

*The Temple of Solomon Could not Stand
On its Water Tower
By N. Natan*

16/ Herod's Decision to Build a New Temple of the Jews in Jerusalem

{ For Herod's Life
cf. previous *-TR TS integral Folder 4-*
in Complete Work }

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-1- Between the worship of Divine Augustus in the majority of towns of Judaea, and Herod's tyrannical ruling exerted implacably on the Jewish nation, the Jewish Sovereign was, nevertheless, a King too well-advised to flout the deep feelings of his subjects. The more so, as the Masters of the Law had not lost the major influence which they exerted over the people, compelled to subject themselves silently to Herod's dictatorship, but smouldering, in spite of that, an unwavering fidelity to the teachings of their Ancestors. Thus, driven, at the same time, by his architectural ambitions, his desire to leave a memorable trace in History by giving free rein to the splendour of his kingship, and by the concern of preserving his nation's unity and cohesion, Herod conceived the idea to build a new Temple of Jerusalem which would replace the edifice which had been rebuilt (about 517 BCE) by the Jews released from their deportation (in 587 BCE) to Babylon. The ambition of Herod was to make of this Monument, essential to the Jewish fervour, an Edifice which would be worthy of all the other imposing buildings that he had already achieved, or which he was realizing in all his kingdom for posterity. But Herod made a massive and radical alteration to the fundamental and mystical structure of the Edifice of the Jewish Worship, and transformed it into a pagan Greco-Latin Temple : and the Jews did never suspect to what extent, the architecture of this sacred Edifice had been conceived, secretly, by Herod, in order to enable him to satisfy, and to enjoy, at will, his immense and defiant desire to place himself on the same level as Divine Augustus, and, by the same occasion, to dominate the Temple High Priest whose nomination depended exclusively upon Herod's sole pleasure.

-2- According to the account of Flavius Josephus, it is in a general climate of amazed mistrust, that Herod announced to the Jewish People his will to demolish completely the second (Hasmonean improved) Temple, then to rebuild a new third Temple. With this intention in mind, fidelity to the Model inspired by God to Moses counted less than the desire to dazzle by making the Edifice larger, higher, and by modifying the ancestral Model towards the dominant Greco-Roman style. To this end, Herod centered all his argument, aimed at making the Jewish People accept that a more imposing Edifice by its dimensions and splendour, be built, and especially that the height be increased. Even if that distortion implied to use, quite shamelessly, some arithmetic untruths, and to draw argument from the true fact that Solomon for the first Temple had, previously, proceeded, also, to rather important modifications of the measurements prescribed by Moses for the Sanctuary. The account of Flavius Josephus is most probably inspired, like the majority of descriptions favourable to Herod, from the work of the King's Court Historian, Nicolaus of Damascus, in which certain episodes and certain speeches of Herod, do not, of course, avoid the usual tendency towards a rather propaganda demagogy.

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Flavius Josephus : *Jewish Antiquities* : 15 : 11 :

1. And now Herod, in the eighteenth year of his reign, and after the acts already mentioned (history actions and building of superb Edifices), undertook a very great work, that is, to build of himself the temple of God, and make it larger in compass, and to raise it to a most magnificent altitude, as esteeming it to be the most glorious of all his actions, as it really was, to bring it to perfection; and that this would be sufficient for an everlasting memorial of him. but as he knew the multitude were not ready nor willing to assist him in so vast a design, he thought to prepare them first by making a speech to them, and then set about the work itself; so he called them together, and spoke thus to them :

"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 (about 30 meters ???) of its largeness in altitude; for so much did that first Temple which Solomon built exceed this Temple height (!!!). But let no 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

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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."

2 And this was the speech which Herod made to them; but still this speech frightened many of the people, as being unexpected by them ; and because it seemed incredible, it did not encourage them, but put a damp upon them, for they were afraid that he would pull down the whole edifice, and not be able to bring his intentions to perfection for its rebuilding ; and this danger appeared to them to be very great, and the vastness of the undertaking to be such as could hardly be accomplished.

But while they were in this disposition, the King encouraged them, and told them he would not pull down their Temple till all things were gotten ready for building it up entirely again.

And as he promised them this beforehand, so he did not break his word with them, but got ready a thousand wagons, that were to bring stones for the building, and chose out ten thousand of the most skillful workmen, and bought a thousand sacerdotal garments for as many of the Priests, and had some of them taught the arts of stone-cutters, and others of carpenters, and then began to build; but this not till every thing was well prepared for the work.

So Herod removed all the old foundations, and laid others, and erected the Temple upon them, being in length a hundred cubits (50 meters), and in height twenty additional cubits (+ 10 meters = 120 cubits = 60 meters), which [twenty cubits], upon the sinking of their foundations fell down (to the height of 50 meters); and that part which had fallen down we resolved to raise it again in the days of Nero.

To simplify the calculations in the Study conducted in the present Work, and in which the **proportions** between various measurements will be of a cardinal importance, we will always allot to "**cubit**" (distance between the end of the fingers and the elbow when the forearm is lain) the average and arbitrary figure, of **50 centimeters**.

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One can note, in connection with this Speech of Herod transmitted by *Jewish Antiquities 15/11* a first additional point of detail : Namely that, if the whole of the Building had subsided a ten meters height, as Flavius Josephus indicates, that excludes that the Temple could stand directly on a rock base, or even, at least, more than ten meters atop the rock base. In addition, in this same order of secondary ideas, all the accounts concerning the various constructions of the Temple mention constantly the installation of foundations.

But, above all, this speech of Herod betrays the intention which had been formed in the mind of the Tyrant: Indeed, the invention which he advances of the alleged original height of the Sanctuary is not innocuous : this huge distortion of the basic measurements of the Temple, that we will examine infra, and which one could think that it arose, perhaps, from a simple architectural ambition aimed at building a more imposing higher Edifice, came, in fact, within a stratagem, deliberately set up by the King of the Jews, to proceed to his own secret Deification.

-3- The Rabbinical Literature, in *the Qodachim Order of the Mishnah*, devotes most of *the Tractate Middoth (Measurements)* to the description of the 3rd Temple of Herod. This *Tractate Middoth of the Mishnah* will later not be commented on either in the *Talmud of Jerusalem*, or in the *Talmud of Babylon*, and, either, will not be supplemented by the *Tosefta*. Besides, the measurements indicated in *the Tractate Middoth* coincide, roughly speaking, with those indicated by Flavius Josephus, with, however some divergences of detail.

On the other hand, Rabbinical Literature, as it occurs also for all the reign of Herod, is very laconic on the construction works of the third Temple by this King. And the rare indications on this subject which can be found in this Literature, raise more problems than they do offer any real information : It is, for example, in an incidental of *the Tractate Baba Bathra, of the Neziqin Order, of the Talmud of Babylon*, that is mentioned an anecdote concerning the Decision of Herod to destroy the second Temple and to rebuild the third Temple.

The first chapter of this *Tractate Baba Bathra* presents, according to the structure of the *Talmud*, a Law (Halakah) of the *Mishnah* (Oral Law put in writing after the destruction of the Temple) then discusses it and comments on it, in order to clarify and update this Law : This discussion and these comments are called *Gemara*. In this first chapter of *the Tractate Baba Bathra*, the question is the examination of the Rule which must apply to the construction of a party wall.

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During the discussion (*Gemara*) in connection with the Rule which was stated in the *Mishnah*, the Rabbis examine the problem of the thickness of this party wall and put forward the question to know if the measurements indicated must include or not include the cement added to the stones.

From this moment, the discussion, in connection with the party walls in general, will see, gradually, the essential theme of the Temple appear and develop.

Indeed, at the time of a controversy on measurements of a party wall, Rabbi Hisda evokes, abruptly, according to a usual process by association of ideas and rupture of the account or of the demonstration underway in Rabbinical Literature, the problem of construction and of destruction of Synagogues :

Talmud of Babylon : Order Neziqin : Tractate Baba Bathra : 3b :

Rabbi Hisda said : " One must not take demolish a Prayer House (Synagogue) until another is built : According to some, because it may be neglected by accident, and according to others, because until the new one be built there, they will have no place for Prayers..."

