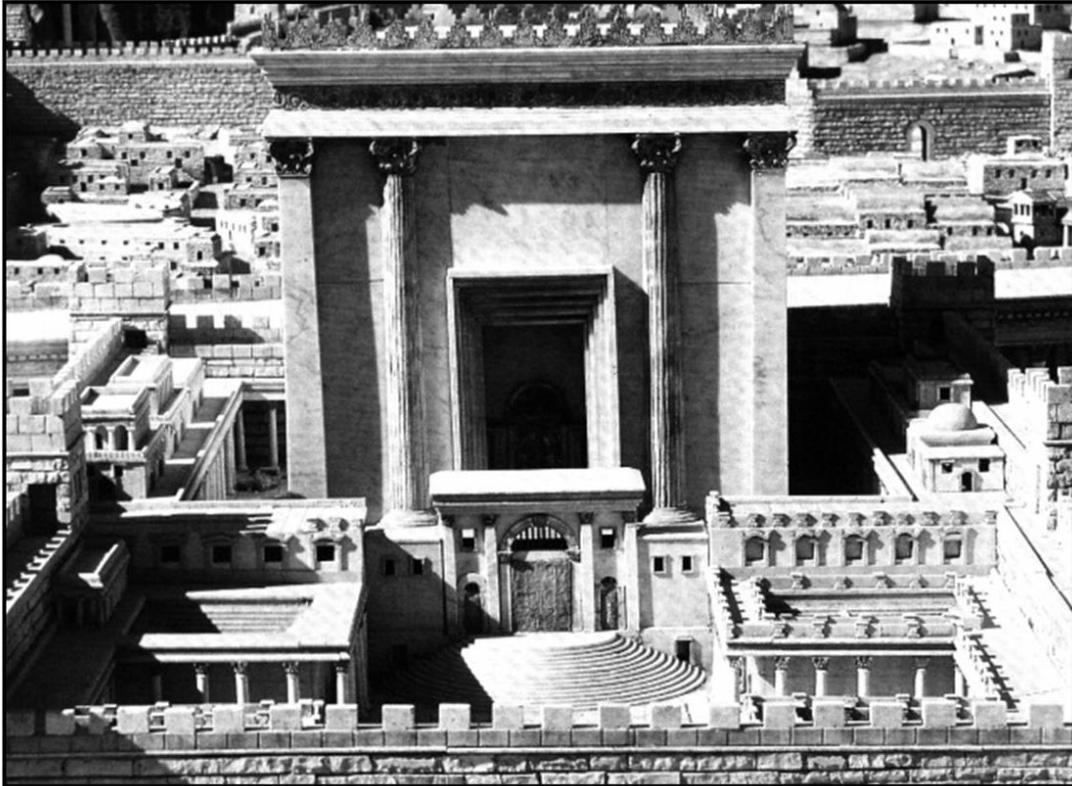


Information on Herod's Temple

Prepared by *Thru the Bible Radio* for listeners to
Dr. J. Vernon McGee's 5-Year Bible study program



This photograph is of the model of Herod's temple located at the Holyland Hotel in Jerusalem.



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Biblical References to Herod's Temple

The following is not intended to be a comprehensive list of biblical references to Herod's temple, but it may help you to better appreciate the prominence of the temple in the New Testament.

- Historical background: The construction of Herod's temple was begun in 19 B.C. and essentially completed in 64 A.D., a mere six years before it was destroyed by the Romans.
- When He was eight days old, Jesus was brought to this temple by His parents, who were required by the Law to present Him to the Lord and make sacrifice of two pigeons or turtledoves for Him because He was their firstborn (Luke 2:21-24).
- During this first visit to the temple, Anna and Simeon prophesied and gave thanks to God at the sight of Him (Luke 2:25-38).
- At the age of twelve, after Passover, He sat in the midst of the teachers in the temple to listen to them, ask questions, and answer the questions they put to Him (Luke 2:41-50).
- During His temptation in the wilderness at the beginning of His ministry, Satan set Christ on a pinnacle of the temple (Luke 4:9).
- On one visit to the temple during a feast day, He met the man He had healed by the pool of Bethesda and warned him not to sin anymore (John 5:14).
- Early one morning, Jesus entered the temple to teach and was confronted by the Pharisees with the woman caught in adultery (John 8).
- During one Feast of Dedication, Jesus entered the temple and, as He walked on Solomon's Porch, asserted His deity (John 10:22-39).
- After His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the Lord entered the temple (Mark 11:11).
- Then He returned another day to cast out merchants doing business there and, following that, He came daily to teach the people and to announce the future destruction of the temple and the resurrection of the temple of His Body (Matthew 21:12-16, 21:23—24:1; Mark 11:15-19, 11:27—12:44; Luke 19:45-48; John 2:13-25).
- During those teaching sessions, He was questioned and His authority was challenged by the chief priests and scribes (Matthew 21:23-27; Mark 11:27-33; Luke 20:1, 2).
- Also in the temple, Jesus observed the widow who cast in her two mites (Luke 21:1, 2).
- The Book of Acts contains numerous references to the temple:
 - The first apostolic miracle—a lame man healed on Solomon's Porch—and Peter's second sermon, his arrest, and at the same time 5000 believed on the Lord (3:1—4:4).
 - Further miracles were performed there later (5:12-16) and the apostles once again were arrested (5:17, 18).
 - The next morning, having been brought out of prison by an angel, they went back to the temple to teach (5:19-26).
 - After they were beaten by the council and commanded not to speak of Jesus, they went daily to the temple to teach and preach (5:40-42).
 - Paul and a number of other men entered the temple to perform a vow, and Paul was seized (21:26-40).

