

MIDDOTH, OR THE MEASUREMENTS OF THE TEMPLE.

WITH THE COMMENTARY OF RABBI OBADIAH OF BARTENORA.

(Concluded.)

CHAPTER III.

1. THE altar was thirty-two cubits by thirty-two cubits.¹ It rose a cubit, and receded a cubit—this *was* the foundation;² it was now thirty by thirty. It rose five cubits and receded a cubit—this *was* the circuit; it was now twenty-eight by twenty-eight. The place of the horns *occupied* a cubit on either *side*; it was now twenty-six by twenty-six. The place for the feet of the priests to walk³ *was* a cubit on either side; it was now twenty-four by twenty-four—the place for the fire. Rabbi Jose said “at first⁴ it was only twenty-eight cubits by twenty-eight.” It rose and receded according to this measure, [*i.e.*, in the above-mentioned manner], until the

¹ They brought a square frame made of four boards, each of which was thirty-two cubits long. The breadth of *each* board was a cubit, and this was the height of the frame, and they filled it with stones, lime, pitch and melted lead, so that it became one solid mass of thirty-two cubits by thirty-two cubits, and a cubit high: and this was the foundation.

² It rose a cubit and receded a cubit. After the foundation had risen to the height of a cubit, another frame was brought, the length of each board of which was thirty cubits, and the breadth of the board which was the height of the frame, was five cubits. This they placed upon the foundation and filled with stones, lime, pitch, and lead, like the first, and it adhered to the foundation, and became one solid mass of thirty cubits by thirty cubits standing upon the foundation. This was called the circuit: it was five cubits higher than the foundation, and receded a cubit because it was shorter than the foundation a cubit on every side. And again a third frame was brought which was twenty-eight cubits by twenty-eight cubits, *and* three cubits high, and it was placed upon the circuit and filled like the first. This was the place for the pile, which was the top of the altar. Thus the foundation stood out from the circuit a cubit on every side, and the circuit stood out from the place for the pile a cubit on every side. Afterwards there was brought a frame of a cubit by a cubit, and in height a cubit, and placed upon the corners of the altar, and filled. And this was the horn of the altar, and thus for each of the four corners.

³ In order that it might not be necessary for the priests to go between the horns, they left a vacant space of a cubit inside the horns, upon which the feet of the priests might walk.

⁴ In the days of Solomon *the altar* measured only twenty-eight cubits by twenty-eight, and the receding and rising of the foundation and circuit and place of the horns, and place for the going of the feet of the priests were so that the place for the pile remained twenty by twenty.

place for the fire was twenty by twenty. And when the children of the captivity came up, they added to it four cubits on the south and four cubits on the west,⁵ like a gamma;⁶ as is said⁷ (Ezekiel xliii, 16), "and the altar, twelve cubits long, by twelve broad, square." It might appear that it was only twelve by twelve, *but* when it says "in the four squares thereof," it is taught that it measured from the middle twelve cubits to every side. And a red line encircled it in the middle,⁸ to distinguish between the upper bloods⁹ and the lower bloods.¹⁰ And the foundation extended all along the northern and western sides, and took up on the south one cubit, and on the east one cubit.¹¹

⁵ So that its foundation was thirty-two by thirty-two and the place for the pile twenty-four by twenty-four. We read "four cubits on the south, and four cubits on the west," and thus it is quoted in the sixth chapter of Zevachim (61b).

⁶ Like a *gamma*. The Greek *gimel*, which resembles our *nun* reversed. It is explained in the place just mentioned that on account of the *shitin* (which were the holes through which the drink-offerings ran down) they added so as to extend the altar to the south and to the west. For before in the days of Solomon, it was held that the "altar of earth" should be solid like the earth—that is, it should not be hollow; and when the drink-offerings were poured upon the top of the altar at the south-western corner they ran down from the altar upon the pavement and flowed into the cistern which was dug there near to the south-western corner close to the altar. It was not in the altar itself, but the children of the captivity added to the masonry of the altar, until this cistern was taken into the middle of the altar, and the holes at the top of the altar opened opposite to it, so that the drink-offerings might run down there. They used to say "the drink is like the food." As the food is consumed upon the altar (that is the offerings which are burnt upon the top of the altar), so also the drink (that is the drink-offerings) is swallowed by the altar. And the text "an altar of earth" is expounded that it be joined to the earth, that they should not build it upon arches or over cavities.