Said Rabhina to Rabbi Ashi :

- How is it ? When the money for the new building has already been collected by the Treasurer, may the old one be demolished, or not ?

And Rabbi Ashi answered :

- Even then a redeeming of prisoners (Jews turned in as slaves) may happen for which this sum might be used immediately.

- But how is it if the whole material for the new Synagogue was already prepared ?

And Rabbi Ashi answered :

- Even then the above case can happen, and the material would be sold out for this purpose (for redeeming the Jewish slaves).

- If so, then, what happens if the Edifice is already built ?

And Rabbi Ashi answered :

- A completed Synagogue, it is not customary to sell for such purpose.

All this discussion referred only to an old Synagogue which does not present a sign of crack that could cause a collapse of the Building : because, in this case, the Synagogue would be demolished immediately.

At this point of the discussion an anecdote is reported, which is treated, according to characteristics of the Rabbinical Literature, in the style of Aggadah (legendary history):

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This anecdote presents Herod and the Master of the Law, Baba Ben Buta, whom Hérod would have made burst the eyes, but who would have advised, nevertheless, his torturer to build up a new Temple, in order to become reconciled with the Jewish People.

The discussion between the Babylonian Rabbis tries, then, to clarify this anecdote, and they comment on the tradition which reached them, on the construction of the Temple of Jerusalem, under the reign of Herod :

- The first interpretation of this tradition is that the destruction, and the rebuilding, of the Temple would have been decided by the Rabbinical Authorities.
- Conversely, the second interpretation is that this Decision would have been exclusively political, and depended exclusively on the Royal Arbitrary (of Herod) :

Talmud of Babylon : Order Neziqin : Tractate Baba Bathra : 3b :

- How could Baba ben Buta counsel Herod to demolish the Temple (of Jerusalem) for the purpose of building a new one ? Was this not against the Law as declared above Rabbi Hisda ?
- If you wish, you may say that Baba ben Buta saw a sign of ruin in the old (2d) Temple, and if you wish, it may be said that it is different with a King, who usually never retracts from his decision.

This last opinion, concerning the rebuilding of the Temple of Jerusalem, and, incidentally, the site of this rebuilding, is based on the words of Rabbi Samuel, a Doctor of the Law very devoted to the Sassanides Sovereigns who constituted the last Persian Dynasty, from the 3rd to the 7th century CE., before the conquest of the Moslems :

Now, Rabbi Samuel declares, always in the continuation of this same Rabbinical discussion :

Talmud of Babylon : Order Neziqin : Tractate Baba Bathra : 3b :

Rabbi Samuel :

- If the King should say : "I will remove this great mountain", he would stick by his words and it would be done.

The continuation of this Aggadic (legendary) account, reported by the Babylonian Rabbis, tells the story of Herod who massacred the Hasmonean family, as well as the death of Mariamne (one of Herod's wives) whose body Herod would have preserved in honey during seven years (cf. supra).

Then the account reconsiders the Decision taken by Herod to **demolish the old (second) Temple including its Foundations and to rebuild a completely new (third) Temple:**

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The Aggadic Tradition, reported on this subject by the Rabbis, tends, then, to rehabilitate the action of the Pharisees by demonstrating their science, and tries to claim for exclusively religious motives, the full responsibility of Herod's Decision to build a new Temple :

Talmud of Babylon : Order Neziqin : Tractate Baba Bathra : 3b :

One day, Herod came incognito to see Baba ben Buta (whom he had blinded) and sat before him saying :

- Let the Master see what the bad slave Herod has done !

Baba ben Buta answered : - What can I do to him ? Herod said : - Curse him !

But Baba ben Buta answered with the *Verse of Ecclesiastes : 10 :20 :*

- "*Even in your thoughts you must not curse a King!*"

Herod said to him : - But he is not a King at all !

Baba ben Buta answered by continuing his quotation :

- Let him be only powerful, "*Even in the secret of your bed chamber do not curse the powerful*". And if he is a Ruler, then it is written in *Exodus 22 : 27 :* "*A Ruler of your people you shall not curse.*". Then Herod said :

- This is only when the Ruler does as the people of Israel do : but he, Herod, does the contrary ! Baba ben Buta answered then : - I am afraid of him.

Herod replied : - But there is no, one who could tell him, as only you and I are here !Baba ben Buta answered by quoting again *the Ecclesiastes :*

- "*For a bird of the air can carry the words (and repeat them to the King).*"

Then Herod declared : - I am Herod and I did not know that the Rabbis were so careful. Had I been aware of this, I would not have slain them. But now, I crave your advice, as, perhaps, for my error you could find some remedy ?

Baba ben Buta answered :

- You have blinded the Eyes of the World (the Rabbis), so, as it is written in *Numbers 15 : 24 :* "*if it is unintentionally committed without the knowledge of the Congregation...*" Go, therefore, and occupy yourself with the Eye of the World, which is now the Temple, as it is written in *Ezekiel : 24 : 21 :* "*I will profane my Sanctuary... which is the Desire of your Eyes...*"

And so, I advised you to rebuild the Temple.

And Herod said : - I fear the Roman Government.

Baba ben Buta replied then :

- Send a Messenger to Rome for which it shall take a year until he shall reach there, and let him remain there a year, and his returning shall also take a year : and during these three years **you can demolish this Temple and build a new one..**

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Herod did so, and the answer from Rome (after three years) was :
- If you have not as yet demolished the old Temple, let it remain so. If you have already demolished it do not rebuild a new one. And if you have already demolished the old Temple and also rebuilt a new one, such is the behaviour of bad slaves : they seek advice after the thing is already done. It is true that you are the Ruler. Your record, however, is in our archives in which it can be seen that you are not a King, nor a descendant of Kings : It is only marked : "Herod the slave who made himself free"

All the first chapter of this *Tractate Baba Bathra* is rather typical of a widespread form of the Rabbinical Literature in the *Talmuds*.

This Literature mixes, indeed, stating of the Law (Halakah) with discussions and comments (Gemara), intermingled with Aggadic stories tinted with legends aimed at impregnating durably the memory.

And the Rabbis, of the Present like those of the Past, devote themselves, then, to a telescoped gymnastics of this memory, which makes it possible to establish an uninterrupted chain of incessant references to the Sacred Scriptures.

Indeed, it is always through prism of the Sacred Scriptures that all this Literature proceeds, in order to be capable to better fix in writing, the Oral Law, perpetuated by generations of Sages, through and despite the vicissitudes of History.

-4- To be able to plainly measure the extent and the nature of the architectural appropriation of the Temple of the Jews, which was operated by the overweening pride of Herod, in order to build, at the same time, the Sanctuary which would be devoted to the God of the Jews, and the Sanctuary which would allot to Herod the same Divine Value as that which was allotted to the Roman God-Augustus through all the Roman Empire, it appears necessary to proceed to a precise History of the Sanctuary of the Jews, starting from the Meeting Tent of Moses (Tabernacle) to the 3rd Herodian Temple of Jerusalem.

And it appears also that this History of the Sanctuary of the Jews turns out at the same time to be fundamental and essential to the Demonstration concerning the search of the disappeared Site of this Temple, disappearance and search which constitute the very subject of the present Work.

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17/ History of the Temple of Jerusalem

The Meeting Tent of Moses Tabernacle

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-1- The "Birth Certificate" of the Sanctuary of the Jews, with its Sacred **Proportions** **imprescriptible and specifically Judaic**, appears in *Exodus: 25 to 40*.

After having given to Moses the Tablets of the Law comprising the Ten Commandments, which constitute the Basis of the Moral Covenant held between the Eternal and the Jews, the Eternal indicates to Moses the pattern of the Sanctuary which will have to shelter the Ark containing this Covenant contracted between Divinity and Humanity.

The Center of this Sanctuary is a Tent that can be taken down, and which will be the Tent intended for the "Meeting" between the Eternal and Representatives of Jewish Humans.

The Structure of the Tent of the Meeting is set up by "boards-frameworks" standing upright on which are laid down two superposed "canvas".

There are 20 boards-frameworks for the north side, 20 boards-frameworks for the south side, and 8 boards-frameworks for the rear side of the Tent westwards.