The Plan of the Interior Arrangement of the Temple at Jerusalem

The building, including the foyer, was divided into six separate areas or courts, rising one above another.

The Court of the Gentiles—situated on the lowest level outside the sacred precincts, this was the only part to which foreigners were admitted.

The Sacred Enclosure—located three feet above the Court of the Gentiles; all Gentiles were forbidden, under the penalty of death, to pass through this area.

The Court of the Women (sometimes called the Treasury)—three feet higher than the Sacred Enclosure; Jewish women were permitted to enter, but they could not advance any farther.

The Court of Israel—ten feet higher than the Court of the Women; all male Jews had entrance.

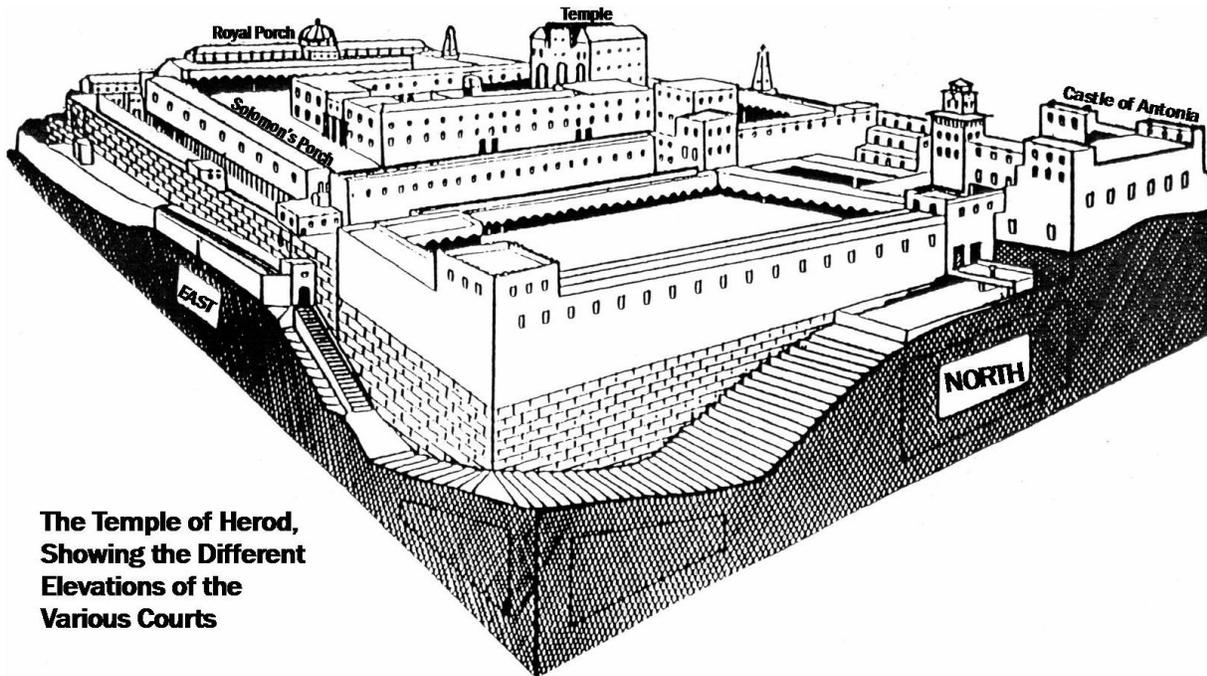
The Court of the Priests—three feet above the Court of Israel; reserved for priests only.