⁷ This is a verse from Ezekiel, who prophesied concerning the measurement of the second house [Temple] and of that which is to be in the future. "And the altar twelve:" the measures of the place for the pile are said to be twelve. "In the four squares thereof" teaches that from its middle he measured twelve cubits to every side: so it was twenty-four by twenty-four.

⁸ A red line was made round the altar at its middle, five cubits from the base, that is one cubit below the top of the circuit.

⁹ The blood of a sin-offering of a beast, and a burnt-offering of a fowl which was sprinkled above the red line.

¹⁰ The blood of all other offerings, which was sprinkled below the red line.

¹¹ The whole of the altar was in the portion of Benjamin except one cubit (along the south side and one cubit) along the east side which were included in the portion of Judah: but the cubit which was on the east did not extend along the whole eastern side, for when it reached the north-eastern horn, it was all included in the cubit belonging to the horn; and in like manner the cubit taken up on the south did not go all along the south, but when it reached the south-western horn, it was all close to the horn, a cubit. Thus, three corners of the

2. And at the south-western corner¹² there were two apertures like two narrow nostrils, by which the blood poured upon the western¹³ and southern¹⁴ foundations, might run down,¹⁵ and become mixed together in the canal, and pass out into the valley of Kedron.

3. Below, in the pavement at that corner,¹⁶ there was a place measuring a cubit by a cubit, and a slab of marble in which a ring was fixed, by which they went down to the foundation¹⁷ and cleansed it. And there was an incline¹⁸ to the south of the altar, thirty-two¹⁹ cubits long, by sixteen broad, and in it on the west was a cavity²⁰ in which were put the defiled sin-offerings of birds.²¹

4. Both the stones of the incline and the stones of the altar *were* from altar were in the portion of Benjamin, and the south-eastern corner alone in the portion of Judah: and as Jacob blessed Benjamin, saying, "Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey" (Genesis xlix, 27), which is interpreted "in his possession the Sanctuary shall be built" [Targum of Onkelos], that which sanctifies the blood must be in no other than the portion of Benjamin, and on this account they did not make a foundation to the altar at the south-eastern corner, because it was not in the portion of the ravener, and the blood was not sprinkled below *the red line* at that corner. And when they made a square frame for the foundation to fill it with stones, pitch, and lead, as we have said, they put wood or some other substance in that south-eastern angle, in order that that angle should not be filled, and afterwards they removed the wood and that corner was left void without foundation. And on this account the middle part of the altar was called the circuit, because it entirely surrounded all the corners, which was not the case with the foundation.

¹² Below in the cubit of the foundation were two apertures.

¹³ As the remainder of the blood of the sin-offerings, the blood of which was sprinkled on the inner altar, after all the sprinklings was poured upon the western foundation.

¹⁴ The remainder of the blood of those sacrifices whose blood was sprinkled upon the outer altar.

¹⁵ Through those apertures and become mixed together in the canal for water which was in the Court, thence pass out into the valley of Kedron. And the gardeners bought it from the Gizbarim [or treasurers of the Temple] to manure the soil therewith.

¹⁶ The south-western.

¹⁷ To the hollow (or pit) which was under the altar opposite the place where drink-offerings were poured out.

¹⁸ Like a sloping bridge. It was made on the south, and by it they ascended and descended from the altar, for they might not ascend by steps because it is written (Exod. xx, 26) "thou shall not go up by steps unto mine altar."

¹⁹ Its length was placed from south to north, and its breadth from east to west, sixteen cubits.

²⁰ Like a kind of hollow window, a cubit by a cubit. It was in the incline itself and placed on the western side. רבובה, *rabubahr*, is the same as נבובה, *nabubah*, as in the passage לוחות לבוב, "hollow with boards" (Exod. xxvii, 8).