When these 48 boards-frameworks, 5 meters high and made of acacia wood overlaid with gold, are put standing upright on silver sockets, and are all coupled together at the bottom and at the top, they constitute in this way the whole framework of the Tent, on which then can be laid down two superimposed canvas, which wraps up also the sides and the rear of the Tent.

- The internal canvas which is inside the Tent, is made of parallel strips of woven linen coupled to one another :

Once put together, this internal canvas measures 20 meters long by 14 meters wide.

- The external canvas, which is in the open air, is made of parallel strips of goats' hair coupled to one another, over which are superposed a canvas made of ram skins dyed red and, above it, a covering of badger skins.

This external canvas aimed at protecting the internal canvas measures 22 meters long by 15 meters wide.

The Tent of the Meeting, thus formed, measures **15 meters long, 5 meters wide, and 5 meters high**.

The front of the Tent is imperatively in line Eastwards, and its Rear is imperatively in line Westwards.

The two superimposed "canvas" cover the top, the sides, and the back of the Tent ;

However the interior "canvas" does not touch ground.

On the other hand, the external "canvas" is driven into the ground by bronze stakes.

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The front of the Tent, is closed by a Curtain which is fixed on 5 columns of acacia wood covered with gold, and driven into bronze bases.

-2- The Interior of the Tent of the Meeting is divided in two parts :

-A- The part of the back (towards the west) is intended to shelter the Ark of the Covenant, and this part of the Tent will be called the **Most Holy Place**.

This Most Holy Place is a perfect Cube, which measures 5 meters long, 5 meters wide and 5 meters high.

This **Most Holy Place** is separated from the other part of the Tent, which will be called **Holy Place**, by a Curtain fixed on 4 columns of acacia wood covered with gold, and driven into silver bases.

-B- The Holy Place, measures, therefore, 10 meters long, 5 meters wide et 5 meters high.

Inside this **Holy Place**, there are :

a- A Table of acacia wood covered with gold, 1 meter long, 50 centimeters wide, 75 centimeters high, which is placed at the northern side of the Tent.

On this table are put, inter alia, the breads offered to The Eternal.

b - Opposite this Table of the Offerings, and thus at the southern side of the Tent, there is the seven branches Lampstand, made of 30 kilos of gold.

c - And in front of the Curtain which hides the Ark of the Covenant, and which separates the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place, is placed a square Altar, 50 centimeters side and 1 meter high, made of acacia wood covered with gold.

On this Altar incense burns permanently.

Exodus : 26 :

(The Eternal said to Moses :)

"Make the Tabernacle with ten curtains of finely twisted linen and blue, purple and scarlet yarn, with cherubim worked into them by a skilled craftsman. All the curtains are to be the same size—twenty-eight cubits (14 meters) long and four cubits (2 meters) wide. Join five of the curtains together, and do the same with the other five. Make loops of blue material along the edge of the end curtain in one set, and do the same with the end curtain in the other set. Make fifty loops on one curtain and fifty loops on the end curtain of the other set, with the loops opposite each other. Then make fifty gold clasps and use them to

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fasten the curtains together so that the Tabernacle is a unit.

Make curtains of goat hair for the tent over the Tabernacle eleven altogether. All eleven curtains are to be the same size—thirty cubits (15 meters) long and four cubits (2 meters) wide. Join five of the curtains together into one set and the other six into another set. Fold the sixth curtain double at the front of the tent.

Make fifty loops along the edge of the end curtain in one set and also along the edge of the end curtain in the other set. Then make fifty bronze clasps and put them in the loops to fasten the tent together as a unit.

As for the additional length of the tent curtains, the half curtain that is left over is to hang down at the rear of the Tabernacle. The tent curtains will be a cubit (50 centimeters) longer on both sides; what is left will hang over the sides of the Tabernacle so as to cover it.

Make for the tent a covering of ram skins dyed red and over that a covering of badger skins.

Make upright frames of acacia wood for the Tabernacle. Each frame is to be ten cubits (5 meters) long and a cubit and a half (75 centimeters) wide, with two projections set parallel to each other. Make all the frames of the Tabernacle in this way. Make twenty frames for the south side of the Tabernacle. And make forty silver bases to go under them—two bases for each frame, one under each projection. For the other side, the north side of the Tabernacle, make twenty frames, and forty silver bases— two under each frame.

Make six frames for the far end, that is, the west end of the Tabernacle, and make two frames for the corners at the far end. At these two corners they must be double from the bottom all the way to the top, and fitted into a single ring ; both shall be like that. So there will be eight frames and sixteen silver bases, two under each frame. Also make crossbars of acacia wood: five for the frames on one side of the Tabernacle, five for those on the other side, and five for the frames on the west, at the far end of the Tabernacle. The center crossbar is to extend from end to end at the middle of the frames.

Overlay the frames with gold and make gold rings to hold the crossbars.

Set up, Moses, The Tabernacle according to the plan shown you on the Mountain.

Make a curtain of blue, purple and scarlet yarn and finely twisted linen, with cherubim worked into it by a skilled craftsman. Hang it with gold hooks on four posts of acacia wood overlaid with gold and standing on four silver bases. Hang the curtain from the clasps and place the Ark of the Covenant behind the curtain. The curtain will separate the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place.

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Put the cover on the Ark of the Covenant in the Most Holy Place.
Place the Table of Offerings outside the curtain on the north side of the
Tabernacle and put the Lampstand opposite it on the south side.

-3- The Altar for Offering of Sacrifices is placed opposite the Entry of the Tent of
the Meeting.

This Altar, made of acacia wood covered with bronze, is a square of 2,5 meters on side and
1,5 meter high (*Exodus : 27 and 38*)

Between the Altar of the Sacrifices and the Tent of the Meeting a Laver of bronze is installed
containing Waters for the Purifications of Aaron, the High Priest, and for his sons intended
to succeed him.

Exodus : 30 : 17-21 :

17/ Then the Eternal said to Moses :

18/ **For the Purifications by immersion (of the body), make a bronze Basin
with its bronze stand.**

Place it between the Tent of the Meeting and the Altar of .Sacrifices :

And make Waters flow in it.

Aaron and his sons are to wash their hands and feet from water from it.

20/ **And before entering the Tent of the Meeting, Aaron and his sons shall
purify by immersing themselves in these Waters**

So that they will not die (for profanation).

Also when they approach the Altar to minister by presenting a sacrifice,

21/ they shall wash their hands and feet so that they will not die.

This is to be a lasting Ordinance for Aaron and his descendants (High Priests
and Priests) for the generations to come.

This Purification, by immersion of the body in live Waters, inside the Enclosure of the Tent
of the Meeting, is also the Rule for the Establishment of the High Priest, Aaron:

Exodus : 40 :12 :

(At the day of the Dedication of the Tent of the Meeting)

You shall bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the Tent of the Meeting,

And there, **bath them by immersion in the Purification Waters.**

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-4- The Courtyard inserting the nomadic Tent of the Meeting, is delimited by a rectangle of hanging curtains, which are drawn up on **2,5 meters high**.

This rectangle, shaped by these curtains driven into posts and bases, constitute the precinct of the Jewish Sanctuary, and measures **50 meters long by 25 meters width**.

Finally, the Entrance of this rectangular courtyard, shaped by curtains-walls, is made of a Curtain ten meters long, and of the same height (2,5 meters) as the curtains which form the square of this sacred Precinct. (*Exodus : 27 : 9-19 and 38 : 9-20*).

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18/ History of the Temple of Jerusalem

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-1- King David (1040-970 BCE.), then Solomon (990-928 BCE.) bring the itinerant Ark of the Covenant inside Jerusalem, then undertake the construction of a permanent Structure, the Temple, intended to shelter, definitively, this Ark of the Covenant.

Initially, David builds in Jerusalem an altar, at a Site indicated by an Angel of the Lord, following a punishment inflicted by the Eternal.

2 Samuel : 24 : 15-24 :

So The Eternal sent a plague on Israel from that morning until the end of the time designated, and seventy thousand of the people from Dan to Beersheba died.

When the Angel stretched out his hand to destroy Jerusalem, The Eternal was grieved because of the calamity and said to the Angel who was afflicting the people : "Enough ! Withdraw your hand ! "

The Angel was then at the threshing floor of Araunah, the Jebusite.

