second Temple was built on the ruins of Solomon's Temple on the Temple mount. A very incomplete description of the plan of the structure built under the direction of Zerubbabel is found in a copy of the original decree by Cyrus (Ezra 6:3-4; 1 Esdras 6:24-25; see *Ant.* 11.4.6; 99). The Temple was to be a place of sacrifice--so that the altar was to be rebuilt--and was to be ninety feet (i.e., sixty cubits) high and ninety feet wide with three courses of well-polished stones and one of timber. According to The Book of Haggai, the returnees were slow to rebuild the Temple.

The history of the Temple during the Persian and early Hellenistic periods is largely unknown, owing to a lack of sources. Presumably, it still existed and operations went on within it as normal. There is one reference from this period to consider. Josephus claims to quote from a work written by a certain Hecataeus of Abdera, a philosopher who lived in the fourth and third centuries BCE and who wrote a work about the Jews. In his work, Hecataeus describes the Jerusalem Temple (*Apion* 1.22; 198-99).

The same man describe our city Jerusalem also itself as of a most excellent structure, and very large, and inhabited from the most ancient times. He also discourses of the multitude of men in it, and of the construction of our temple, after the following manner: "There are many strong places and villages (says he) in the country of Judea; but one strong city there is, about fifty furlongs in circumference, which is inhabited by a hundred and twenty thousand men, or thereabouts; they call it Jerusalem. There is about the middle of the city a wall of stone, whose length is five hundred feet (five plethra), and the breadth a hundred cubits, having a pair of gates; wherein there is a square altar, not made of hewn stone, but composed of white stones gathered together, having each side twenty cubits long, and its altitude ten cubits. Hard by it is a large edifice, wherein there is an altar and a lampstand, both of gold, and in weight two talents: upon these there is a light that is never extinguished, either by night or by day. There is no image, nor any thing, nor any donations therein; nothing at all is there planted, neither grove, nor any thing of that sort. The priests abide therein both nights and days, performing certain purifications, and drinking not the least drop of wine while they are in the temple."

He says that the Temple encompassed an area of five hundred feet (i.e., five plethra = c. 98 feet) long and one hundred cubits broad, access to which was through a pair of gates (The implication is that the Temple is surrounded by a wall). He describes the altar, which was square (twenty cubits x twenty cubits and ten cubits high) and made of unhewn stones, and beside it, a building containing an (incense) altar, a lampstand, both made of gold. The lamps on the lampstand are never extinguished. He remarks that in the Temple there are no statues or votive offerings, and no vegetation, in the form of sacred groves.

Palestine, which included Judea, passed over from the Ptolemaic kingdom to the Seleucid kingdom in c. 198 BCE. It seems that during the war between the two kingdoms that the Temple was damaged, so that Antiochus III, the king of the Seleucid kingdom, decreed that work on the Temple be completed under favorable political conditions. The goal was to make it more splendid than it was before (*Ant.* 12.3.3; 139-41). The only reference to a specific feature of the Temple is to the stoa (porticos): "I would

also have the work about the temple finished, and the stoa, and if there be any thing else that ought to be rebuilt" (*Ant.* 12.3.3; 141). " Whether these stoa were already existent before the renovations sponsored by Antiochus III or were architectural innovations is impossible to determine. The edict published by Antiochus concerning the Temple, as cited by Josephus, implies that there was an outer court, into which gentiles may enter, provided that they have purified themselves: "He [Antiochus III] also published a decree through all his kingdom in honor of the temple, which contained what follows: "It shall be lawful for no foreigner to come within the limits of the temple round about; which thing is forbidden also to the Jews, unless to those who, according to their own custom, have purified themselves. (*Ant.* 12.3.4; 145). Surely the decree of Antiochus III would not have allowed gentiles to enter the inner courts, so that there must have existed an outer court into which ritually-pure gentiles were allowed to enter, but proceed no further.

It seems that it was Simon (surnamed the just or the righteous), high priest from 219-196 BCE, who was responsible for overseeing the Temple repairs and renovations (*Sir* 50.1-3). *Sirach* says that Simon was responsible for reinforcing the Temple. In particular it is said, "In his time the wall was built, for the residence in the Temple of the King. In his day the reservoir was dug, the pool with the vastness like the sea's" (50:2-3). The wall that Simon built seems to be the outer wall, which would encompass the outer court. Simon also dug a reservoir, presumably to hold water used for sacrifice or other purposes. In his eyewitness description of Simon's high-priestly service in the Temple, most likely on the Day of Atonement, *Sirach* mentions "the house of the curtain" (i.e., the holy of holies) (50:5) as well as the altar and the court of the sanctuary (50:11).

Succeeding Antiochus III was Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who in 168 BCE plundered the Jerusalem Temple, including the veil separating the holy place from the holy of holies. He also built another altar on the altar already in the Temple. After several years of armed struggle, Judas Maccabees took control of the Temple, but found it in a state of disrepair. The description of the state of the Temple after the Antiochan persecution and Judas's restoration of it in 1 Macc 4.36-51 provides valuable data for a historical reconstruction of the second Temple.

Then Judas and his brothers said, "See, our enemies are crushed; let us go up to cleanse the sanctuary and dedicate it." 37 So all the army assembled and went up to Mount Zion. 38 There they saw the sanctuary desolate, the altar profaned, and the gates burned. In the courts they saw bushes sprung up as in a thicket, or as on one of the mountains. They saw also the chambers of the priests in ruins. 39 Then they tore their clothes and mourned with great lamentation; they sprinkled themselves with ashes 40 and fell face down on the ground. And when the signal was given with the trumpets, they cried out to Heaven. 41 Then Judas detailed men to fight against those in the citadel until he had cleansed the sanctuary. 42 He chose blameless priests devoted to the law, 43 and they cleansed the sanctuary and removed the defiled stones to an unclean place. 44 They deliberated what to do about the altar of burnt offering, which had been profaned. 45 And they thought it best to tear it down, so that it would not be a lasting shame to them that the Gentiles had defiled it. So they tore down the altar, 46 and stored the stones in a convenient place on the temple hill until a prophet should come to tell what to do with them. 47 Then they took unhewn stones, as the law directs, and built a new altar like the former one. 48 They also rebuilt the sanctuary and the interior of the temple, and consecrated the courts. 49 They made new holy vessels, and brought the lampstand, the altar of incense, and the table into the temple. 50 Then they offered incense on the altar and lit the lamps on the lampstand, and these gave light in the temple. 51 They placed the bread on the table and hung up the curtains. Thus they finished all the work they had undertaken.

The Temple desecrated by Antiochus had gates, which were burnt down; in addition, it seems that there were living quarters for priests on duty, which were in ruins. All the furniture and utensils were missing, including the veil (see also *Ant.* 12.317-18 = *War* 1.39;). Judas removed both the original altar and the altar that Antiochus placed upon the original, replacing these with another altar. Judas and his followers made a new lampstand, altar of incense and table (of shewbread), in addition to building a new altar

made with unhewn stones. It seems also that a new veil was manufactured. (In 2 Macc 4.12, 28; 5.5 references are made to the citadel adjacent to the Temple.)

Letter of Aristeas is probably a historical fiction written in the early part of the second century either before or during the Antiochan persecution, as opposed to the time of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (283-247 BCE). Nevertheless, the description of the Jerusalem Temple found in *Letter of Aristeas* (83-91) is credible and seems to be that of an eyewitness.

83 I have given you this description of the presents because I thought it was necessary. The next point in the narrative is an account of our journey to Eleazar, but I will first of all give you a description of the whole country. When we arrived in the land of the Jews we saw the city situated 84 in the middle of the whole of Judea on the top of a mountain of considerable altitude. On the summit the temple had been built in all its splendor. It was surrounded by three walls more than seventy cubits high and in length and breadth corresponding to the structure of the edifice. All the buildings 85 were characterized by a magnificence and costliness quite unprecedented. It was obvious that no expense had been spared on the door and the fastenings, which connected it with the door-posts, and 86 the stability of the lintel. The style of the curtain too was thoroughly in proportion to that of the entrance. Its fabric owing to the draught of wind was in perpetual motion, and as this motion was communicated from the bottom and the curtain bulged out to its highest extent, it afforded a pleasant 87 spectacle from which a man could scarcely tear himself away. The construction of the altar was in keeping with the place itself and with the burnt offerings which were consumed by fire upon it, and the approach to it was on a similar scale. There was a gradual slope up to it, conveniently arranged for the purpose of decency, and the ministering priests were robed in linen garments, down to their 88 ankles. The Temple faces the east and its back is toward the west. The whole of the floor is paved with stones and slopes down to the appointed places, that water may be conveyed to wash away the 89 blood from the sacrifices, for many thousand beasts are sacrificed there on the feast days. And there is an inexhaustible supply of water, because an abundant natural spring gushes up from within the temple area. There are moreover wonderful and indescribable cisterns underground, as they pointed out to me, at a distance of five furlongs all round the site of the temple, and each of them has countless pipes 90 so that the different streams converge together. And all these were fastened with lead at the bottom and at the sidewalls, and over them a great quantity of plaster had been spread, and every part of the work had been most carefully carried out. There are many openings for water at the base of the altar which are invisible to all except to those who are engaged in the ministration, so that all the blood of the sacrifices which is collected in great quantities is washed away in the twinkling of an 91 eye.

If he is writing around the time of Antiochus IV, then the author is probably describing the Jerusalem Temple as it appeared in the early second century. How similar the Temple in this appeared was to the Temple a century earlier during the reign of Ptolemy II is impossible to determine. The author of *Letter of Aristeas* says that the Temple sat upon the tallest hill in Jerusalem and faced east; it had three enclosing walls over seventy cubits high, while the west wall of the sanctuary served as the fourth enclosing wall. In general, the author was impressed by the quality of the workmanship and the material used in its construction, giving as examples the doors, their fastenings and the lintels. He mentions the veil and describes how air currents would cause it to be in a gentle but perpetual motion, which created quite the spectacle for the on-looker. The foundation of the Temple was said to be covered with precious stones. He also makes reference to the altar, which one approached by a ramp, and how there was a method devised to wash away sacrificial blood from the altar using water from a spring and a system of underground reservoirs that channeled water to the altar; the blood was washed out through discrete holes at the base of the altar through which the water would wash away the sacrificial blood. Presumably, the water and blood would flow underground and exit somewhere beyond the outer walls. (Actually, It is not clear what exactly is being described.) The author also claims to have toured the citadel adjacent to the Temple; he describes seeing towers and catapults (100-104).