²¹ Which remained there until they began to decompose and were afterwards taken out to the place of burning.

the valley Beth Kerem.²² They dug below the virgin earth,²³ and brought thence perfect stones upon which iron had not been lifted up. For iron defiles by its touch, and by a scratch, it defiles everything.²⁴ If one of the stones became scratched, it was unlawful, and all *the rest were* lawful. They whitened them²⁵ twice in a year, once at the Passover, and once at the Feast of Tabernacles, and the Temple once at the Passover. Rabbi Judah said²⁶ "every Sabbath eve they whitened them with a cloth on account of the blood." They did not plaster them with an iron trowel,²⁷ least it should touch and defile. For iron was created to shorten the days of man, and the altar was created to prolong the days of man: it may not be that what shortens be lifted up upon what prolongs.

5. And there were rings to the north of the altar,²⁸ six rows of four each (though some say, four *rows* of six each), upon which they slaughtered the holy sacrifices. The place of the slaughterers was to the north of the altar, and in it eight small pillars²⁹ with square planks of cedar wood³⁰ upon them, and iron hooks were fixed to them,³¹ three rows to each pillar,³² upon which they hung the beasts and skinned them upon the marble tables³³ which were between the pillars.

6. The laver was between the porch and the altar, drawn towards the south. Between the porch and the altar *were* twenty-two cubits, and twelve steps were there, the height of each step half a cubit, and the tread a cubit; a cubit, a cubit, and a landing three cubits; and a cubit, a cubit, and a landing three cubits; and the uppermost, a cubit, a cubit, and a

²² From the valley of Beth Kerem they brought them.

²³ Soil in which they had never before dug.

²⁴ Any scratch defiled the stones, even though not done by iron.

²⁵ They whitened them with lime twice a year.

²⁶ He does not dispute with the first doctor, but adds that on every Sabbath eve they wiped them with a cloth on account of the blood.

²⁷ He returns to the words of the first doctor, that when they whitened them with lime twice in a year they did not plaster them with trowels such as builders are accustomed to plaster with.

²⁸ Because they did not tie the two fore-feet of the continual sacrifices to each other, or the two hind-feet to each other (as we are taught in the treatise "Tamid" (ch. iv). Johanan the high priest caused twenty-four rings according to the twenty-four courses of the priesthood to be made. They were fixed in the pavement, and made like a bow, into which they introduced the neck of the beast at the time of slaughtering, and fixed the end of the ring in the ground. And they were on the north of the altar because the most holy sacrifices were slaughtered on the north.

²⁹ Low stone pillars.

³⁰ Square pieces of cedar wood were upon the pillars.

³¹ A kind of hook (*uncinus* in the barbarian tongue). They were fixed in those planks of cedar, and by them they suspended the beast.

³² There were three rows of hooks one above another to each piece to suspend therefrom the large or small beasts.

³³ Upon these they washed the inwards, because the marble made the flesh cold and preserved it from putrefication.

landing four cubits.³⁴ Rabbi Judah said the uppermost a cubit, a cubit, and a landing five cubits.³⁵

7. The doorway of the porch was forty cubits high, and twenty cubits broad. And five carved oak beams³⁶ were above it, the lower one³⁷ extended beyond the doorway a cubit on either side, the one above it, extended beyond it a cubit on either side, so that the uppermost was thirty cubits, and a row³⁸ of stones was between every two *beams*.

8. And beams of cedar were fixed from the wall of the temple to the wall of the porch, in order that it should not bulge.³⁹ And golden chains were fixed in the roof of the porch, by which the young priests used to get

³⁴ Thus we read "the height of each step half a cubit," &c., as Rabbi Baruch testifies, that he found in certain ancient corrected manuscripts. This is the explanation:—The height of each step was half a cubit. The tread, that is the breadth of the step, where the feet trod, was a cubit. The second and third step were each a cubit in the tread, that is, a cubit, a cubit, as is taught [in the Mishna] and a landing three. The fourth step was three cubits broad. A *robed* ["landing"] was a row of the pavement, as "surrounded by *robadin* or benches of stone;" on the fourth *robed* or row in the court," because the pavement was broad without steps. And on this account, it is not said, the tread three *cubits*, but the *robed* or landing, three *cubits*, which is as much as to say a row of the pavement. "A cubit, a cubit:" that is to say, the tread of the fifth and sixth steps was a cubit. "And the *robed*, or landing three;" the seventh step was three cubits broad. "The upper a cubit, a cubit, and the landing four;" the explanation is that the upper step which was that one of the twelve steps which came after four steps each of one cubit *in the tread*, that this upper step was four cubits broad to the porch. Thus all the steps were nineteen cubits from the first to the porch, and three cubits of the breadth of the pavement were unoccupied [תקתן, plane, smooth] from the altar to the commencement of the steps, making twenty-two cubits between the porch and the altar.