When David saw the Angel who was striking down the people, he said to the Eternal : " I am the one who has sinned and done wrong. These are but sheep. What have they done ? Let Your Hand fall upon me and my family ! "

On that day, Gad (Prophet) went to David and said to him :

- Go up and build an Altar to the Eternal on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite."

So David went up, as the Eternal had commanded through Gad.

When Araunah looked and saw the King and his men coming toward him, he went out and bowed down before the King with his face to the ground.

Araunah said : " Why has my Lord the King come to this servant ? "

- To buy your threshing floor, David answered, so I can build an Altar to the Eternal, that the plague on the people may be stopped.

Araunah said to David : " Let my Lord the king take whatever pleases him and offer it up. Here are oxen for the burnt offering, and here are threshing sledges and ox yokes for the wood. O King, Araunah gives all this to the King."

Araunah also said to him : " May the Lord, your God, accept your offering. "

But the King replied to Araunah : " No, I insist on paying you for it. I will not sacrifice to the Eternal my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing."

So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen and paid fifty shekels of silver for them.

David built an Altar to the Eternal there, and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings.

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Then the Eternal answered prayer in behalf of the land, and the plague on Israel was stopped.

The continuation of the account concerning the construction of the Temple in Jerusalem is in *1 Kings* : 5-8.

But the Site on which Solomon builds the Temple there is not explicitly indicated, and does not refer to the threshing floor of Arauna on which David had built an Altar to stop the epidemic.

On the other hand, in *Chronicles*, written later after *Samuel* and *Kings*, it is indicated that Solomon built the Temple on the threshing floor of Arauna, and it is specified there, in addition, that this Site is on Mount Moriah where Abraham had offered his son in sacrifice to God.

And, if the first indication of *Chronicles* concerning the threshing floor of Arauna amplifies a Text of *Samuel*, the second indication, on the other hand, does appear neither in *Samuel* nor in *Kings*.

In this respect, it is advisable to recall that most of *Chronicles* were written after the destruction of the first Temple, by a Scribe or a Priest, or a group of Scribes and/or Priests of the Sacerdotal Class, and based on *Kings* and other various Sources.

-2- The description of the Temple of Solomon appears, mainly, in *1 Kings* : 6 and 7, and in *2 Chronicles* : 3-5.

To build the Temple of Jerusalem, Solomon takes up again the plan of Moses' Tent of the Meeting (Tabernacle), but he transposes it into a permanent hard structure :

Stone replaces canvas ; cedar, pine and wild olive-tree replace acacia.

Inside, all the stones are covered with pine for the floors, and with cedar for the walls ; the roof is made of cedar. All the interior wood, including those of the sculptures and of the tables are, themselves, covered with gold, as in Moses' Tent of the Meeting.

Concerning the Proportions, **all Interior Dimensions of the Temple** are uniformly **doubled** compared to those of the Sanctuary of Moses.

However, the **height of the Holy Place**, itself, and itself only, is **tripled**.

Moreover one **Porch** is added in front of the Entry of the Temple, having the same height and the same width as the Holy Place, with a depth, projecting itself in front of the Building, on **5 meters**.

All these measurements, of which the proportions are strictly deducted from measurements of Moses' Tent of the Meeting which was made of canvas without thickness, apply, thus, to the actual interior of the Sacred Building.

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Also, to these figures, of which the **proportions** are regarded as perpetuating a sacred and imprescriptible significance, it is necessary to add the measurements, not communicated for the Temple of Solomon, concerning the thickness of the walls and the roofs, which are from now on necessary to support and protect such a hard permanent structure :

Thus, only, the interior of the Building scrupulously respects measurements, inspired, or rather, proportionally deduced, of those of Moses' Tent of the Meeting.

All the Temple of Solomon (interior) has, therefore, a **constant and uniform width of 10 meters (5 X 2)**.

The length of the Most Holy Place of the Temple of Solomon, containing the Ark of the Covenant, is 10 meters, its width of 10 meters, and its height is 10 meters also.

With the result that the **Most Holy Place** has, rigorously, the same shape of a **Perfect Cube of 10 side meters** as that of the **Most Holy Place** of Moses' Tent of the Meeting, which was a **Perfect Cube of 5 side meters**.

Its dimensions thus doubled, but its Sacred Proportions have remained unchanged, the **Cube** being, in Antiquity, the architectural most perfect form which could be carried out.

- On the other hand, concerning the Holy Place, if its **20 meters length** and its **width of 10 meters** are rigorously **the double** of those of Moses' Tent of the Meeting, **its 15 meters height** multiply by **3**, the height of the Tent of the Meeting (cf. infra).

- What is thus added, by Solomon, to the original plan of the Tent of the Meeting itself, is a **Porch of 15 meters height and 10 meters width**, in the prolongation of the Holy Place of the Temple, and having **5 meters depth**.

That made that **the overall length of the Temple is of (10+20 =) 30 + 5 = 35 meters**.

And the two Columns, supporting the roof of this Porch, are called, respectively, Yakin (Stability) and Boaz (Force).

-3- The Porch which was added on the front of the Temple, alike these two Columns, raise a certain problem of interpretation, since neither one nor the others appear in the Tent of the Meeting of Moses.

In addition, Solomon made, also, add, all around the Temple, an Annex-Structure of three storeys, which was placed next the sides and back of the Sacred Building, and which was intended to shelter, inter alia, all that was necessary to the Priests ensuring the Worship.

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This new Annex-Structure measures 2,5 meters width at its base, and approximately 8 meters height in total (as consisting of three storeys of 2,5 meters height each). Which means that this Annex-Structure, 8 meters high, is less high than the Porch and the Holy Place (15 meters in height) as well as less high than the Most Holy Place (10 meters in height) next to which this Annex-Structure is, thus, placed, surrounding the back and the sides of the Building :

1 Kings : 6 : 2 :

The Temple that King Solomon built for the Eternal was sixty cubits (30 meters) long, twenty cubits (10 meters) wide and thirty cubits (15 meters) high (height of the Holy Place).

The Porch at the front of the main hall of the Temple extended the width of the Temple, that is twenty cubits (10 meters), and projected ten cubits (5 meters) from the front of the Temple. He made narrow clerestory windows in the Temple (at the superior part of the walls).

Against the walls of the Holy Place and of the Most Holy Place, Solomon built a three storeys structure around the Building, in which there were side rooms. The lowest floor was five cubits (2,5 meters) wide, the middle floor six cubits (3 meters) wide and the third floor seven cubits (3,5 meters) wide.

He made offset ledges around the outside of the Temple so that nothing would be inserted into the Temple walls.

In building the Temple, only blocks dressed at the quarry were used, and no hammer, chisel or any other iron tool was heard at the Temple Site while it was being built.

The entrance to the lowest floor was on the south side of the Temple ; a stairway led up to the middle level and from there to the third.

So he built the Temple and completed it, roofing it with beams and cedar planks. And Solomon built the side rooms all around the Temple. The height of each was five cubit (2,5 meters), and they were attached to the Temple by beams of cedar.

-4- The Architectural addition, carried out by Solomon, of one Porch with two Columns, and of the Annex structure of three storeys placed against the walls of the Temple, appears as an utilitarian installation. Thus it does not have any Sacred and Mystical function which could have been deduced from Moses' Tent of the Meeting whose precise structure, dimensions and proportions had been strictly prescribed by the Eternal.

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Therefore one could think that this architectural addition, of a functional type, was inspired to Solomon and to his Priest-architects, by the structure of certain neighbouring Syrian Temples, like, for example, the Temple of Aïn Dara.

Indeed, this Temple of Aïn Dara, which is structured, like several Pagan Temples of the area, in a rectangular form but without the specificity of the perfect Cube designed by Moses to shelter the Ark of the Covenant, comprised a Porch supported by two Columns resting on two basaltic bases, still visible. And, also, this Temple of Aïn Dara comprised a U-shaped Annex-gallery, which had been installed against the external walls of the Pagan Temple, and which surrounded it, in a kind of continuous apse, all along the two sides and the back of the Sanctuary, just as for the Temple of Solomon. It is extremely probable that Solomon Temple Annex, intended to provide facilities for the Worship ceremonies, had been wished by the Jewish Priesthood. And the construction of this Annex would account, thus, for the fact that the height of the Holy Place had been multiplied by 3 instead of being multiplied by 2, as for all other dimensions issued from the dimensions of Moses' Tent of the Meeting. This deliberate rupture on the Biblical Regulations concerning the imprescriptible Sacred Proportions was probably due to the architectural desire to build openings for daylight in the higher part of the side walls (over the top of the Annex) in order to bring the daylight inside the Holy Place.