Later, as the conflict between the Seleucid kingdom and the Maccabees continued, Antiochus V Eupator, the son of Antiochus IV, is said to have pulled down the walls of the Temple: "But when the king entered Mount Zion and saw what a strong fortress the place was, he broke the oath he had sworn and gave orders to tear down the wall all around" (1 Macc 6.60-63; see *Ant.* 12.9.7; 382-83). These walls were probably the outer walls surrounding what was known as the outer court, because in 1 Macc 9.54, it is said that the high priest Alcimus, hostile to the Maccabees, tore down the walls of the inner court: "In the one hundred and fifty-third year, in the second month, Alcimus gave orders to tear down the wall of the inner court of the sanctuary." Which walls these were is not clear, but probably they were the walls surrounding the priests' court and sanctuary. Jonathan, a brother of Judas, rebuilt the outer Temple wall (1 Macc 10.11; *Ant.* 13.2.1; 41); presumably the inner walls were also rebuilt at some point after Alcimus's death. According to Josephus, Jonathan later repaired the Temple walls and added high towers to the Temple precincts: "When Simon and Jonathan had finished these affairs, they returned to Jerusalem, where Jonathan gathered all the people together, and took counsel to restore the walls of Jerusalem, and to rebuild the wall that encompassed the temple, which had been thrown down, and to fortify the Temple precincts by very high towers" (*Ant.* 13.5.11; 181). (Presumably, parts of the outer walls of Temple were destroyed during Jonathan's conflicts with the Seleucids, since he had repaired the outer Temple wall earlier.)

John Hyrcanus, the son of Simon, inherited the high priesthood from his father. Josephus describes how, on what seems to be the Day of Atonement, Hyrcanus burned incense alone in the Temple (*Ant.* 13.10.3; 282). During the reigns of Aristobolus I, the son of Hyrcanus I and the reign of Alexandra, references are made to the citadel adjacent to the Temple (*Ant.* 13.11.2; 307 = *War* 13.3; 76; *Ant.* 13.16.5; 426-27 = *War* 1.5.4; 117-19; see *Ant.* 14.1.2; 5, 14.3.4; 51). Alexander Jannaeus, the second husband of Alexandra, is said to have erected a wooden barrier around the altar and the Temple as far as the wall in order to keep the people away from him and the other priests (*Ant.* 13.13.5; 372-73)

As to Alexander, his own people were seditious against him; for at a festival which was then celebrated, when he stood upon the altar, and was going to sacrifice, the nation rose upon him, and pelted him with citrons [which they then had in their hands, because] the law of the Jews required that at the feast of tabernacles every one should have branches of the palm tree and citron tree; which thing we have elsewhere related. They also reviled him, as derived from a captive, and so unworthy of his dignity and of sacrificing. At this he was in a rage, and slew of them about six thousand. He also built a partition-wall of wood round the altar and the temple, as far as that partition within which it was only lawful for the priests to enter; and by this means he obstructed the multitude from coming at him.

This innovation was precipitated by the fact that some Jewish men observing Alexander Jannaeus offering the required sacrifices at the festival of Tabernacles pelted him with citrus fruit during the feast of Tabernacles. This barrier to keep the people at a distance from the High Priest seems to be a wall designed to keep non-priests at a safe distance from the priests (i.e., out of throwing range). It is not clear, however, how this new barrier related to the one that must have already been in place before the incident of citron-throwing. Perhaps what is being described is an enlargement of the area where only priests could enter.

Josephus says that during the Hasmonean period, the ravine between the Temple mount and the city was filled in to give better access to the Temple; in addition, the hill on which the Akra (fortress) stood was lowered, so that the Temple would be the tallest structure in Jerusalem and not be blocked from view by the Akra (*War* 5.4.1; 139-40)

The faction loyal to Aristobolus II took refuge in the Temple when the Roman general Pompey marched on Jerusalem in 63 BCE. In his description of Pompey's siege, Josephus describes the Temple and its situation (*Ant.* 14.4.1-4; 58-73 = *War* 1.7.2-6; 143-53). The rebels took refuge in the Temple and cut the bridge that led to the Temple from the city. The Temple is said to have been a natural fortress since it was surrounded by a ravine; in addition, the Temple was fortified with towers, which may refer to towers attached to the fortress later called Antonia or to other towers built into the outer wall of the Temple. (During the siege and even when Pompey's troops had breached the outer wall, the priests faithfully carried out their duties of offering the morning and evening sacrifices.) Pompey eventually breached one of the largest towers. Josephus says that Pompey and some of his troops entered the inner court of the Temple and even inspected the holy place. They saw the golden table, the sacred lampstand, the libation vessels, and a great quantity of spices, but took nothing, not even the deposits in the Temple treasury. The author(s) of the Psalms of Solomon refers disapprovingly to Pompey's siege of the Temple, especially as he desecrated it (*Ps. Sol.* 2.1-2, 26-27; 8.16-18; 17.12).

The Roman Crassus, proconsul of Syria from 54-53 BCE, intending to march against the Parthians and needing funds for this campaign, took money on deposit in the Temple and is said to have planned to strip all the gold off the Temple also (*Ant.* 14.7.1; 105-109 = *War* 1.8.8; 179).

Now Crassus, as he was going upon his expedition against the Parthians, came into Judea, and carried off the money that was in the temple, which Pompey had left, being two thousand talents, and was disposed to spoil it of all the gold belonging to it, which was eight thousand talents. He also took a beam, which was made of solid beaten gold, of the weight of three hundred minae, each of which weighed two pounds and a half. It was the priest who was guardian of the sacred treasures, and whose name was Eleazar, that gave him this beam, not out of a wicked design, for he was a good and a righteous man; but being entrusted with the custody of the veils belonging to the temple, which were of admirable beauty, and of very costly workmanship, and hung down from this beam, when he saw that Crassus was busy in gathering money, and was in fear for the entire ornaments of the temple, he gave him this beam of gold as a ransom for the whole, but this not till he had given his oath that he would remove nothing else out of the temple, but be satisfied with this only, which he should give him, being worth many ten thousand [shekels]. Now this beam was contained in a wooden beam that was hollow, but was known to no others; but Eleazar alone knew it; yet did Crassus take away this beam, upon the condition of touching nothing else that belonged to the temple, and then brake his oath, and carried away all the gold that was in the temple.

Apparently the gold covered the interior and/or exterior of the walls of the Temple buildings. Eleazar gave Crassus the beam or rod that held up the veils in the sanctuary. The purpose of these veils is not clear; possibly this is a reference to more than veil that separated the holy place from the holy of holies. Josephus explains that the Temple contained much wealth, some of which was used as ornamentation, because Jews from outside of Palestine sent money to the Temple (*Ant.* 14.109-13).

Antigonus, a Hasmonean, the son of Aristobolus II, allied with the Parthians took control of Jerusalem from the Romans. Herod, with Roman support, in 39 BCE began a campaign to retake Jerusalem. Herod laid siege to the Temple, and eventually gained access to the outer courts of the Temple. Josephus says that some of the porticos were burnt. When Herod took the outer court of the Temple, his enemies fled into the inner courts. When the Romans gained access to the inner courts, a massacre ensued, but Herod restrained the Roman soldiers from entering into the sanctuary (*Ant.* 14.15.14; 465-83 = *War* 1.17.8-18.3; 342-57).

2.2. The Herodian Temple

2.2.1. References to Events Relating to the Herodian Temple

In 20-19 BCE, in the eighteenth or the seventeenth year of his reign, Herod announced that he planned to renovate the Temple (*Ant.* 15.11.1-2; 380-90 = *War* 1.21.1; 401). Actually, it seems that what he intended was its dismantling and complete reconstruction, so that one could call it a new Temple; some feared that Herod would pull down the old structures but would not be able to rebuild them. Josephus's detailed description the Herodian Temple will be considered later.

When Herod was on his death bed, Josephus says that some youths, at the instigation of their teachers Judas and Matthias, pulled down a golden eagle that Herod had erected over the great gate of the Temple as a dedicatory offering (*Ant.* 17.6.1-3; 151-63 = *War* 1.33.2-4; 649-55). The Temple gate referred to is probably the eastern gate leading into the inner courts of the Temple, called the Beautiful Gate. In their view, the biblical prohibition against images justified their action. The youths responsible climbed onto the roof, lowered themselves and cut the image down with axes.

Upon Herod's death, Archelaus, one of Herod's sons, went to the Temple, ascended a platform and sat on a golden throne (*Ant.* 17.8.4; 200 = *War* 2.1.1; 1-2). Where exactly in the Temple this took place is not clear. This pretentious act was for the purpose of staking a claim to power. When Archelaus was in Rome petitioning Augustus to confirm the last will of his father, Herod, a riot broke out in the Temple during the festival of Weeks; Varus, proconsul of Syria, attempted to quell the disturbance (*Ant.* 17.10.2; 254-64 = *War* 2.3.2-3; 45-50). According to Josephus, the rioters climbed atop the porticos surrounding the outer court and attacked the Roman legionnaires from above. In retaliation, the Romans burned the porticos feeding the fire with combustible materials until the porticos collapsed (Josephus says that the porticos had some wooden components and even gold ornamentation). Pushing their way through the fire, the Romans made their way into the Temple treasury, which they proceeded to pillage; where exactly in relation to the porticos the treasury was situated is difficult to determine. Probably, however, as will be seen, the Temple Treasury was located in the women's court.