³⁵ Rabbi Judah said, the uppermost landing was five cubits to the porch, because he thought that the steps commenced at a distance of two cubits from the altar.

³⁶ Figured and painted beams of *melah*, of oak upon which galls, which are called *melin* grow. Thus in Gittin (19a) it is considered whether it was lawful to write a bill of divorce with *the melin*, water in which galls have been steeped.

³⁷ The lower beam rested horizontally upon the lintel of the doorway, which was twenty cubits broad, and the beam projected beyond the doorway a cubit on either side, so that its length was twenty-two cubits; and the second beam which was above it projected beyond the first on either side, so that its length was twenty-four *cubits* and the third twenty-six *cubits*, and the fourth twenty-eight *cubits*, and the fifth thirty cubits.

³⁸ *Nidbakh*, a row (as in Ezra vi, 4, "three rows of great stones") between each two. These five beams did not touch one another, but a row of stone masonry was between them.

³⁹ In order that the walls should not lean so as to fall on account of their *great* height, these beams, which extended from one wall to the other, rested upon the two walls so that they should not fall.

up and see the crowns,⁴⁰ as is said (Zech. vi, 14), "and the crowns shall be to Helim, and to Tobijah, and to Jediaah, and to Hen the son of Zephaniah for a memorial in the Temple of the Lord." A golden vine was placed at the doorway of the Temple, and supported upon poles, and whoever made a freewill offering⁴¹ of a leaf, a berry or a branch, brought and hung it to this vine. Rabbi Eleazer, the son of Zadok, it happened once that three hundred priests⁴² were employed *in removing it.*"

CHAPTER IV.

1. THE doorway of the Temple was twenty cubits high and ten broad, and it had four doors, two within and two without,¹ as is said (Ezekiel xli, 23) "the Temple and the Sanctuary had two doors." The outer ones opened to the interior of the doorway to cover the thickness of the wall, and the inner ones opened into the interior of the house to cover *the space* behind the doors, for all the house was overlaid with gold, except behind the doors. Rabbi Judah said: "they were placed within the doorway, and were a sort of folding doors,² which turned back upon

⁴⁰ Which were in the windows of the Temple.

⁴¹ Of gold, for the Temple, and desired that the gold thus offered should itself be put upon the Temple so that it might all be covered with gold. Of that gold which was offered, there was made according to its value a berry, or a leaf or a cluster, and hung upon the vine.

⁴² In consequence of the great weight of the gold which was upon it, three hundred priests were necessary to move it and carry it from place to place. This is one of the places in which the wise men have spoken the language of hyperbole, for there were not really three hundred priests *employed for this purpose*. All that Rabbi Eliezer, the son of Zadok, intended was to make known that a great quantity of gold was offered there.

¹ Two within: in the thickness of the wall towards the inner side. Two without: in the thickness of the wall towards the outer side. The thickness of the wall of the Temple was six cubits, and at the end of the outer cubit of the thickness of the wall were the two outer doors, one on the right of the doorway, and one on the left, each of the doors being five cubits broad. When closed they touched one another and shut the doorway, the breadth of which was ten cubits; and when opened towards the inside they covered five cubits of the thickness of the wall. And two other doors of the same size were fixed at the inner side of the thickness of the wall, and when opened covered five cubits on one side, and five cubits on the other side of the breadth of the wall of the Temple within; and there the wall was not overlaid with gold like the rest of the house, because it was not seen.