-5- The various additions and modifications carried out, thus, by Solomon, in the Structure of the Jewish Sanctuary, the proportions of which had been precisely defined by the Eternal to Moses, will bear a certain importance, insofar as these additions and modifications will open, later, the way to Herod to take a great number of freedoms, altogether architectural and ideological, when building the third Temple :

Indeed, Herod, (as we will see *infra*) will create an Edifice, of Greco-Roman style, which corresponded to his own syncretic vision of Roman Empire Gods and the Single God of the Jews : a cosmogonic perspective, which allowed Herod to locate himself as fully divinized, following the example of his Roman Master and Protector, Divine Augustus.

-6- Concerning the Porch added by Solomon, *2 Chronicles 3: 4* indicate that the Porch of the Temple of Solomon was sixty meters high, whereas *1 Kings : 6: 2* indicated, implicitly, a **15 meters height**, alike that of the Holy Place of the Temple.

This figure, architecturally and religiously extreme, of a height of 60 meters for the Porch only, compared to the 15 meters height of the Temple according to *1 Kings*, is, probably, an error of a Scribe Copist of *Chronicles*.

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- This error is perhaps involuntary.
- Or this error is, most probably, voluntary, and, in this case, one could, possibly, allot it to Scribes, courtiers sycophant of Herod, who, as we will see infra, wished to have Scriptural bases allowing him to transform the original proportions of the Temple of Solomon, in particular for its height and its frontage, as wished by the oriental Potentate according to his own Greco-Roman vision.

-7- Concerning the two bronze columns, Yakin and Boaz, one can note another kind of distortion, due to a late interpretation, also carried out from the text of *Chronicles* : Indeed, the text of *Chronicles*, and the height attributed to the Columns provide indication that these two Columns stood separate from the Temple. Actually, these two Columns supported the Porch of the Temple. This precise framework is indicated altogether by the Hebraic Text *Kings*, and by the Greek Text of *Reigns of Septuagint*, which confirm, implicitly or explicitly with their figures, the architectural purpose of these two Columns intended to support the Porch, in the same way as for the Porch of the Syrian Temple of Ain Dara.

1 Kings : 7 : 15-22 :

Huram cast two bronze Pillars, each eighteen cubits (9 meters) high and twelve cubits (6 meters) around by line.

He also made two capitals of cast bronze to set on the tops of the Pillars ; each capital was five cubits (2,5 meters) high...

The capitals on top of the Pillars in the Porch were in the shape of lilies, four cubits (2 meters) high.

On the capitals of both Pillars, above the bowl-shaped part next to the network, were the two hundred pomegranates in rows all around.

Huram erected the Pillars at the Porch of the Temple.

The Pillar to the south he named *Jakin* ("The Eternal establishes its Stability", according to *Chronicles*) and the one to the north, *Boaz* ("In the Eternal is Strength", according to *Chronicles*).

According to these figures, transmitted by *1 Kings*, the Columns have a height of : $9 + 2,5 + 2$, that is to say a total of 13,5 meters, to which it is necessary to add a complementary ornamental part.

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One gets, thus, roughly, to a 15 meters height figure for each Column, and this figure corresponds, exactly, to the height of the Porch and the height of the Holy Place. This height, thus, a priori, is conceived specifically to support the roof of the Porch.

In addition, separate Columns appear by no means in Moses' Sanctuary, where there was neither a Porch.

In the same way, one will find Columns which would be detached from the Porch, neither in the second Temple, built, with the return of the exiles of Babylon, by Zorobabel and Joshua, nor in the third Temple, built by Herod.

And if separate Columns had, indeed, constituted one of the mystico-architectural characteristics of the Jewish Sanctuary, these characteristics would have certainly been taken again, amplified and emphasized, as well for the second Temple, as particularly for the third Temple of Herod, because, for example, of the vogue of the Obelisks in Roman Antiquity.

Reigns, in the *Greek Septuagint*, also gives, for these Columns, a description which appears quite as coherent, on the architectural level, as the Hebraic Text of *Kings*, and in both cases, these two Columns, *Yakin* and *Boaz*, appear as specifically built to support the roof of the Porch :

Septuagint : III : Reigns : 8 : 13 :

And King Solomon sent and took Chiram out of Tyre, the son of a widow woman ; and he was of the tribe of Nephtalim, and his father was a Tyrian ; a worker in brass, and accomplished in art and skill and knowledge to work in brass ; and he was brought in to King Solomon, and he wrought all the works.

And he cast the two Pillars for the Porch of the Temple.

Eighteen cubits (9 meters) was the height of each Pillar, and a circumference of fourteen cubits (7 meters) encompassed it, even the thickness of the Pillar...

And he made two molten chapiters to put on the heads of the Pillars : five cubits (2,5 meters) was the height of one chapter and five cubits (2,5 meters) was the height of the other chapter

And Chiram set up the Pillars of the Porch of the Temple :

And he set up the one Pillar and called its name *Jachum* (*Yakin*) ; and he set up the second Pillar and called its name *Boloz* (*Boaz*).

And on the heads of the Pillars he made lily-work against the Porch of four cubits (2 meters) and a chamber over both the Pillars...

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One finds thus in this description of *Reigns of Septuagint*, concerning the Columns *Yakin* and *Boaz*, the same height of the Columns as that indicated in the corresponding *Kings* Hebraic Text :

And, there, still, this height, in both cases, corresponds to the height of the Porch, that these two Pillars-Columns support, very explicitly according to the Text of *the Septuagint*.

Thus, the late tradition, separating these two Columns from the Temple, can appear, symbolically, as attractive and stimulative, but, according to all probability, it is, architecturally and historically, inadequate.

- On this appendix subject, one could put forward, inter alia, the assumption that the construction of a Porch with columns could appear as too far away from the austere geometrical design of the Sacred House, such as it had been prescribed by the Eternal to Moses, and that, consequently, certain Jews would have preferred "to detach" these Columns from the Temple itself.

- One could, also, imagine that one wanted, with this Tradition of detached Columns, to prevent any possible reference to a Pagan Temple of the Area, comprising a Porch supported by Pillars.

- Finally one could advance that the names, given to each of the two Columns, had induced a certain esoteric speculation, which was nourished more easily from two Columns picturesquely detached from the Temple.

-8- In any case, this Solomonian Porch and its two Columns will allow, later, to Herod to endow the 3rd Temple with a characteristic Greco-Romain style, by constituting the framework of its frontage, not with two Pillars, but with four Columns integrated in the supporting structure of the Herodian Porch.

It is, indeed, a frontage widened by its Porch, and no more a Porch in the prolongation of the walls of the Temple, that Herod will impose on the new Sanctuary of the Jews, pretending, in that way, that he respects its original Concept :

But, in fact, Herod will impose an architectural structure completely innovative, which will give to the frontage of the Temple of the Jews a widened vision, similar to those offered by many tetrastyle Temples (with 4 Columns) which were dedicated through all the Roman Empire to the Divine Augustus, of which those built by Herod himself, like, for example, in Panion, close to the Source of the Jordan river.

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And, to mark still more this implicit devotion of Herod to Augustus, the gold Eagle, which will be affixed to the pediment probably triangular of the Jewish Temple, will complete to express, spectacularly, the full allegiance of Herod to the Roman Power and its Ideology.

-9- Concerning the interior installation of the Temple of Solomon, its organization takes up again, in much the same way, the lay out which had been instituted by The Eternal for Moses' Tent of the Meeting, namely:

- A- The Ark of the Covenant is placed in the Most Holy Place ;
- B- In the Holy Place, are placed the gold Table for incense, and the gold Table for the Offerings ;
- C- The seven branches Candelabrum which stood north in Moses' Tent of the Meeting is replaced by ten gold Candelabra, five being located north in the Holy Place, and five south ;
- D- In addition, wooden doors covered with gold (or mobile panels ?) replace the curtains of separation which were installed in the Tent of the Meeting.