Josephus gives the account of how Samaritans scattered human bones throughout the Temple during Passover, when the priests were accustomed to throwing open the gates of the temple after midnight; this had the effect of ritually contaminating the Temple (*Ant.* 18.2.2; 29). When he was procurator of Judea, Pontius Pilate illegally expropriated funds from the Temple treasury to build an aqueduct (*Ant.* 18.3.2; 60-62 = *War* 2.9.4; 175-77). Josephus also explains, in some detail, how, when he became emperor, Gaius (Caligula) ordered Petronius, proconsul of Syria, to erect a statue of him in the Temple. Petronius protested and delayed, and Gaius died before the former carried out the order, to the relief of all sensible people (*Ant.* 18.8.2-9; 261-309 = *War* 2.10.1-5; 184-203). Finally, Josephus relates how once during a Passover celebration, a Roman soldier standing on exterior temple walls exposed himself to the Passover crowds, thereby causing a riot. As a result a massacre ensued as the Roman legionnaires attempted to restore order (*Ant.* 20.5.2; 104).

During the reign of Agrippa II (52-66 CE), the Temple was to undergo renovations because its foundation had begun to sink. Importing huge timbers from Lebanon, Agrippa hoped to underpin the sanctuary and raise it up twenty cubits, but the war with Rome interrupted his work (*War* 5.1.5; 36). On behalf of the unemployed construction workers, whose jobs were terminated with the completion of the Temple, the people request that Agrippa II allow the workers to raise the height of the east portico, which Josephus says was built by Solomon. No doubt, he means that the eastern wall was pre-Herodian, that Herod did not rebuild this part of the outer wall (*Ant.* 20.9.7; 219-22).

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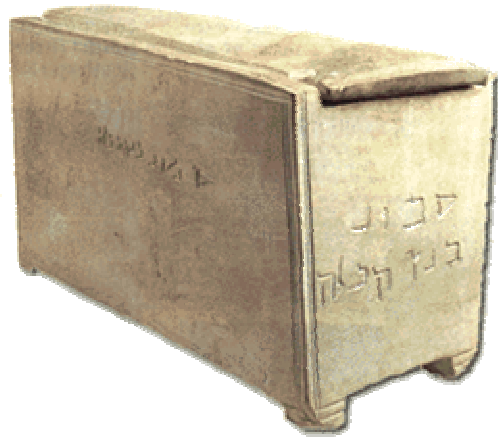
2.2.3. Description of Herod's Temple

A. Introduction

In 20-19 BCE, in the eighteenth or the seventeenth year of his reign, Herod announced that he planned to renovate the Temple (*Ant.* 15.11.1-2; 380-90 = *War* 1.21.1; 401). Actually, it seems that what he intended was its dismantling and complete reconstruction, so that one could call it a new Temple; some feared that Herod would pull down the old structures but would not be able to rebuild them (*Ant.* 15. 388-89). Josephus records Herod's speech to the people on the eve of his massive renovation project (*Ant.* 15. 382-87); probably Josephus copied it from the court archives.

"I think I need not speak to you, my countrymen, about such other works as I have done since I came to the kingdom, although I may say they have been performed in such a manner as to bring more security to you than glory to myself; for I have neither been negligent in the most difficult times about what tended to ease your necessities, nor have the buildings. I have made been so proper to preserve me as yourselves from injuries; and I imagine that, with God's assistance, I have advanced the nation of the Jews to a degree of happiness which they never had before; and for the particular edifices belonging to your own country, and your own cities, as also to those cities that we have lately acquired, which we have erected and greatly adorned, and thereby augmented the dignity of your nation, it seems to me a needless task to enumerate them to you, since you well know them yourselves; but as to that undertaking which I have a mind to set about at present, and which will be a work of the greatest piety and excellence that can possibly be undertaken by us, I will now declare it to you. Our fathers, indeed, when they were returned from Babylon, built this temple to God Almighty, yet does it want sixty cubits of its largeness in altitude; for so much did that first temple which Solomon built exceed this temple; nor let any one condemn our fathers for their negligence or want of piety herein, for it was not their fault that the temple was no higher; for they were Cyrus, and Darius the son of Hystaspes, who determined the measures for its rebuilding; and it hath been by reason of the subjection of those fathers of ours to them and to their posterity, and after them to the Macedonians, that they had not the opportunity to follow the original model of this pious edifice, nor could raise it to its ancient altitude; but since I am now, by God's will, your governor, and I have had peace a long time, and have gained great riches and large revenues, and, what is the principal filing of all, I am at amity with and well regarded by the Romans, who, if I may so say, are the rulers of the whole world, I will do my endeavor to correct that imperfection, which hath arisen from the necessity of our affairs, and the slavery we have been under formerly, and to make a thankful return, after the most pious manner, to God, for what blessings I have received from him, by giving me this kingdom, and that by rendering his temple as complete as I am able."

In preparation to execute his building project, Herod acquired a thousand wagons (with oxen) to transport the stones from the quarry to the building site, hired 10,000 skilled workmen and trained 1,000 priests as masons and carpenters, for only priests could build the Temple proper (*Ant.* 15.11.2; 389-90). The huge blocks of stone were fit into place by means of ramps and pulleys (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 84). Herod's Temple was under construction from c. 20/19 BCE until 63, just before its destruction by the Romans, but most of the work was completed earlier rather than later. Josephus says that the Temple proper (ho naos) was completed after a year and a half, whereas the construction of the stoa and the outer courts took eight years (*Ant.* 15.11.5-6; 420-21). The rest of the time was spent finishing the task. He also claims that during the time the Temple proper (ho naos) was under construction, no rain fell during the day, but only at night, so as not to hinder progress (*Ant.* 15.11.7; 425).



Simon the Temple Builder

One of the ossuaries found in a tomb in the Old City of Jerusalem bore the inscription "Simon the Temple Builder." Presumably, this man was involved in the construction of Herod's Temple, a fact for which he wanted to be to be remembered.

No one knows for certain what Herod's temple looked like, nor its exact dimensions, but one can form a general idea of its layout from recent archaeological excavations (see M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*), accounts of authors contemporary with Herod's Temple and from the Mishnah. The major literary sources are Josephus (*War* 5.5.1-8; 184-247; *Ant.* 15.11.5-7; 410-25) and the Mishnaic tractate *Middot* (*m. Mid.*), as well as other tractates. The problem is that the literary sources are all incomplete and contradictory at points; the Mishnah is suspect on some counts because it was written long after living memory of the Temple. Where these sources diverge, either both are given as options or one of the two options is determined to be the most likely.

B. Situation and Dimensions

The Jerusalem Temple was situated on top of the Temple Mount, also known as Mt. Moriah. To the west of the Temple was the Tyropoeon valley and to the south and east was the Kidron valley, possible identical to the Hinnom valley (Gehinnom).



Temple Mount

Beginning in 19/20 BCE, Herod the Great began to enlarge the existing Temple Mount to be able to accommodate larger crowds of Jewish festival pilgrims.

The north provided easiest access to the Temple. Josephus describes the city as laying before the

Temple as a "theater," by which he means that the city was situated as on the west and south sides of the Temple, in a sort of semi-circle (*Ant.* 15.410). Archaeological investigation reveals the outer wall of Herod's Temple itself was an irregular quadrangle: south wall = 280 m.; west wall = 485 m.; north wall = 315 m.; east wall 460 m. The total circumference of the temenos or sacred precincts, was 1,540 m., and the total area = c. 144,000 sq. m. (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 77). These dimensions were large by ancient standards; most temples in the ancient world were much smaller. Herod had the old foundations of the Temple removed (*Ant.* 15.391). Archaeological evidence suggests, however, that he kept the eastern wall in tact, for there is a "seam" visible near the southern corner of the eastern wall separating the Herodian stonework and what is presumed to be the pre-Herodian eastern wall. From the seam southward is thirty-two meters (out of a total of 460 meters) of Herodian wall, from which it may be inferred that Herod's builders extended the outer wall this distance to the south (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 101-103). There is also archaeological evidence of an elaborate drainage system.



"Seam" on Eastern Wall

In the Mishnah it is said that the Temple mount—the outer wall—was 500 cubits square (*m. Mid.* 2.1) (A cubit is c. 22 inches or 56.1 centimeters), and Josephus says that the east portico was 400 cubits long (*Ant.* 20.9.7; 221-22). Obviously there is a discrepancy between the archaeological and the literary evidence concerning the size of the Temple. (The Mishnah may base its measurements on Ezek 42:16-20, which specifies that the Temple should be 500 cubits square.) In another place, Josephus said the circumference of the outer walls was four stadia (stadiou = c. 607 ft. or 184 m.) with each side being one stadiou, which would make the outer courts a square (*Ant.* 15.401).



Mikveh

This mikveh (ritual bath of purification) is located to the south of the Temple close to the Huldah gates, and dates to the second-Temple period. Jews would cleanse themselves from ritual impurity in this mikveh in order to be qualified to enter the Temple (see Lev 14, 15; Num 19).

In *Apion* 2.8; 103-109, Josephus gives a brief description of the layout of the Temple. He says that the Temple had four courts, each with restrictions on who could enter. The outer court was open to all, including non-Jews, except menstruating women. Into the second court were allowed all Jewish men and

menstrually clean Jewish women. Beyond the second court was the third court into which ritually pure Jewish men could enter. Finally the fourth court was restricted to priests who were properly attired. Josephus also indicates that only the high priest dressed in his high priestly raiment could enter the sanctuary (adytum). Similarly, the Mishnah distinguishes degrees of holiness possessed by various areas of the Temple: the Temple mount was holier than the city, whereas the terrace surrounding the inner courts was holier than the Temple mount. The court of women is holier than the terrace and the court of the Israelites is holier than it. Finally, the court of the priests is holier than all (*m. Kelim* 1.8-9). It should also be noted that one ascended as one went up to the Temple and, once in the Temple, moved upwards towards the sanctuary (*War* 5.1.1; 9-11).