² Boards of two pieces connected by means of joints; when opened they could if desired be folded back, one upon the other. Thus all these doors, both those which were within and those which were without, were connected by means of joints. And both the doors within and those without were fixed at the end of half a cubit of the thickness of the wall, and five cubits of the thickness of the wall intervened between the outer and the inner doors. Each door was five cubits *broad*, formed of two boards, each two cubits and a half, joined together.

themselves ; these, two cubits and a half, and those, two cubits and a half, and the door-post *was* half a cubit *broad* on this side, and the doorpost half a cubit *broad* on that side," as is said (Ezekiel xl, 24) "and the doors had two leaves *apiece*, two turning leaves, two *leaves* for the one door, and two leaves for the other *door*."³

2. And there were two little doors⁴ to the great gate, one on the north, and one on the south. No one ever entered by that on the south. And it is of this gate that Ezekiel explains as is said (Ezekiel xliv, 2) "then said the Lord unto me: This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it, because the Lord, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut." He took the key and opened the little door and went into the chamber,⁵ and from the chamber into the Temple. Rabbi Judah said, "he went into the thickness of the wall,⁶ until he found himself standing between the two gates, when he opened the outer one from within and the inner one from without.

3. And thirty-eight chambers⁷ were there, fifteen on the north,⁸ fifteen And when the outer door was opened towards the inside one half of it was folded back upon the other half, and covered two cubits and a half of the thickness of the wall, and in like manner the inner door, when it was opened towards the outside, was also folded back and covered the remaining two cubits and a half of thickness of the wall. [The word which I have rendered "folding doors" is אצטרמיטא, *estremeta*. It appears to be from the Greek *εστρεφω*, to *turn back*. In some copies, and in other passages, it occurs as אצטרמיטא and אצטרמיטא, V. Buxtorf, and Aruch. S. V. Rabbi Lipsitz's note on the passage is, "It is meant to say that each door was made of two pieces connected together by joints].

³ So that each door was divided into two.

⁴ Two little doors, one on the right of the great gate of the Temple and one on its left, at some distance from the gate. Of that on the south it is written, "it shall be shut, it shall not be opened," in the Temple of the future, and certainly thus it was in the eternal house [the second Temple].

⁵ This was that chamber which opened into the Temple, and from the chamber he entered into the Temple and went along the Temple as far as the great gate which was at the end of the thickness of the wall within and opened it. He then came to the second gate which was at the end of the thickness of the wall without, and stood within and opened it.

⁶ Because he thought that he did not enter from the chamber into the Temple, but from the chamber went in the thickness of the wall of the Temple, until he found himself standing between the two gates, and opened the doors of the outer gate from within and the doors of the inner gate from without.

⁷ *Taim* = *lishkoth*, chambers.

⁸ Below where it is reckoned that from the north to south is seventy cubits, it is taught: "the wall of the gallery five, and the gallery three; the wall of the chamber five, and the chamber six; and the wall of the Temple six;" and that the corresponding measurements on the south were similar. And it is not meant that the thickness of the wall of the gallery, and the thickness of the wall of the chamber, and the thickness of the wall of the Temple which was on the northern side was thus, but that the thickness of the wall, with the cavity

on the south and eight on the west. Those on the north, and those on the south, *were* five above five, and five above them; and those on the west, three above three and two above them. And there were three openings to each, one to the chamber on the right, and one to the chamber on the left, and one to the chamber above it. And at the north-eastern corner, there were five openings; one to the chamber on the right, and one to the chamber above it, and one to the gallery and one to the little door,⁹ and one to the Temple.

4. The lower row of chambers was five cubits broad¹⁰ and the roof six: the middle six cubits and the roof seven, and the upper seven, as is said (1 Kings vi, 6) "the nethermost chamber *was* five cubits broad, and the middle *was* six cubits broad, and the third *was* seven cubits broad."

which was between it and the second wall was reckoned. And in the five of the wall of the gallery, and three of the gallery, and five of the wall of the chamber, and six of the chamber, and six of the wall of the Temple, in each one of these five there was a chamber which was the \aleph , *tha*, so that there were five chambers on the north and also on the south. And over these five were built other five, and five more on the top of them, so that there were fifteen chambers to the north and fifteen to the south. And in like manner on the west, as is reckoned below in its place, the wall of the Temple six, and the chamber six, and the wall of the chamber five, and in every one of these was a chamber, so that the wall was not six cubits thick, but the wall with the chamber that was in it was six, and the single chamber that was outside it was six, and the wall of the one chamber which was outside of them with the chamber which was in it was five, behold three chambers. And three other chambers were built above these three, and two above them, behold, eight chambers to the west.

⁹ The chamber in which was the northern little door, because by that chamber they entered into the Temple. The teaching is according to the rabbis, as it is said above, the priest "entered to the chamber, and from the chamber to the Temple," and not according to Rabbi Judah, who said "he went in the thickness of the wall."