Concerning decoration, all the interior walls and ceilings are covered with cedar wood and the floors with pine wood, all these wood, themselves, being covered with gold.

Taking again the Cherubim decorative topic of the Ark of the Covenant and of Moses' Tent of the Meeting, Solomon makes install, in the Most Holy Place, and facing the Ark of the Covenant, two immense Cherubim made of wild olive-tree wood covered with gold, and being 5 meters high, with wings of 2,5 meters each one :

These wings, spread out in parallel with the rear wall of the Most Holy Place, stretch consequently, from the northern longitudinal wall to the opposite wall south (2,5 meters + 2,5 + 2,5 + 2,5 = 10 meters).

1 Kings : 6 : 14-35 :

So Solomon built the Temple and completed it.

He lined its interior walls with cedar boards, paneling them from the floor of the Temple to the ceiling, and covered the floor of the temple with planks of pine.

He partitioned off twenty cubits (10 meters) at the rear of the Temple with cedar boards from floor to ceiling to form within the Temple an inner Sanctuary : the Most Holy Place. The main hall (Holy Place) in front of this Most Holy Place was forty (20 meters) cubits long.

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The inside of the Temple was cedar, carved with gourds and open flowers
Everything was cedar : no stone was to be seen.
He prepared the inner sanctuary- the Most Holy Place- within the Temple to set
the Ark of the Covenant of The Eternal there.
The inner sanctuary –**The Most Holy Place- was twenty cubits (10 meters)
long, twenty cubits (10 meters) wide and twenty cubits (10 meters) high.**
He overlaid the inside with pure gold, and he also overlaid with gold all the
inside of the Temple.
Solomon covered the inside of the Temple with pure gold, and he extended
gold chains across the front of the inner Sanctuary, which was overlaid with
gold. So he overlaid the whole interior with gold. He also overlaid with gold
the Altar that was by the inner Sanctuary.
In the inner Sanctuary he made a pair of Cherubim of wild olive wood, each ten
cubits (5 meters) high.
One wing of the first Cherub was five cubits (2,5 meters) long, and the other
wing five cubits (2,5 meters) - ten cubits (5 meters) from wing tip to wing tip.
The second Cherub also measured ten cubits (5 meters), for the two Cherubim
were identical in size and shape.
The height of each Cherub was ten cubits (5 meters). He placed the Cherubim
inside the Innermost Room (Most Holy Place) of the Temple, with their wings
spread out. The wing of one Cherub touched one wall, while the wing of the
other touched the other wall, and their wings touched each other in the middle
of the Room. He overlaid the Cherubim with gold.
On the inner walls all around the Temple, in both the inner and outer Rooms,
he carved Cherubim, palm trees and open flowers.
He also covered the floors of both the inner and outer Rooms (Most Holy Place
and Holy Place) of the Temple with gold.

-10- The text of *1 Kings* does not provide a precise information on the Sacrifices
Altar which was installed in front of the Temple.
At most, it is known that it was made of bronze and too small (perhaps of the same size as
Moses' Altar) for the many Sacrifices that Solomon offered to The Eternal, during the
Inauguration of the Temple :
Also, Solomon had to make build a second Altar, larger, probably outside the Square, since
Solomon could address, from this place, all the Israelites who had gathered in front of him (*1
King : 8 : 64*).

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The text of *2 Chronicles* advances, on the other hand, that the bronze Sacrifices Altar (which is not specified if it were apart from the Square) measured 10 meters by 10 meters, and 5 meters high.

(In the same way, for the Columns *Yakin* and *Boaz*, *2 Chronicles* ascribes them a height of about twenty meters, which allowed to imply that these Columns were separated from the Temple.)

And *2 Chronicles* note, also, in the Temple, separating the Most Holy Place from the Holy Place, a Curtain, as in the Tent of the Meeting, curtain which *1 Kings* did not indicate. On the other hand, this Curtain of separation will be in the second and in the third Temple.

-11- If the description of the Sacrifices Altar of the Temple of Solomon is almost non-existent in *1 Kings*, on the other hand, installations of the elements, intended to provide the Waters necessary for Purifications Worship, are described with much precision.

It happens that this particular information, as we will see all along the present Study, will form part, inter alia, of the diverse Biblical, Rabbinical, Jewish and Pagan data and documentary elements, which will make it possible to explain the Hydraulic Network of the Temple : This Hydraulic Network had been installed upstream from the Temple, in the underground of the Jewish Citadel, which was overlooking and protecting the Jewish Sanctuary. And this underground Hydraulic Network has been miraculously preserved, up today, almost intact in the bedrock of the "Haram" (in fact, ancient Jewish Citadel). And there, still, as will see infra, the Greek *Septuagint* will provide us some additional indications which will make more coherent the diverse descriptions of various elements which had been assembled in this underground Hydraulic Network, and intended to allow the necessary Jewish Rites of Purifications by live Waters issued directly from Sources.

The bronze Basin, destined to contain the Purification Waters, which was placed at the south-east of Moses' Tent of the Meeting, is positioned in the same way, in front of the Temple of Solomon, in its south-east.

But this Basin-Laver has become considerably larger and heavier.

Moreover, its decorative development is especially intended to commemorate the memory of times when the Tent of the Meeting and its components, just like the twelve Tribes of the Jewish Nation, were itinerant and nomadic :

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I.e. an immense bronze Laver, made by Hiram, is posed on twelve bulls carved out of bronze also, and being, each one, most probably quite larger than natural.

1 Kings : 7 : 23-26 :

Huram made the "Sea" of cast bronze, circular in shape, measuring ten cubits (5 meters) from rim to rim and five cubits (2,5 meters) high.

It took a line of thirty cubits (15 meters) to measure around it.

Below the rim, gourds encircled it—ten to a cubit. The gourds had been cast in two rows in one piece with the Sea.

The "Sea" stood on twelve bulls, three facing north, three facing west, three facing south and three facing east.

The "Sea" rested on top of them, and their hindquarters were toward the center.

The "Sea" was a handbreadth in thickness, and its rim was like the rim of a cup, like a lily blossom.

The "Sea" held two thousand baths (80.000 liters) of water.

In addition to this immense bronze Laver of 80.000 liters, which corresponds to the first bronze Basin of Moses' Tent of the Meeting, Solomon adds ten movable bronze carriages worked and decorated, on which are posed basins also in bronze, which contain, each one, 1.600 liters of water :

1 Kings : 7 : 38-39 :

Huram, then, made ten bronze basins, each holding forty baths (about 1.600 liters) and measuring four cubits (2 meters) high, one basin to go on each of the ten carts.

He placed five of the stands on the south side of the Temple and five on the north.

He placed the Sea on the south side, at the southeast corner of the Temple.

The text of the *Septuagint* provides some additional and useful information on the supply of the live Source Waters which were necessary for the Purification Rites in the Temple of Solomon :

Septuagint : 3 Reigns : 2 : 36 :

And Solomon had 70.000 bearers of burdens and 80.000 hewers of stone in the mountain.

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And Solomon made "**the Sea**", and the bases (10) and the great lavers (10) and the pillars (2) and the **Fountain of the Court**, and "**the bronze Sea**";
And Solomon built the Citadel as a defense above the Temple (upstream from the Temple)...

The Greek text of the *Septuagint*, thus, takes up again, like the Hebraic text of *1 Kings*, the huge bronze Laver, called "bronze Sea", as well as the 10 mobile Basins with their carts. But the text of the *Septuagint* adds a **Fountain**, probably located at the south-east of the Square, and, moreover, adds, another new element: "**the Sea**", which is quoted in first.

This "**Sea**" could thus be regarded as an immense Cistern-Tank, intended to provide with purifying live Waters, inter alia, the 10 Basins on their carts, the Fountain of the Square, and the large bronze Laver, called "the bronze Sea".

Now, the largest and oldest underground Cistern, which is, still, nowadays, in the bedrock of the Haram Al-Sharif (Esplanade of the Mosques), and which had been explored by the 19th century Archaeologists, is called precisely by this name "**the large Sea**".