C. The Outer Courts

1. The Temple Walls



Largest Stone in Temple Found to Date

The outer courts were surrounded by a high and thick wall. Josephus says that this wall was the "greatest ever heard of," which, although exaggerated, is not far from the truth (*Ant.* 15.11.3; 396). Parts of this wall still survive today and have recently been excavated down to their original street level. Not surprisingly the stones used were large, especially those used in the lower courses and the corners. Josephus says that some of the stones were 40 cubits long (c. 20 m.) and six cubits (c. 3 m.) high (*War* 5.5.1; 189; *Ant.* 20.9.7; 221); the largest stone found to date is 12 m. x 3 m. x 4 m., weighing c. 400 tons (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 88). The outer wall consisted of three rows of blocks and was about five meters thick (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 90-91); the blocks were fitted together using the "dry construction" method, which means that no mortar was used in the construction. Each block had a "marginal dressing," meaning that each had a frame or margin chiseled around its edge (M. ben Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 96). The stones used are described by Josephus as "hard and white" (lithoi leukoi te kai krataioi) (*Ant.* 15.11.3; 392). According to Josephus, Roman battering rams were unable to cause a breach in the outer western wall (*War.* 6.4.1; 220-22).



Marginal Dressing

The outer face of each block used in the construction of the outer wall was smoothed. Herod's masons then chiseled a margin around the edge of each block; in this way, anyone could easily see that the wall was composed of individual blocks. The margin varied from between one to two centimeters deep and nine to eighteen centimeters wide.

The height of the wall varied, but on the exterior to the south it extended more than thirty meters above ground level (Sanders, *Judaism*, 68). In some places, the actual height of the wall is fifty meters, because the foundation is twenty meters below street level (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 77, 92). (Josephus says that the actual height of the wall in some places was as high as 300 cubits (= c. 150 meters), but this seems to be in error; he is correct, however, in noting in general that, "The whole depth of the foundations was not apparent; for they filled up a considerable part of the ravines, wishing to level the narrow alleys of the town" *War* 5.188].)



"To the Place of Trumpeting" Sign

This inscription, which translates as "To the place of trumpeting...", was discovered during B. Mazar's excavations at the base of the Herodian wall at the southwest corner of the Temple Mount. It probably served to indicate where a priest would stand to blow the trumpet to begin and end the Sabbath. Josephus explains the procedure: "And the last [tower] was erected above the roof of the Priest's Chambers, where it was the custom for one of the priests to stand and to give notice, by the sound of a trumpet, in the afternoon of the approach, and on the following evening



the approach, and on the following evening of the close, of every seventh day, announcing to the people the respective hours for ceasing work and for resuming their labors" ([War](#) 4.582-83). This inscribed stone was found at the southwest corner of the Temple, which suggests that this was the place where the trumpeting occurred.

Josephus describes how the outer wall was constructed (*Ant.* 15. 397-400). The outer walls were built around the base of the Temple mount, starting from the lowest point; the blocks were fastened to one another with lead (He also says that iron clamps were used on the inside of the blocks to join them together, giving the outer walls greater strength). When the wall reached the designated height, the summit of the Temple mount was leveled off, and fill was brought in to fill up the empty space between the walls and the Temple mount, so that the outer walls functioned as retaining walls. This provided a level surface for the Temple complex. Actually, the empty space between the summit and the outer walls was not completely filled in, for under the Temple complex are layers of vaults, now known as "Solomon's Stables" (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 91); this empty space reduced the pressure exerted against the outer walls from within (see also m. Para 3.3: "The Temple Mount and the Temple Courts had a hollow space beneath them in case there was a grace in the depths"). These vaults on the southern side of the Temple complex supported the floor of the temenos, the precincts of the Temple. Obviously the outer wall would be almost impenetrable, especially since the Temple was surrounded on three sides by ravines; only the access from the north was relatively level. This explains why so frequently the Temple was used as a citadel.



Part of Lintel from Temple



Western or Wailing Wall

What is known as the Western Wall or the "Wailing Wall" is a portion of the outer western wall of the Herodian Temple; it is the traditional Jewish place of prayer. At present, the Western Wall measures c. 50 m. wide and c. 20 m high; the original ground level of this portion of the Herodian Temple, however, is several meters below present ground level.

. The Temple Gates

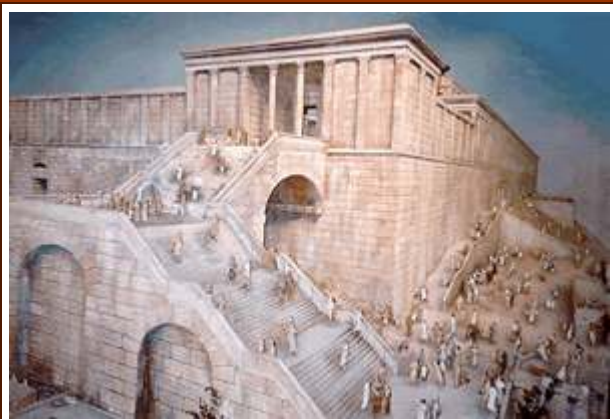


Part of Lintel from Coponius (Kiphonus) Gate

According to the Mishnah, one entered the Temple complex, surrounded by the outer wall, through one of five gates, two on the south and one each other side (*m. Mid.* 1.3); according to *m. Mid.* 2.3 the gates were ten cubits wide by twenty cubits high (c. five meters by ten meters). The gate on the west was known as the Coponius (Kiphonus) Gate (*m. Mid.* 1.3), which may correspond to what is today known as Barclay's Gate, named after the American J. T. Barclay, who identified the remains of the lintel and arch of this Herodian gate (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 116, 140-41). Contrary to the Mishnah, however, archaeological evidence confirms that there was more than one gate on the west side, bordering the Tyropoeon valley. In fact, Josephus says that there were four gates leading into the Temple from the west (*Ant.* 15.11.5; 410). The most southerly of these four gates was situated

twelve meters north of the southwest corner of the outer wall. In 1838, Edward Robinson identified the remains of an archway, now known as "Robinson's Arch," that once led to the place where this gate once stood; the supporting pier for the western edge of this arch was uncovered thirteen meters from the western wall.

Robinson's Arch and Supporting Pier for Staircase



To the south of this pier, perpendicular to the archway, was uncovered the foundations of a row of vaults that rise gradually from south to north; these vaults supported a staircase connecting the street running along the Tyropoeon Valley with the Temple. Josephus may be describing this gate when he writes, "The last [gate] led to the other part of the city, from which it was separated by many steps going down to the ravine and from here up again to the hill" (*Ant.* 15.11.5; 410). It is clear both from Josephus' description and the archaeological evidence that one ascended a staircase in order to enter this southernmost gate on the western side of Temple complex. North of "Robinson's Arch" and "Barclay's Gate," which may be the Coponius Gate, is located what is now known as "Wilson's Arch,"

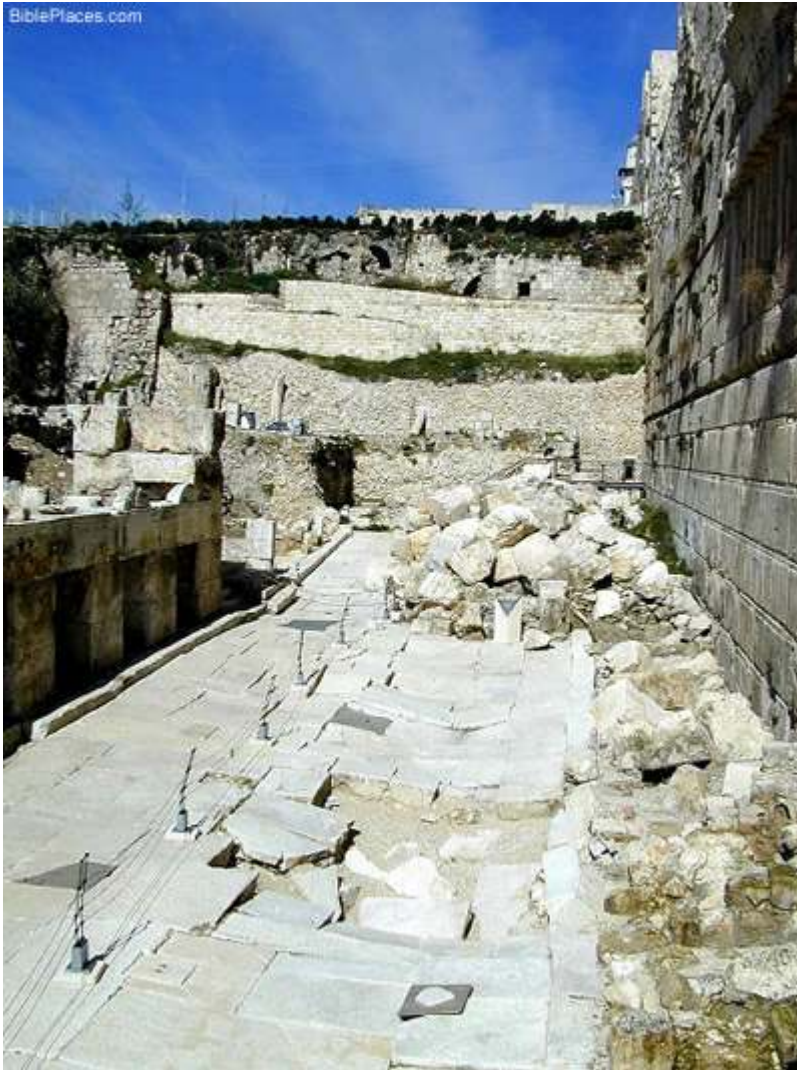


"Wilson's Arch"

named after the man who explored it in the late 1860's. This structure probably dates from the post-destruction period, but marks the location of another western gate (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 169-78). The northernmost gate along the western wall may have been situated at what is now known as "Warren's Gate," named after its discoverer, Charles Warren, who led the British expedition under the auspices of the Palestine Exploration Fund. What is visible at present is the upper portion of a blocked-up gate, which is probably a later, Muslim reconstruction of a gate original to Herod's Temple (The arched lintel of "Warren's Gate" dates from the Muslim period, but the gate posts are probably from the second-Temple period [M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 145]). Josephus describes how, during the siege of the Temple, Titus burned some of the outer gates and how their silver plating melted to revealed a wooden interior, which soon caught fire; this fire soon spread to the porticos (*War* 6.4.2; 232-35). On the outside of the outer western wall of the Temple ran a street paved with stones; along the eastern side of the street, adjacent to the outer western Temple wall and the western side were many shops (see M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 80, 114).