The House of God—eight feet above the Court of the Priests. This was divided into two compartments—the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. Into the former, the priests entered to perform certain duties at stated times, but only the high priest could enter into the latter—even then, it was only once a year, on the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for the sins of the people.

The inaccessibility of the Holy of Holies to all except the high priest on one day in the year, and the various barriers preventing the common people from ever approaching near the supposed dwelling place of the divine presence, was a continual object lesson of the holiness of God and His separation from sinners.

The Christian dispensation ushered in a new era. The redemption through Jesus swept away all barriers between God and penitent men. When Jesus died, the veil of the temple was torn in two (Matthew 27:51), signifying that the way was now open for immediate access to God through Christ (Hebrews 10:10, 19). In Jesus, all class distinctions are obliterated: those that formerly existed between Jews and Gentiles (Romans 10:12), men and women (Galatians 3:28), and priests and laymen (Revelation 1:6).

Model of Herod's Temple



**The Temple of Herod,
Showing the Different
Elevations of the
Various Courts**

Temple—The temple proper, containing the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies.

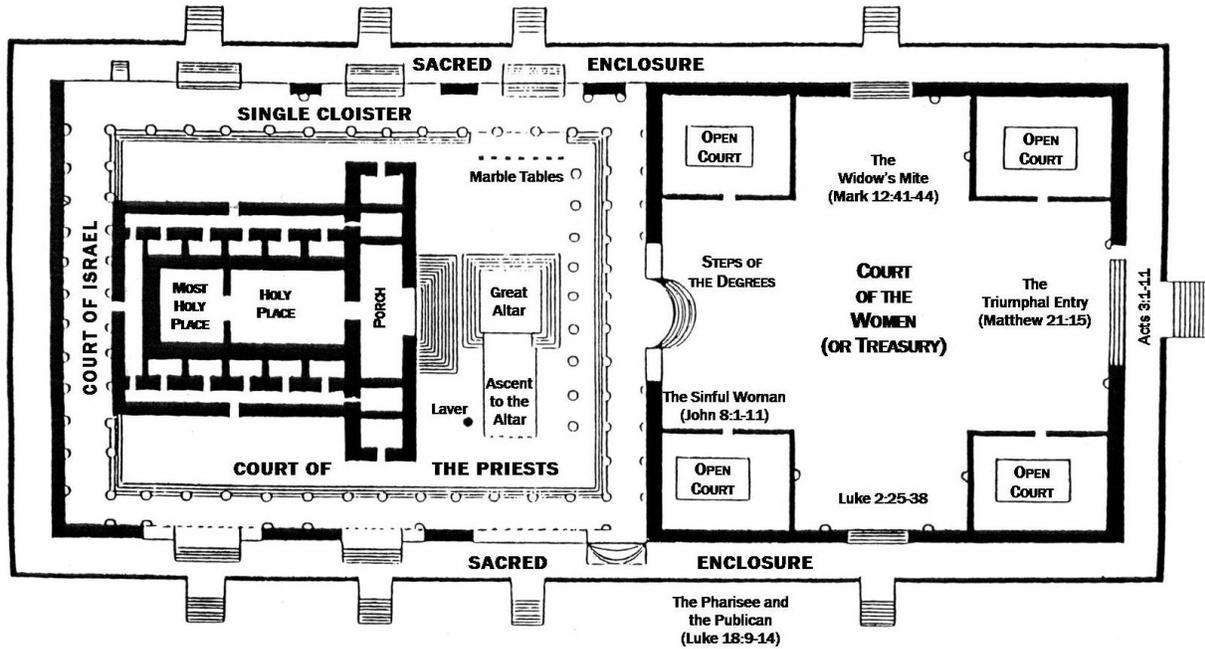
Castle of Antonia—The barracks of the Roman soldiers.

Royal Porch—It was perhaps in this porch where Jesus, at the age of 12, debated with the doctors and wise men (Luke 2:46).

Solomon's Porch—Extending along the front of the temple area, this is where Jesus walked and taught the Jews during the Feast of the Dedication (John 10:22, 23). It is also mentioned by name in Acts 3:11 and 5:12 as a meeting place for the early church.

Interior of Herod's Temple at Jerusalem

Court of the Gentiles



Court of the Gentiles

Jesus Cleanses the Temple
(Matthew 21:12, 13)