-12- Concerning the Square of Solomon Temple, its description, as well in *1 Kings* as in *2 Chronicles*, is much vaguer than the description, extremely precise, which had been given in *Exodus* for the Square of Moses' Tent of the Meeting (consisting in a rectangle of 50 meters by 25 meters, and delimited by curtains hangings 2, 5 meters high). And the very laconic descriptions of Temple of Solomon Square do not give any kind of indication on its measures, but speak only about walls made of alternate lines of dressed stones and cedar beams :

1 Kings : 6 : 36 :

And he built the inner Courtyard of three courses of dressed stone and one course of trimmed cedar beams.

-13- Under the reign of Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, Pharaoh Shishak conquers Jerusalem, and grabs all the objects in gold.

It is however impossible to determine if Shishak also seized the Liturgical objects, but one could, possibly, conjecture that a certain superstitious respect, often widespread in early

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Antiquity, would have dissuaded him to remove, in any case, the heart of this Worship, and that, in addition, the Ark of the Covenant in particular would have, probably, been hidden, to avoid its capture or its destruction.

On the other hand, later, a descendant of David, Ahaz, King of Judah, being attacked at the same time, by the northern Kingdom of Israel and by the Kingdom of Syria, requests the assistance of the Tiglath-Pileser, King of Assyria.

Ahaz obtains this help, in exchange of precious offerings, but also by making act of allegiance, and by agreeing to adapt Pagan Religious practices to the Jewish Worship.

These compromises are not without exerting a certain influence on the infrastructure of the Temple of Jerusalem, in particular on the Altar of Sacrifices, and on the large bronze Laver and the ten Basins which had been installed for all the Water Purifications.

2 Kings : 16 :

In the seventeenth year of Pekah, son of Remaliah (King in Israel Kingdom), Ahaz, the son of Jotham, began to reign over Judah Kingdom.

Ahaz was twenty years old when he became King of Judah and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem ; but he did not do what was right in the eyes of The Eternal, his God, as his ancestor David had done. He walked in the way of the Kings of Israel (the Kingdom located at the north of the Kingdom of Judah, whose Jewish Tribes made secession after the death of Solomon, and of which certain Kings dissented from the Worship of the Single God).

Indeed he offered his son in a burning sacrifice according to the abominations of the nations whom The Eternal had cast out before the children of Israel.

Ahaz offered sacrifices and burned incense at the high places, on the hilltops and under every spreading tree .

Then Rezin, King of Syria and Pekah, son of Remaliah and King of Israel, marched up to fight against Jerusalem and besieged Ahaz, but they could not overpower him. At that time, Rezin, King of Syria, captured Elath for Syria by driving out the men of Judah. Then the Edomites moved to Elath and have dwelt there to this day. Ahaz sent messengers to say to Tiglath-Pileser, King of Assyria : "I am your servant and vassal. Come up and save me out of the hand of the King of Syria and of the King of Israel, who are attacking me." And Ahaz took the silver and gold found in the Temple of the Eternal and in the treasuries of the Royal Palace and sent it as a gift to the King of Assyria. The King of Assyria complied by attacking Damascus and capturing it. He deported its inhabitants to Kir and put Rezin to death.

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Then King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-Pileser King of Assyria. He saw an Altar in Damascus and sent to Uriah, the (High) Priest, a sketch of the Altar, with detailed plans for its construction.

So Uriah the Priest built an Altar in accordance with all the plans that King Ahaz had sent from Damascus, and finished it before King Ahaz returned. When the King came back from Damascus and saw the Altar, he approached it and presented offerings on it. He offered up his burnt offering and grain offering, poured out his drink offering, and sprinkled the blood of his peace offerings on the Altar.

The bronze Altar that stood before the Eternal he brought from the front of the Temple -from between the new Altar and the Temple of The Eternal- and put it on the north side of the new Altar.

King Ahaz then gave these orders to Uriah the Priest :

"On the large new Altar, offer the morning burnt offering and the evening grain offering, the King's burnt offering and his grain offering, and the burnt offering of all the people of the land, and their grain offering and their drink offering. Sprinkle on the Altar all the blood of the burnt offerings and sacrifices. But I will use the bronze Altar for seeking divination (by examining the entrails of the sacrificed animals)." And Uria the Priest did just as King Ahaz had ordered. King Ahaz cut off the side panels of the carts and removed the lavers from their movable stands. He removed the Sea from the bronze bulls that supported it and set it on a stone base. He took away the Sabbath canopy that had been built at the Temple, and removed the Royal Entryway to the Temple of The Eternal, in deference to the King of Assyria.

It would seem that the bronzes of the carriages and the basins were dismantled to be offered to the King of Assyria as well as the twelve carved bulls.

It would seem, also, that the King of Assyria required more or less that the Structure and the Symbolics of the Temple of Jerusalem correspond more to those which governed Pagan Sanctuaries.

"The Royal Entryway" was, perhaps, an Entry allowing the King to penetrate in the Temple, by passing through the three stories structure built by Solomon next to the sides and the back of the Temple : the removal of this Entry would imply, perhaps, that Ahaz wished from now on to penetrate in the Temple by the principal Entry, as well as the High Priest, and just in the same way as the King of Assyria did in his Pagan Temples.

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In this field of influence of Pagan Rites, which would have been thus imposed on the Jewish Worship, the King of Assyria would have been, in some kind, a precursor of certain Seleucid then Roman Sovereigns, who will have the same concern about trying to standardize the Jewish Religion according to Pagan Worship rules, when Judea is under their dependence. And in a certain way, it is the same process of architectural paganizing that the construction of the 3rd Temple by Herod will develop, as we will see infra.

-14- In 587 BCE, Babylonians having replaced Assyrians in the domination of this part of the World, Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, shows himself as more expeditious than the Assyrian Sovereigns : he radically destroys the Temple of Jerusalem and deports in Babylonia its Jewish Population.

And, especially, it is during this destruction that disappears, probably, the Ark of the Covenant, which constituted the pulsing heart of the Jewish Worship that forged daily the essential Bond between Divinity and Humanity.

A persistent tradition wants that this Ark of the Covenant had been hidden by Jeremiah. Indeed, the Prophet Jeremiah preached submission to the King of Babylon, with the reason that, on the one hand, it was unrealistic, then, to oppose his invincible military power, and that, on the other hand, this submission to be accepted by the Jews, was, in fact, a punishment inflicted by The Eternal, because of the Jews' unfaithfulness to God, and because of the innumerable sins of Israel.

Also, Jeremiah, in consequence of his ceaseless public exhortations to submission, enjoyed a preferential treatment when the troops of Nebuchadnezzar seized Jerusalem, and he was not deported like the majority of the Jewish Notables.

2 Maccabees : 2 : 1-5 :

You will find in the records, not only that Jeremiah the Prophet ordered the deportees (to Babylon) to take some of the aforementioned Fire (of the Altar) with them, but also that the Prophet, in giving them the law, admonished them not to forget the Commandments of The Eternal or be led astray in their thoughts, when seeing the gold and silver idols and their ornaments. With other similar words he urged them not to let the Law depart from their hearts.

The same document also tells how the Prophet, following a divine revelation, ordered that the Tent (?) and the Ark should accompany him and how he went off to the mountain which Moses climbed to see God's inheritance.

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When Jeremiah arrived there, he found a room in a cave in which he put the Tent, the Ark, and the Altar of incense ; then he blocked up the entrance.

This passage which appears in the Second Book of the Maccabees is the text of one of the two letters, written by the Religious Authorities of Jerusalem to the Jews living in Egypt, in the time of Judas Maccabeus.

-15- In the same sphere of this tradition of the Ark of the Covenant which would have been hidden by Jeremiah, Eupolemus, for example, gives one of the first confirmations to this version.

Eupolemus was a Jewish Historian, writing in Greek, in the 2d century BCE.

This Eupolemus, of whom some work fragments have reached us, is, in all probability, the Eupolemus whom Judah Maccabeus sent along with Jason to negotiate the first friendship Alliance of the Jews with Rome, in 161 BCE.

Eupolemus, in *1 Maccabees* : 8 : 17, is said to be the son of John, and grand-son of Accos.