"Warren's Gate"



Street Along Western Wall

In the 1990's, further excavations were carried out along the outer western wall of Herod's Temple. After the removal of much debris, the street that ran along the west side of the Temple was uncovered. The street is 10 m. wide, and is paved with stones. Along the outer wall there are the remains of shops that opened onto the street. Across from "Robinson's Arch" there was uncovered a pier that once supported it; it contains four cells that were probably used for the purpose of commerce.

**Remains of Shops
Along Western Wall**



A staircase led to a walkway that ran along the top of the shops along the western wall; it led to the two lower gates through which one entered into the Temple underground.



**Staircase along
the Western Wall**

The two sets of southern gates are known as the two Huldah Gates, the Double Huldah Gate and the Triple Huldah Gate. It seems that the southern gates became the de facto main entrance to and exit from the Temple, because they were the most used. A paved street seven meters wide ran along the southern outer wall of the Temple in front of the Huldah Gates for a distance of 280 meters. Access to the both Huldah Gates was by means of staircases.



Reconstruction of Southwest Corner of Temple
Urban Simulation Team

View of the Temple Mount from the South

Beginning in 1968, Benjamin Mazar excavated the southern wall of Herod's Temple down to its original foundation. He discovered paved street and a staircase that provides access to a set of gates leading called the Double Huldah Gates.





The staircase in front of the Double Huldah Gates was 65 m. wide, while that in front of the Triple Huldah Gates was 15 m. The Double Huldah Gate served as an entrance into the Temple, while the Triple Huldah Gates were used as an exit (*m. Mid.* 1.3; 2.2) (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 113). Both gates enter into the space under the Royal Portico and eventually led up through highly-decorated tunnels up into the outer courts M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 136-37).



Double Huldah Gates

At present only half of the the right wing of the double Huldah gate is visible from the exterior. The lintel is probably original to Herod's Temple, but the arch and ornamentation are likely from the early Muslim period (H. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 138).



Triple Huldah Gates

To the east of the Double Huldah Gates was situated a set of three gates, called the Triple Huldah Gates. Leading up to these gates was a staircase. The present gates are not original to the Herodian period, but were built on their ruins (H. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 138).



Reconstruction of the Double Huldah Gates
Urban Simulation Team

The eastern gate led to the Mount of Olives, whereas the gate on the north, the Tadi Gate, was not used (*m. Mid.* 2.1). There are the remains of an arch near the "seam" on the eastern wall, indicating that there used to be an entrance into the Temple at this point and that there was a street that ran under this arch parallel to the eastern wall (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 115-16).

3. Beyond the Walls

The area inside the outer walls is known as the outer courts or, as Josephus expresses, "the first court" (ho prōtos peribolos) (The Mishnah refers to the outer courts as the "Mount of the House"); the largest area within the outer court was to the south, then the east, then the north and then the west (*m. Mid.* 2.1). It was paved with stones (*War* 5.11.2; 192-93).

The outer court was surrounded by a portico adjacent to the inside of the walls (*War* 5.5.2; 191-93; *Ant.* 15.11.5; 410-416) (A portico is a porch or walkway with a roof supported by columns). The portico consisted of double rows of columns, except along the southern wall where there were four rows of columns (Acts 2:46). The outermost columns were pilasters, columns set into the Temple wall (M. ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, 93).

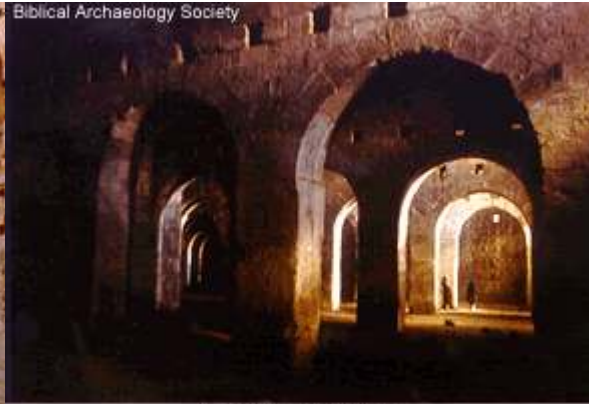
Stoa of Attalos in Athens



The stoa of Attalos was originally built along the Athenian Agora in 150 BCE. It functioned as a commercial center and a shelter for wealthy and influential Athenians. The photograph above is of the lower level of a modern reconstruction of this ancient structure. The stoa of Attalos consisted of two stories with a Doric colonnade on the ground floor, and an Ionic upper colonnade with a balustrade. On both levels, there exist rooms behind the colonnades. The stoas in Herod's Temple no doubt resembled the stoa of Attalos in many respects.



Possible Column from Herodian Temple



"Solomon's Stables"

With the exception of those along the southern wall, each column was twenty-five cubits high and made of a single piece of white marble; the ceiling of the portico was lined with cedar. On the three sides of the outer court the portico was thirty cubits wide (c. 30 x c. 18 inches = 45 feet or 30 x .5 m. = c. 15 m.) (*War* 5.11.2; 190). As indicated, the portico on the south side of the Temple consisted of

four rows of columns, thereby creating three aisles; the two outer aisles were thirty feet (podēs) wide and over fifty-feet high, whereas the middle aisle was one and half times wider than each of the outer aisles (i.e., forty-five feet wide) and twice as high (100 feet high). (Josephus uses the "foot" as a unit

of measurement in this section rather than the cubit; this foot is approximately equal to the English foot.) (This implies that the columns used in the construction of the Royal Portico were taller than those used in the outer porticos.) The ceilings of the Royal Portico was made of wood, which were decorated with carvings of different figures. (*Ant.* 15.11.5; 413-17). Josephus says that there were 162 columns used in the Royal Portico, each with an impressive Corinthian capital; each of these columns was so wide that "it would take three men with outstretched arms touching one another to envelop it" (*Ant.* 15.11.5; 413) (Whether this was true for the columns used in the other porticos is not said.) According to *War* 5.11.2; 192, the total circumference of the the stoa adjacent to the inner wall of the outer court was six stadia (i.e., 6 x c. 607 feet or 184 m.), and in *Ant.* 15.11.5; 415, the length of the Royal Portico was one stadion (c. 607 feet or 184 m.). (His other statement that each side of the wall was one stadion conflicts with this.) These porticos are not mentioned in the Mishnah, possibly because these were typically Greek architectural feature; but archaeologists have uncovered parts of the columns used as part of the porticos (Sanders, *Judaism*, 59). According to Josephus, if one stood on the roof of the Royal portico and looked down into the Kidron valley one would become dizzy, so great was the height (*Ant.* 15.11.5; 410). Another one of these porticos is called Solomon's portico, which probably was situated along the east side of the outer court (John 10:23; Acts 3:11; Acts 5:12). Josephus relates how, during the Roman attack on the Jewish revolutionaries who were in the Temple, some 6,000 women and children took refuge on the top of the one remaining outer portico not yet on fire; without orders, some Roman soldiers set fire to this portico, resulting in the deaths of those who had taken refuge there (*War* 6.5.1 277-78; 6.5.2; 283-85). The tunnel from the Triple Huldah Gates at the south led to what is now called "Solomon's stables," where there were stalls for animals. Presumably, those entering the Temple from the south could buy animals for sacrifice that were certified as valid by the Temple authority.

D. The Inner Courts

1. Soreg

Around the inner court was a balustrade three cubits high called the soreg; the soreg was probably a free-standing structure, separating the outer court from the inner court, and had warning signs regularly spaced along it advising gentiles that entrance into the inner court was forbidden on pain of death (*War* 5.193; *m. Mid.* 2.3) (see also Josephus, *War* 6.2.4; 124-26; *Ant.* 15.11.5; 417; Philo, *Leg. ad Gai.* 212).

Temple Warning Sign



One complete and two fragmentary copies (all in Greek) of the warning to gentiles to proceed no further have been discovered. The inscription translates as follows: "No foreigner is to enter within the balustrade and embankment around the sanctuary. Whoever is caught will have himself to blame for his death which follows." Both Greek (above) and Latin versions of this warning were posted at regular intervals around the soreg (balustrade).

On the inside of the soreg would be found stairs leading up to a terrace (called the chei in *m. Kelim* 1.8), ten cubits wide, which was bounded by the walls of the inner court. According to Josephus, there were fourteen steps leading up to the terrace, while the Mishnah states that there were only twelve steps (*m. Mid.* 2.3). The number in the Mishnah, however, is suspect because of the symbolic importance of the number twelve. Josephus explains that beyond the terrace lay other sets of five steps leading up to gates opening up into the inner courts (*War* 5.5.2; 196-97), but the Mishnah describes the terrace as bounded by the inner wall with no additional steps (*m. Mid.* 2.3). On the exterior the height of the wall, including the steps, separating the two courts was forty cubits, while on the inside it was twenty-five cubits, since the inner courts were elevated above the outer courts. According to the Mishnah, when Nisan 14 fell on the Sabbath (and carrying the sacrificed paschal offering out of the Temple was forbidden) the first group to offer the Passover remained in the outer court, the second group on the terrace surrounding the inner courts, inside of the soreg, whereas the last group waited where they sacrificed their lambs until sundown, when the Sabbath was concluded (*m. Pesah.* 5.10).