¹⁰ On the outside of the wall of the gallery, which was the outer wall of the holy place (הקדש) were chambers (ציעים), *i.e.*, additional rooms (נווטרמות) surrounding the house on three sides, west, north, and south; and these chambers (ציעים) were lower, second, and third. The lower chamber was five cubits broad, and the *robod*, רובד, or pavement, that was above it, that is the roof of the lower chamber, which was the floor of the middle chamber, was six cubits broad, because the wall of the gallery became narrower as it ascended, and when it reached the pavement, which was above the lower chamber, it receded one cubit, and upon the projection thus formed were placed the rafters of the chamber, so that the middle chamber was broader by one cubit than the lower chamber, namely, by that cubit which the wall receded. And again, when it reached the pavement which was above the middle chamber, which was the floor of the third, the wall became narrower and receded one cubit, so that the ends of the rafters could rest upon that cubit by which the wall of the middle chamber projected outwards [towards the interior of the chamber] beyond that

5. And a gallery¹¹ [or winding way] ascended from the north-eastern corner to the north-western corner, by which they went up to the roofs of the chambers. He went up by the gallery with his face to the west, and traversed the whole northern side until he reached the west; having reached the west, he turned his face to the south, and traversed the whole western side until he reached the south; having reached the south, he turned his face to the east, and went along on the south until he reached the door of the upper story, for the door of the upper story opened to the south. And at the door of the upper story were two beams of cedar, by which they went up to the roof of the upper story. And in the upper story pointed pieces of wood distinguished between the holy place and the most holy. And holes¹² opened in the upper story to the most holy place by which they let down the workmen in boxes,¹³ in order that they might not feast their eyes¹⁴ upon the most holy place.

6. The temple was a hundred cubits by a hundred,¹⁵ by a height of a hundred. The solid foundation¹⁶ six cubits, and its height forty; a cubit the ornamental ceiling; ¹⁷ two cubits the place of dropping; ¹⁸ a cubit of the upper chamber, and thus the upper chamber was one cubit broader than the middle, and two cubits broader than the lower chamber. And this is what is said in 1 Kings vi, 6, "for without in the wall of the house he made narrowed rests, כַּנְרֵעוֹת that the beams should not be fastened in the walls of the house;" that is to say, that the wall was narrowed and wanted one cubit in thickness on the outer side in the pavement of the middle chamber, and still another cubit in the pavement of the upper one, in order that there might be place to put the ends of the rafters of the pavement upon, so that it might not be necessary to fasten them in the walls of the house, to make holes in the wall, and fix there the ends of the beams.

¹¹ A kind of hollow way by which they went up to the roofs of the chambers. And because a person going up by it made a circuit in going up, and again in going down, it was called כַּסְבֵּה, or winding way.

¹² Windows such as are made in the roofs of upper rooms.

¹³ They lowered them in the inside of the boxes by means of a rope.

¹⁴ By seeing the most holy place; but might only do what was necessary, and go up again.

¹⁵ A hundred long and a hundred broad.

¹⁶ Solid and closed masonry to form a foundation for the house, upon which they erected the walls.

¹⁷ The lower rafter of the roof was one cubit thick, and because it was overlaid with gold and painted with beautiful pictures, it was called כִּיּוֹר, *kiior*, i.e., ornamented.

¹⁸ The thickness of the upper rafters, which rested upon the lower rafter, was two cubits, and they were called בֵּית דִּלְפָּא, *beth dilpa*, because the planks of the roof were joined together by their means. The interpretation is of joining, בֵּית לּוּפֵי, *beth lofi*, the place of joining. And it need not be wondered why the lower rafters, upon which everything rested, should be only one cubit thick, and the upper rafters which had to bear no weight at all were two cubits thick, because the lower rafter, in consequence of being broader than its thickness of a cubit, was strong and able to support the building above it. But the upper

the rafters of the roof,¹⁹ and a cubit the plaster.²⁰ And the height of the upper story was forty cubits, and a cubit the ornamented ceiling; two cubits the place of dropping, a cubit the rafters of the roof, and a cubit the plaster; and three cubits the parapet and a cubit the scarecrow.²¹ Rabbi Judah said, "the scarecrow was not reckoned in the measurement, but the parapet was four cubits."