2. Gates into the Inner Courts

According to Josephus, there were ten entrances into the inner courts, four on the south, four on the north, one on the east and one leading east to west from the Court of Women to the court of the Israelites, called the Nicanor Gate (*War* 5.5.2; 198; *m. Mid.* 1.4). This is confirmed by the Mishnah, for *m. Sheqal.* 6.3 and *m. Mid.* 2.6 both indicate that there are four gates each on the south and north sides of the inner courts, in addition to the Nicanor Gate. According to *m. Sheqal.* 6.3 and *m. Mid.* 2.6, on the south side, from west to east, are found the Upper Gate, the Fuel Gate, the Firstling Gate and the Water Gate; on the north side, from west to east, are located the Jeconiah Gate, the Offering Gate, the Women Gate and the Song Gate. Only three of these gates actually lead into the women's court from the outer

courts, one from the east (see below), the Song Gate from the north and the Water Gate from the south. There is a discrepancy in the Mishnah, however, concerning the number of gates leading into the inner courts. *m. Mid.* 1.4-5 says that there were only seven gates, three on the south, three on the north and one on the east. But *m. Mid.* 1.4-5 may refer only to the gates on the north, south and east sides that lead into the court of the priests or the court of the Israelites (what Josephus calls the "sacred [court]" and the "third court" *Ant.* 15.11.5; 419), omitting to mention that there were three more gates, one on the north, one on the south and one on the east, each of which leads into the woman's court. In addition, there is some disagreement on the names of the gates in this parallel passage. According to *m. Mid.* 1.4, the gates on the south were called the Fuel Gate, the Firstling Gate and the Water Gate. These three names also occur in *m. Sheqal.* 6.3 and *m. Mid.* 2.6. Only one of the names of the three gates on the north side in *m. Mid.* 1.5, however, matches the names of the four northern gates mentioned in *m. Sheqal.* 6.3 and *m. Mid.* 2.6: the Offering Gate. The other two gates on the north side in *m. Mid.* 1.5 are called the Light Gate and the [the Gate] of the Chamber of the Hearth. With the exception of the Nicanor Gate, these gates were thirty cubits high and fifteen wide, and each had two doors and a gate room. (In *Apion* 2.8; 119, Josephus says that the gates were sixty cubits high and twenty wide, which seems to be an exaggeration.) The Nicanor Gate was forty-cubits wide and fifty cubits high. The nine gate rooms (*exedra*) were thirty cubits wide, thirty cubits deep and forty cubits high, each supported by two columns (*War* 5.5.3; 202-203). Elsewhere, Josephus says that these gate rooms had three rooms each (*Ant.* 15.11.5; 418). The gate room of the Nicanor gate was probably larger in its dimensions. According to *m. Mid.* 1.4 (see *m. Mid.* 2.6), the gate room of the Nicanor Gate had two rooms, one on either side; one was called the Chamber of Phineas where the priest responsible for the distribution of priestly raiment carried out his duties, while the other room was used for the preparation of the meal-offering cakes. In *m. Mid.* 1.6, [the Gate of] the Chamber of the Hearth Gate is said to have four rooms used for different purposes. The room to the southwest was the "Chamber of the Lamb Offerings," the one to the southeast the "Chamber of Shewbread," the one to the northeast the place where the Hasmoneans hid the defiled altar stones, and the room to the northwest was a chamber which led down to the "Chamber of Immersion," where priests would cleanse themselves ritually when needed.

3. Court of Women

The gate to the east leading into the Court of Women may have been the Beautiful Gate (Acts 3:1-10) and was the principal entrance into the inner courts. (The inner courts faced east, though the main entrance to the outer courts was from the south.) Women were required to enter through the north or south gates (*War* 5.5.2; 199). Like the other gates, they that were overlaid with silver and gold (*War* 5.5.3; 201). The Beautiful Gate led into the court of woman, where all Jews could enter, except those who were ritually impure (*Apion* 2.8; 104). The north and south walls of the Court of Women were lined by porticos, thereby creating a corridor from east to west (*War* 5.5.2; 200); along the walls of the Court of Women were storage chambers where temple property or perhaps private property was stored (*War* 5.5.2; 200).

Somewhere among the chambers in the Court of Women was located the Temple treasury (*gazophylakia*), a place where money donated to the Temple or deposited privately was kept (*War* 5.5.2; 200; 6.5.2; 282; see *Ant.* 19.6.1; 294). According to the Mishnah there were located in the Temple thirteen horned-shaped depositories (*shoparoth*) designated for different types of offerings; people would deposit money in these depositories for different purposes (*m. Sheqal.* 2.1; 6. 1, 5). It is probable that these thirteen depositories were located near the Temple treasury; the contents of these depositories were periodically emptied and stored in the Temple treasury. (The same name is used for these depositories as for the Temple treasury itself.) Probably, another name for the Temple treasury is

"Storehouse of God" (tu theou thesauros) (see *Ant.* 17.10.2; 264; *War* 2.3.3; 50).

According to the Mishnah, which may be correct, there were four unroofed chambers in the four corners of the Court of Women: one was the place where unclean priests inspected the firewood removing wood that was worm-eaten; another was the room where those taking the Nazarite vow would cut their hair and cook their peace-offerings. One was the place where lepers would cleanse themselves before presenting themselves before the priest (see Lev 14; Mark 1:44). The Mishnah seems to refer to this chamber as being one of the two chambers closest to the eastern (i.e., Beautiful) gate; if so, in addition to the inspection of lepers, this chamber was also used for women to be purified after childbirth (Lev 12) and for the carrying out the ordeal for the suspected adulteress (Num 5:5-31) (*m. Sotah* 1.5; *m. Tamid* 5.6). Another of these chambers was a the place where drink offerings and grain offerings were kept (*m. Mid.* 2.5). Also, according to the Mishnah, which again may be correct, there was an elevated gallery in the Court of Women, probably on top of the portico roof of the south, east and north sides (*m. Mid.* 2.5)

4. Court of the Israelites



Reconstruction of Nicanor Gate

The Court of Women led into the Court of the Israelites via a curved staircase of fifteen steps, which led up to the Nicanor Gate (*m. Mid.* 1.4; 2.6). As indicated, according to Josephus, this gate was larger than the other nine gates (being fifty cubits high with doors forty cubits wide); its doors were supposed to have been made of Corinthian bronze (*War* 5.201) and it took twenty men to open and close it (*War* 6.5.3; 293). One first entered into the Court of Israelites, where only ritually pure Jewish men could enter (*Ant.* 15.11.5; 419). (According to Josephus, during the Roman attack on the revolutionaries who had taken refuge in the Temple, the Nicanor Gate opened of its own accord after having been closed and bolted [*War* 6.5.3; 293-94].) Under the Court of the Israelites there were chambers that opened out into the Court of the Women; these underground rooms were used for storage equipment and musical instruments used by the Levites (*m. Mid.* 2.6). According to the Mishnah, the Court of the Israelites was 135 cubits wide and eleven cubits deep, and was separated from the Court of the Priests by a low balustrade, which was elevated above the Court of the Israelites by a few steps (*War* 5.5.6; 226; *m. Mid.* 2.6). The Mishnah also claims that the Court of Priests was 135 cubits wide and eleven cubits deep, whereas the entire Temple Court (seemingly excluding the Court of

Women) was 135 cubits wide and 187 cubits deep (*m. Mid.* 2.6). If true, then probably what is referred to as the Court of Priests ("Hall of Priests") in *m. Mid.* 2.6 does not include the area in which the altar is found, because the altar would seem to be too large to fit comfortably into a space of eleven cubits; rather the eleven cubits is probably a space separating the altar from the Court of Israelites (see below).

5. Court of Priests

The Mishnah indicates that there were six chambers (lškwṭ) along the north and south sides of the Court of Priests, three on the north side and three on the south side, corresponding to the six gates, set aside for special purposes. On the north side there was the "Salt Chamber" where salt used for sacrifices was stored, the Parvah Chamber where the hides of the sacrifices were salted and the "Rinsing Chamber" where sacrifices were rinsed (probably the innards of sacrifices). On the south side, were located the "Wood Chamber," the function of which was forgotten, the "Diaspora Chamber," where the water supply for the Temple was controlled, and the "Gazith Chamber" (i.e., Hewn Stone Chamber) where the

Sanhedrin used to meet to judge the priesthood (*m. Mid.* 5.3-4).

In the Court of Priests stood the altar, the ramp, the shambles, and the laver among other things needed for sacrifice (*War* 5.5.6; 225; *m. Mid.* 3.1, 6; 5.2; *m. Tamid* 1.4). (There is also a reference to the "Chamber of Utensils" in *m. Tamid* 3.4.) According to *m. Mid.* 3.1, the base of the altar was thirty-two cubits square, rose one cubit from the ground and had a one cubit wide ledge around it; on the base stood the altar itself, five cubits high with a one cubit ledge around it. Josephus, who may be more credible, however, indicates that the altar was fifteen cubits high and fifty cubits square (*War* 5.5.6; 225). On each corner of the altar there were four "horns." Leading up to the altar on the south side was a ramp; on the west side of the ramp was a "cavity" where disqualified bird offerings were thrown (*m. Mid.* 3.3). *Letter of Aristeeas* describes a drainage system connected to the altar in the pre-Herodian Temple for the purpose of washing away sacrificial blood (89-90); since the Mishnah also refers to a system for the elimination of sacrificial blood (*m. Mid.* 3.2), likely this indispensable feature was retained in the Herodian Temple. According to *m. Mid.* 3.2, at the southwest corner of the altar there were two holes through which blood was flushed away by water into the Kidron valley. Also at the same corner of the altar there was a pit covered by a paving stone functioning as a lid; the paving stone had a ring in it with which to remove it (*m. Mid.* 3.3). Priest probably poured what remained of libations into this pit. To the north of the altar there were rows of rings affixed to the ground, which were used in the slaughtering of animals (It seems that the animal's head was put into the ring to keep it immobile.) In the same location was found the shambles ("House of Slaughter") where the animal was killed and flayed (*m. Mid.* 3.5). To the south, between the sanctuary portico and altar was situated the laver (*m. Mid.* 3.6). According to biblical prescription, priests would wash their hands and feet in the laver before making sacrifices.

6. Sanctuary

The sanctuary, consisting most importantly of the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, was situated west of the Court of the Priests; to the west of the altar was a portico functioning as a propylaeum (an entrance or vestibule) to the building behind it (*War* 5.5.3; 206). According to *m. Mid.* 4.7, the portico was called the "Chamber of the Slaughter-knives" because knives used for killing sacrificial animals were stored there. The entire sanctuary was wider in front and narrower behind (*War* 5.5.4; 207; *m. Mid.* 4.7 "like a lion"). The portico was 100 cubits across (44 m.) and 100 cubits high; the width of the building behind the portico was sixty cubits (*War* 5.5.4; 207; 5.5.5; 221); according to *m. Mid.* 4.7, from east to west, the sanctuary was 100 cubits. The exterior of the building was covered with gold so that it reflected the sunlight (*War* 5.5.6; 222); this part of the temple was the most elevated so that the gold would be visible from afar off. There were golden spikes affixed to the roof of the sanctuary to keep birds from landing on it (*War* 5.5.6; 223-24; *m. Mid.* 4.6).

Image of Temple on Coin Minted during the "Bar Kochba" Revolt



During the revolt of 132-135 CE led by Simon ben Kosiba, who became known as "Bar Kochba" or "Son of a Star" (see Num 24:17), Jews began to mint their own coinage. On the obverse of this coin is represented the facade of sanctuary; the inscription written in ancient Hebrew letters is "Jerusalem." Since only relatively few years had elapsed between the destruction of the Temple by the Romans and the minting of this coin, it is conceivable that the image represents how the sanctuary appeared before its destruction by the Romans.



The reverse of the coin displays a lulav (myrtle, palm branch, and willow tied in a bundle) and ethrog (citron fruit), which are used in the celebration of the Jewish holiday Sukkot or Feast of Tabernacles. The inscription reads: "Year 2 of the freedom of Israel."

One ascended twelve steps up to the portico into which one entered through a gate with no doors; this entrance was seventy cubits high and twenty five cubits wide (*War* 5.5.4; 208). (The Mishnah states the dimensions of this entrance, however, as forty cubits high and twenty cubits wide [*m. Mid.* 3.7].) Moving westward, one entered through the portico into the Holy Place, where only priests could enter. There were two sets of two doors fifty-five cubits high and sixteen wide, separating the portico from the Holy Place, each covered with gold, and above these were golden vines (*War* 5.5.4; 210; *Ant.* 15.9.2; 394; *m. Mid.* 3.8; see also Tacitus. *Hist.* 5.5). In front of the doors, but presumably not obscuring them, hung a tapestry (*War* 5.5.4; 210). In *m. Mid.* 3.8, it is said that actually there were two sets of two doors separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies; moreover, each of the four doors was a double door and would fold back on itself (*m. Mid.* 4.1). To open both sets of doors, a priest would enter through a small door on the north side and make his way into a corridor between the two doors where he would open each set of doors; the smaller door also led into the Holy Place (*hekal*) (*m. Mid.* 4.2). One could see through the entrance of portico to the doors separating the portico from the Holy Place (*War* 5.5.4; 208). In the Holy Place stood the menorah, the incense altar, and the table of shewbread (*War* 5.5.5; 217) (see Luke 1:5-25).

Menorah



Depicted on one the reliefs of the Arch of Titus in Rome is Titus' soldiers carrying plunder from the Temple, which included the menorah. The depiction is credible since the menorah was probably still in Rome at the time when the arch was constructed. Josephus describes the menorah as "made of gold but constructed on a different pattern from those we use in ordinary life. Affixed to a pedestal was a central shaft, from which there extended slender branches, arranged trident-fashion, a wrought lamp being attached to the extremity of each branch; of these there were seven, indicating the honor paid to the number among the Jews" (*War* 7.148-50).



Two fragments of a representation of a menorah in unpainted plaster were discovered in the debris of a house in Jerusalem from the Herodian period. Most likely, it is a copy of the menorah used in the Temple.

To the west of the Holy Place lay the Holy of Holies where only the high priest could enter once a year on the Day of Atonement; there was nothing in the Holy of Holies (*War* 5.5.5; 219; *m. Mid.* 4.7). In *m. Yoma* 5.2, it is explained that there was a stone called "Foundation" (shetijah) three finger breadths high in the Holy of Holies. A curtain separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place (*War* 5.5.4; 212-13; 5.5.5; 219). Josephus describes this curtain in some detail.

"It was a Babylonian curtain, embroidered with blue, and fine linen, and scarlet, and purple, and of a contexture that was truly wonderful. Nor was this mixture of colors without its mystical interpretation, but was a kind of image of the universe; for by the scarlet there seemed to be enigmatically signified fire, by the fine flax the earth, by the blue the air, and by the purple the sea; two of them having their colors the foundation of this resemblance; but the fine flax and the purple have their own origin for that foundation, the earth producing the one, and the sea the other. This curtain had also embroidered upon it all that was mystical in the heavens, excepting that of the [twelve] signs, representing living creatures" (*War* 5.5.4; 212-13).

There is some evidence that there were in fact two curtains, a cubit apart (half a meter), separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies (*m. Yoma* 5.1; see *Heb* 9:3). Philo explains that the outer curtain was called the "covering" (*kalumma*) whereas the inner curtain was called the "veil" (*katapetasma*) (*Vita Mos.* 2.101).

To the north, south and west sides of the sanctuary (the Holy Place and Holy of Holies) (sixty cubits in height) were three stories of interconnected rooms; access to these rooms was from the two sides of the portico (*War* 5.5.5; 220-21). The Mishnah describes these rooms and their functions in some detail. According to this source, there were three stories of five rooms on the north and the south; on the west side there were two stories of three rooms and a third story of two rooms, for a total of thirty-eight rooms. These rooms were connected to one another on either side and above and below. In addition, there was a winding staircase that led from the lower northeast corner to the upper northwest corner; one then traveled along a corridor on the west side moving south and, reaching the end, one turned east and traveled along the south side until one reached the entrance to the story above the sanctuary. From this upper story one could ascend a ladder until one reached the roof. In the upper story there were openings into the Holy of Holies from which workers could be lowered facing the wall in order to make repairs (*m. Mid.* 4.3-5). The use to which the upper portion of the sanctuary (forty cubits in height) was put is not known (*War* 5.5.5; 221).



Model of Temple from "Holyland Hotel"

In the north west corner of the Temple mount stood the Antonia citadel, a Roman garrison where the procurator resided when in Jerusalem; it was connected to the outer court of the Temple by an underground passage (*Ant.* 15.11.7; 424). This citadel was formerly called the *baris* (see *Ant.* 15.11.4; 403).



3. Discontent with the Temple and the Expectation of a Third Temple

Most Jews during the second Temple period recognized the Temple as a Jewish cultic center and made use of it, according to their interpretation of the biblical prescriptions. Evidence of this is the positive references to the Temple and its religious significance in Sirach, Letter of Aristeas and the writings of Philo of Alexander (*Spec. leg.*, 1.141-44; 66-345; *Leg. ad Gai.* 156).

In spite of his glowing description of the high priestly work of Simon ben Jochanan (Greek: Onias), who was high priest from 219 to 196 BCE, however, Jesus b. Sirach implies in his prayer in chap. 36 that what the prophets predicted has not taken place. He asks that God would "gather all the tribes of Jacob and give them their inheritance" (36:13, 16) and that he would "have pity on the city of your sanctuary, Jerusalem the place of your dwelling. Fill Zion with your majesty, and your Temple with your glory" (36:18-19). It seems that Sirach anticipates a time when the eschatological prophecies concerning the return of the exiles and the Temple cult will take place. Similarly, in a letter allegedly sent from Jerusalem to Jews in Egypt, it is said that the ark of the covenant and the original altar of incense was hidden by the prophet Jeremiah and its hiding place would remain concealed "until God gathers His people together again and shows them His mercy" (2 Macc 2:7). At that time God will disclose the location of these items and "the glory of the Lord and the cloud will appear, as they were shown in the case of Moses, and as Solomon asked that the place should be specially consecrated" (2 Macc 2:8). The clear implication is that the promises of restoration and a renewed Temple remain to be fulfilled, at least in their entirety.

Some Jews during the second-Temple period believed that the second Temple would be replaced by a third, eschatological Temple. The author of the Book of Tobit, writing sometime in the second century BCE, states that the Temple rebuilt under Nehemiah will be replaced by a third Temple, built at the final restoration of Israel to the land. (Although this book purports to be a historical record of events in the late 8th and early 7th centuries, it probably dates from the early 2nd century, before the reign of Antiochus IV, and reflects ideas from that period.) In chap. 13, in a hymn to God, Tobit expresses the hope that, after God has afflicted Israel for its iniquities, God would then show it mercy again by gathering the people from all nations and restoring them to the land; Jerusalem will be restored along with the temple and nations shall come to Jerusalem to worship God. But in 14:1-11, part of the testament of Tobit, it is stated that in fact two Temples will be built, one immediately upon returning to the land and the other "when the times of fulfillment shall come" (14:5). The author explains, "After this they will all return from their exile

and rebuild Jerusalem in splendor, and in it the Temple of God will be rebuilt, just as the prophets of Israel have said concerning it" (14:5). At that time the nations of the world will be converted, and abandon all their idols, those who go to Jerusalem will live in safety and the wicked will disappear from the earth. In other words, the author distinguishes between the Temple rebuilt by Ezra and the eschatological Temple foretold by the prophets.