7. From east to west one hundred cubits. The wall of the porch²² five, and the porch eleven; the wall of the temple six, and its interior forty cubits; the partition²³ space a cubit, and twenty cubits the holy of holies; the wall of the temple six,²⁴ the chamber six, and the wall of the chamber five. From north to south seventy cubits. The wall of the gallery five, and the gallery three; the wall of the chamber five, and the chamber six; the wall of the Temple six, and its interior twenty cubits; the wall of the Temple six,²⁵ and the chamber six; the wall of the chamber six, the place rafters which were not broader than a hand-breadth, or less, had to be made thicker; or the upper rafters were two cubits thick in order to render the roof distant from the lower rafter, because this was painted with beautiful figures, and if the roof had been close to it, the figures would have been entirely unseen and unobserved.

¹⁹ תַּקְרָה. The planks which were laid upon the beams were one cubit in thickness.

²⁰ The mud, and stones, and lime which were put over the planks.

²¹ כְּלֵה עוֹרֵב. A sharp plate of iron, like a sword, the height of which was a cubit, was placed on the top of the parapet in order that the birds might not rest upon it, and hence it was called כְּלֵה עוֹרֵב, *challeh oreb*, crow destroyers, because the crows were destroyed by its means.

²² The thickness of the wall of the porch on the eastern side was five cubits and that of the wall of the Temple on the eastern side six cubits.

²³ The cavity (or internal space) of the Temple was forty cubits *long from east to west*.

²⁴ The wall which separated between the Temple and the holy of holies was called *tirkisin*, because it shut up the ark and tables of the law which were given at Sinai, טַרְק, *trak* in the Aramaic tongue, means *shut*, as טַרְיָקִי גָלִי, shut the door. *Sin* is Sinai. And the thickness of that wall was a cubit. The wise men could not decide whether its holiness was as the holiness of the interior, or as the holiness of the exterior, and therefore they made in the second house two rails, an outer one and an inner one, and between them a space of a cubit to receive between them the space of the place of the wall, which was one cubit thick [in Solomon's Temple].

²⁵ We have already explained above that it was not the wall of the Temple which was on the western side that was six cubits in thickness, but the thickness of the wall of the Temple with the void place which was between it and the second wall which was external to it was six cubits; and the thickness of the second wall, which is called "chamber," with the void place which was between it and the third wall, six cubits; and the thickness of the third wall, which was called the "wall of the chamber" with the void place which was between it and the fourth outer wall was five cubits, and the three void places which were between the four walls were the *taim* chambers, and over them were other chambers, as we are

for the descent of the water three cubits, and the wall five cubits. The porch extended beyond it fifteen cubits on the north,²⁶ and fifteen cubits on the south, and this was called the house of the slaughtering knives,²⁷ because there they kept the knives. The Temple was narrow behind²⁸ and broad in front, and it resembled a lion, as it is said (Isaiah xxix, i), "Woe to Ariel, the city *where David dwelt.*" As a lion is narrow behind and broad in front, so the Temple was narrow behind and broad in front.

CHAPTER V.

1. THE whole court¹ was one hundred and eighty-seven cubits long² by one hundred and thirty-five broad.³ From east to west one hundred and eighty-seven: the place for the tread of Israel⁴ [*the laity*] eleven cubits; the place for the tread of the priests⁵ eleven cubits; the altar thirty-two;⁶ between the porch and the altar twenty-two cubits; the temple a hundred cubits;⁷ and eleven cubits behind the house of atonement.⁸

2. From north to south one hundred and thirty-five. The incline and the altar sixty-two; from the altar to the rings eight cubits; the place of the rings twenty-four; from the rings to the tables, four; from the tables to the pillars, four; from the pillars to the wall of the court, eight taught above, "on the west three, above three, and two above them," and likewise "from north to south the wall of the gallery five," &c., all include the hollow space which was between wall and wall. The whole is as I have explained above.

²⁶ The wall of the porch was five cubits thick, and the porch *itself measured* ten cubits on the north, and likewise on the south.

²⁷ Because of the knives which were deposited there it was called the place of slaughtering knives. In the Roman tongue, also, large knives are called *chalpim* [*? scalpellum, scalper ?*].