After the Antiochan crisis, the idea that the existing Temple did not represent the fulfillment of the prophetic promise of a new Temple persisted. The existing Temple, rededicated by Judas, was at best an interim Temple to be replaced by an eschatological Temple. This idea is found in many different texts. In the *Book of Jubilees*, written in the early part of the second century BCE, history is divided into two periods: "From the first of creation until my [God's] sanctuary is built in their midst forever and ever" (1.27-28; see 1:29); this sanctuary is the eschatological Temple, the one spoken of by the prophets, and its appearance marks the transition from this age to age to come, the time of Israel's eschatological salvation. This implies that the author viewed the Temple that existed at the time of his writing as destined to be replaced at the end of the age by another, permanent Temple (see also *Jub.* 25:21).

I Enoch 83-90 (usually dated from the early Maccabean period) is a description in symbolic terms of the periods of history from the beginning to the messianic period. Near the completion of history, after the oppression of the Jews (sheep) by the Seleucids, God (the Lord of the sheep) intervenes, destroying the Gentile oppressors, and brings judgment upon Satan, the stars (rebellious angels) (90:24-25) and apostate Jews (90:26-27). After this God brings a new Temple: "And I stood to see till the old house was removed....And I looked till the Lord of the sheep brought a new house, greater and loftier than the first, the old one which he had taken away" (90:28-29). This new, eschatological Temple is also referred to in the *Apocalypse of Weeks*: "And thereafter there shall arise the eighth week of righteousness....And there shall be built the royal house of the great one, in splendor, for all generations for ever" (91:13). In addition, all the Gentiles pay homage to the Jews (90:30), and the dispersed Jews return to the land and perhaps the dead are raised (90:33).

Book 3 of *The Sibylline Oracles*, probably dating from the second century BCE, makes reference to the building of a new Temple by the Messiah (3.294); the Temple is to have a permanent place in the eschatological age (3.702-20, 772-74). There is also a probable reference to an eschatological Temple in the *Testament of Benjamin*: "...And the latter Temple will exceed the former in glory" (9:2).

Although the Qumran community withdrew from participation in the Temple, its members expected to take control of Jerusalem and build a new, eschatological Temple. This would take place after the final battle between the sons of light and the sons of darkness. The reason that we know that this group intended to replace the second Temple with another, rather than simply purify it, is that found among the Dead Sea Scrolls is a document (11QTemple) that provides a plan for a replacement Temple, which was very different from the second Temple at any time during its evolution. (See also 4Q171 3.11; 1QM 2.1-6; 7:4-10)

Nevertheless, in spite of its plans to build a new, eschatological Temple, from its inception the Qumran community considered itself as a community as a temporary replacement for the Temple. This is evident in its use of Temple imagery to describe itself. In 1QS 8.5b-6a, the community is "a holy house for Israel and an assembly of the holy of holies for Aaron"; similarly, in 1QS 8.8 the community is said to be "a dwelling of the holy of holies for Aaron...offering up a soothing odor," and a "house of perfection and truth in Israel." Finally, in 1QS 9.6 again the community is described as "a holy house for Aaron, for the community of the holy of holies, and a house of the community for Israel. The phrases "holy of

holies," "holy house," and simply "house" are terminology used of the Temple. In these passages, the priests in the community are associated with the holy of holies and the lay membership with the Temple in general. This no doubt is the basis of the many statements to the effect that the community provides atonement for the sins of its members and for the land. (See also 4Q174 [Florilegium] 1.1-18.)

4. The Heavenly Temple Corresponding to the Earthly Temple

4.1. The Heavenly Temple in the Old Testament

In Exod 25:9, 40 Moses is instructed to make the earthly tabernacle according to what God showed him (see 1 Chron 28:19). This could be taken to imply that Moses was to model his earthly tabernacle on a heavenly original. The idea that Yahweh dwells in a heavenly Temple (hekal) is found in the Old Testament. In Isa 6:1-2, Isaiah sees the Lord seated upon his throne in the heavenly Temple (hekal) (see also Isa 63:15). In his song to Yahweh, David says that from His Temple (hekal), Yahweh heard his voice (2 Sam 22.7; Ps 18:6). The prophet Habakkuk proclaims, "Yahweh is in his holy Temple (hekal); let all the earth be silent before Him (Hab 2:20), and Micah refers to Yahweh's dwelling in his Temple (Micah 1:2). Finally, David refers to how everyone in the Temple of Yahweh cries holy to Him, which seems to be a reference to the heavenly Temple where Yahweh dwells (Ps 29.9), and in Ps 11:4, he says, "The Lord is in His holy Temple; the Lord is on His heavenly throne" (see also Ps 150:1: "Praise God in His sanctuary [qadosh]").

4.2. The Heavenly Temple in the Second-Temple Period

4.2.1. References to the Heavenly Temple

A. 2 Baruch 4; 59:4

2 Bar 4

And the Lord said to me, "This city will be delivered up for a time, and the people will be chastened for a time, and the world will not be forgotten. Or do you think that this is the city of which I said, 'On the palms of my hands I have carved you?' It is not this building that is in your midst now; it is that which will be revealed, with me, that was already prepared from the moment that I decided to create Paradise. And I showed it to Adam before he sinned. But when he transgressed the commandment, it was taken away from him—as also Paradise. After these things I showed it to my servant Abraham in the night between the portions of the victims. And again I showed it also to Moses on Mount Sinai when I showed him the likeness of tabernacle and all its vessels. Behold, now, it is preserved with me—as also Paradise. Now go away and do as I command.

2 Bar 59:4

For he showed him many warnings together with the ways of the Law and the end of time, as also to you; and then further, also the likeness of Zion with its measurements which was to be made after the likeness of the present sanctuary.

B. Wisdom of Solomon 9:8

You have given command to build a Temple on Your holy mountain, and an altar in the city of Your habitation, a copy of the holy tent that You prepared from the beginning.

C. *Testament of Levi* 3:4-5

In the uppermost heaven of all dwells the Great Glory in the Holy of Holies superior to all holiness. There with him are the archangels, who serve and offer propitiatory sacrifices to the Lord on behalf of all the sins of ignorance of the righteous ones.

D. *1 Enoch* 14.10-20

And the vision was shown to me thus: Behold, in the vision clouds invited me and a mist summoned me, and the course of the stars and the lightnings sped and hastened me, and the winds in 9 the vision caused me to fly and lifted me upward, and bore me into heaven. And I went in till I drew nigh to a wall which is built of crystals and surrounded by tongues of fire: and it began to scare 10 me. And I went into the tongues of fire and drew nigh to a large house which was built of crystals: and the walls of the house were like a tessellated floor (made) of crystals, and its groundwork was 11 of crystal. Its ceiling was like the path of the stars and the lightnings, and between them were 12 fiery cherubim, and their heaven was (clear as) water. A flaming fire surrounded the walls, and its 13 portals blazed with fire. And I entered into that house, and it was hot as fire and cold as ice: there 14 were no delights of life therein: fear covered me, and trembling got hold upon me. And as I quaked 15 and trembled, I fell upon my face. And I beheld a vision, And lo! there was a second house, greater 16 than the former, and the entire portal stood open before me, and it was built of flames of fire. And in every respect it so excelled in splendor and magnificence and extent that I cannot describe to 17 you its splendor and its extent. And its floor was of fire, and above it were lightnings and the path 18 of the stars, and its ceiling also was flaming fire. And I looked and saw therein a lofty throne: its appearance was as crystal, and the wheels thereof as the shining sun, and there was the vision of 19 cherubim. And from underneath the throne came streams of flaming fire so that I could not look 20 thereon. And the Great Glory sat thereon, and His raiment shone more brightly than the sun and 21 was whiter than any snow. None of the angels could enter and could behold His face by reason 22 of the magnificence and glory and no flesh could behold Him. The flaming fire was round about Him, and a great fire stood before Him, and none around could draw nigh Him: ten thousand times 23 ten thousand (stood) before Him, yet He needed no counselor. And the most holy ones who were 24 nigh to Him did not leave by night nor depart from Him. And until then I had been prostrate on my face, trembling: and the Lord called me with His own mouth, and said to me: 'Come hither, 25 Enoch, and hear my word.' And one of the holy ones came to me and waked me, and He made me rise up and approach the door: and I bowed my face downwards.

In a vision, Enoch is taken to Heaven where he sees a house before which was another, greater house in which was found the throne of God. Enoch bows before the open door of the second house, but is summoned to appear before God; he is then told that the request of the Watchers for forgiveness has been refused. *1 Enoch* 14 seems also to assume the existence of more than one Temple, each belonging to one of the heavens.

4.2.2. *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*

Of particular interest is the text, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, copies of which were found at Qumran and Masada. This is a liturgical composition, made up of thirteen parts. They serve to "invoke angelic praise, describe the angelic priesthood and the heavenly temple, and give an account of the worship performed on the Sabbath in the heavenly sanctuary" (C. Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice: A Critical Edition*, 1). Each song begins with a call to praise God followed mostly by a description of

angelic praise in the heavenly sanctuary. Without going into too much detail, this text presupposes the existence of a heavenly temple and its angelic priests. There are also probable references to a single angel who presides over the angelic priestly hierarchy (4Q401 frg. 23.1; 4Q401 frg. 20.2; 4Q403 frg. 1, col. 2.23; 4Q403 frg. 1, col. 2.24). (These angels functioned as heavenly priests in the heavenly Temple.) There are also two probable references to Melchizedek as one of these heavenly priests (4Q401 11.3; 22.3). Given Melchizedek's identification with Michael/Prince of Light, it is likely that Melchizedek would have been understood as this presiding priestly angel, which would make him the heavenly high priest. Other references to angelic priests include *Jub.* 31:13: "May he [God] draw you [Levi] and your seed near to Him from all flesh to serve in His sanctuary as the angels of the presence and the holy ones" and *T. Levi* 3.5: "There are with Him [God] the archangels, who serve and offer propitiatory sacrifices to the Lord on behalf of all the sins of ignorance of the righteous ones. They present to the Lord a pleasing odor, a rational and bloodless oblation."

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