²⁸ Narrow behind on the western side, and broad in front on the eastern side. It is not clear to me how this should be, for "a hundred by a hundred" is symmetrical.

¹ The whole circuit of the court, within which circuit was built the house on its western side, the court and the altar being on its eastern side.

² From east to west.

³ From north to south.

⁴ This is what was called the court of Israel.

⁵ Called the court of priests.

⁶ Explained above at the beginning of Chapter III.

⁷ The thickness of the wall of the porch and the interior of the porch, and the thickness of the wall of the Temple and its interior, and a cubit the partition, and the interior of the holy of holies and the wall of the temple on the west, and the chamber, and the wall of the chamber, altogether were a hundred cubits, as is explained in its chapter above.

⁸ From the outer wall of the Temple on the western side to the western wall of the court eleven cubits, including the unoccupied space with the thickness of the wall, was called "behind the house of atonement."

cubits; and the remainder between the incline and the wall, and the place of the pillars.

3. There were six chambers in the court, three on the north, and three on the south. Those on the north *were* the chamber of salt, the chamber of Parvah,⁹ and the chamber of the washings. In the chamber of salt they put salt for the offering. In the chamber of Parvah they salted the sacred skins, and on its roof was the place of bathing for the high priest on the day of atonement.¹⁰ The chamber of washings *was so called because* there they washed the inwards of the holy *sacrifices* and a winding stair¹¹ went up from it to the roof of the house of Parvah.

4. Those on the south *were* the chamber of wood, the chamber of the captivity¹² [or of the draw-well], and the chamber Gazith. The chamber of wood, Rabbi Eliezer, the son of Jacob, said, "I forget for what it served." Aba Shaul said, "*it was* the chamber of the high priest,¹³ and it was behind the *other* two, and the roof of the three was even.¹⁴ The chamber of the draw-well. There the *בּוּר הַגּוּלָּה*, the draw-well, was placed, and the wheel put over it, and from thence water was supplied to the whole court. The chamber Gazith; there the great Sanhedrim of Israel sat,¹⁵ and judged the priesthood. And the priest in whom was found

⁹ A certain wizard whose name was Parvah built this chamber by means of witchcraft, and it was called after his name. Thus I find. And Rambam has written that he made a hole in the wall in order to see how the high priest performed his function, and that he was killed there.

¹⁰ The five immersions which the high priest had to undergo on the day of atonement when changing from golden garments to white and from white to golden, were all upon the roof of the house of Parvah, because it was hallowed with the same degree of holiness as the court, and the immersions which were on account of the day of atonement were required to be in the holy place (as is written (Levit. xvi, 24), "and he shall wash his flesh with water in the holy place"), except the first immersion, which was not on account of the day of atonement [but was the ordinary immersion required of every priest before going into the court]. And also on all other days of the year no clean person might enter the court until he had been immersed, and hence the first immersion was in the profane part [of the Temple] over the water gate. This was the third gate on the south, and a fountain of water was conveyed there by means of a conduit which came from the fountain Etham, and there the first immersion took place.

¹¹ Stone masonry turning and winding stairs to go up to the roof of the house of Parvah by a winding way.

¹² So called from a well which they who came up from the captivity [in Babylon] dug there.

¹³ This was the chamber of wood; it was the chamber Parhedrin, as we are taught in the beginning of the treatise Yoma: "seven days before the day of atonement they removed the high priest from his house to the chamber Parhedrin."

¹⁴ There was one roof to the three.

¹⁵ In the unballowed side of it, for the chamber Gazith was half in the holy, and half in the profane *part of the Temple*, and in the half which was in the holy

any disqualification *was* clothed in black and veiled in black, and went out and departed. And he in whom no disqualification was found, clothed in white, and veiled in white, entered and served with his brethren, the priests. And they made a festival, because no disqualification was found in the seed of Aaron the priest. And thus they said, "Blessed be the place [*i.e.* God], blessed be he that no disqualification was found in the seed of Aaron. And blessed be He who chose Aaron and his sons, to stand and serve before Jehovah in the House of the Holy of Holies."

part, it was not possible for the Sanhedrin to sit, because there was no *right of* sitting in the court for any but kings of the house of David only, as is written (2 Sam. vii, 18), "then went King David in and sat before the Lord."