Now, the Accos, during the second Temple period, were one of the leading priestly families of Jerusalem being descended from Aaron and distinguished by their long history of service and dedication to the Temple. Their origins are mentioned, for example, in *1 Chronicles* 24.

For this hereditary reason, Eupolemus, even brought up in Greek culture, could have had access to certain, perhaps, authentic Religious Sources.

Eupolemus seems to have written a documentary history book, *Concerning the Kings of Judaea*, which contains a number of non-biblical traditions.

Fragments of his work had been quoted by the Pagan author Alexander Polyhistor in his work, *On the Jews*.

Alexander Polyhistor was a writer of Minor Asia, in the 1st century BCE, who had been taken along prisoner to Rome and then emancipated.

He was an Author with documentary or even encyclopedic vocation, and he had collected in a Work, *On the Jews*, vast extracts of varied Antique Jewish Authors. Indeed, Alexander Polyhistor was an Author who hid behind the works that he recorded, with the result that the fragments resulting from his work are, rather probably, faithful to the disappeared Jewish originals.

The work of Polyhistor has also disappeared, but some of its fragments have been, in turn and inter alia, transmitted, by Eusebius of Caesarea, Christian erudite Father of the 4th century CE, in his work written in Greek, *Preparation for the Evangel* :

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Eupolemus, quoted by Polyhistor, and transmitted by Eusebius of Caesarea :
Preparation for the Evangel : 39 :

- Eupolemus' Remarks concerning Jeremiah the Prophet, as mentioned in similar fashion by Polyhistor - :

Then Jonacheim ruled. At this time the Prophet Jeremiah prophesied.

Sent by God he caught the Jews sacrificing to a golden idol whose name was Baal. He declared to them their coming misfortune. Jonacheim attempted to burn him alive but Jeremiah said that with that very timber they would prepare food for the Babylonians, and that, as captives, they would dig the trenches of the Tigris and Euphrates.

When Nebuchadnezzar, the King of the Babylonians heard what was being prophesied by Jeremiah he called upon Astibares, the King of the Medes, to join him in making war.

Using the Babylonians and the Medes, after he gathered 180.000 foot-soldiers, 120.000 cavalry and 10.000 chariots for foot-soldiers, he first subdued Samaria, Galilee, Scythopolis, and the Jews living in Gilead.

Then he took Jerusalem and captured alive Jonacheim, the King of the Jews. After he had taken as tribute the gold in the Temple, as well as the silver and the bronze, he transported it to Babylon without the Ark and the Tablets which it contained. These Jeremiah withheld.

-16- This same tradition of the Ark of the Covenant hidden by Jeremiah, feeds abundantly also the Pseudepigraphic Literature.

The Pseudepigraphic Literature appeared in the middle of the Hellenistic period and developed considerably, from the beginnings of the Roman Domination until 3rd century EC. approximately.

The main base of this Literature is primarily Jewish, and particularly resulting from the Jewish Diaspora, even if, sometimes, certain developments can, possibly, be allotted to re-using or late additions, from certain Judeo-Christians circles.

This Literature is characterized by a stylistic convention which wants that the texts presented are, in general, apocryphal or pseudonymous writings ascribed to various Patriarchs and Prophets to famous Characters of the Bible : Some of these texts are presented as authentic stories, resulting from topics of the Bible ; and some of these texts are presented as Prophecies and Oracles referring to Jewish History, past, contemporary and future.

The treatment of this Literature is, rather often, of Apocalyptic style.

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In addition, of the historical parallels, in this Literature, allow to treat contemporary situations, by describing comparable events of the past, and by combining sources of various times.

It is the case, in particular, for the parallel established, between the destruction of the first Temple by Nebuchadnezzar, and the destruction of the third Temple by Titus, as well as for the sets of themes connecting their causes and their effects, from the same eschatological point of view:

The Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch, known as *Baruch II*, was written between the 1st and 2nd century CE : it presents, Baruch, the faithful secretary of the Prophet Jeremiah, at the time of the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and the destruction of the first Temple:

2 Baruch : 6-9 :

And it came to pass on the morrow that, lo! The army of the Chaldees surrounded the City, and at the time of the evening, I, Baruch, left the people, and I went forth and stood by the oak.

And I was grieving over Zion, and lamenting over the captivity which had come upon the people. And lo! Suddenly a strong Spirit raised me, and bore me aloft over the wall of Jerusalem.

And I beheld, and lo! Four Angels standing at the four corners of the City, each of them holding a torch of fire in his hands.

And another Angel began to descend from Heaven, and said unto them :

'Hold your lamps, and do not light them till I tell you. For I am first sent to speak a word to the Earth, and to place in it what The Eternal the Most High has commanded me.'

And I saw him descend into the Holy of Holies, and take from there the Veil, and Holy Ark, and the Mercy-Seat, and the two Tables (of the Law), and the holy raiment of the High Priest, and the Altar of incense, and the forty-eight precious stones, wherewith the High-Priest was adorned and all the holy Vessels of the Tabernacle.

And the Angel spoke to the Earth with a loud voice :

'Earth, Earth, earth, hear the Word of the Mighty God,

And receive what I commit to you,

And guard them until the last times,

So that, when you are ordered, you may restore them,

So that strangers may not get possession of them.

For the time comes when Jerusalem also will be delivered for a time,

Until it is said, that it is again restored for ever.'

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And the Earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up.
And after these things I heard that Angel saying unto those Angels who held the lamps :
'Destroy, therefore, and overthrow its wall to its foundations, lest the enemy should boast and say : " We have overthrown the wall of Zion, and we have burnt the place of the mighty God. And we have seized the place where I had been standing before. "
Now the Angels did as He had commanded them, and when they had broken up the corners of the walls, a Voice was heard from the interior of the Temple, after the wall had fallen saying :
'Enter, you enemies, and come, you adversaries;
For He who kept the House has forsaken (it).'

And I, Baruch, departed. And it came to pass after these things that the army of the Chaldees entered and seized the House and all that was around it.
And they led the people away captive and slew some of them, and bound Zedekiah the King, and sent him to the King of Babylon.
And I, Baruch, came, and Jeremiah, whose heart was found pure from sins, who had not been captured in the seizure of the City.
And we rent our garments, we wept, and mourned, and fasted seven days.

Still in these Pseudepigraphic Writings, *Paralipomena of Jeremiah* (or *Baruch IV*) which has an unquestionable relationship with *Baruch II*, expose, also, the same topic of the Sacred Objects of the Temple which have been hidden by Jeremiah, at the time of the destruction of the 1st Temple :

Paralipomena of Jeremiah : 3 : 18-20 :

Jeremiah and Baruch entered the Holy Place, and taking the Vessels of the Temple service, they consigned them to the Earth as the Lord had told them
And immediately the Earth swallowed the Vessels.
And they both sat down and wept.

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19/ History of the Temple of Jerusalem

The second Temple of Zerubbabel and Jeshua

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-1- About fifty years after the destruction of the first Temple of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, the wheel of history turns again, and Cyrus, King of Medes and Persians, seizes Babylon.

The Persian Power replaces the Babylonian Power, and reigns, in its turn, on all Middle East.

Now, in 538 BCE, Cyrus promulgates an Edict authorizing the rebuilding of the Temple of Jerusalem, as well as the return of the Jewish deportees who wish to return to Judaea:

Ezra : 1 :

In the first year of Cyrus, King of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of The Eternal spoken by Jeremiah, The Eternal moved the heart of Cyrus, King of Persia, to make a proclamation throughout his Realm and to put it in writing :

“This is what Cyrus, King of Persia says :

‘The Lord, the God of Heaven, has given me all the Kingdoms of the earth and he has appointed me to build a Temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah.

Anyone of his people among you—may his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem in Judah and build the Temple of the Lord, the God of Israel, the God who is in Jerusalem...

Then the family heads of Judah and Benjamin, and the Priests and Levites—everyone whose heart God had moved—prepared to go up and build the House of The Eternal in Jerusalem...

Moreover, King Cyrus brought out the articles belonging to the Temple of The Eternal, which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem and had placed in the Temple of his God.

Cyrus, King of Persia, had them brought by Mithredath, the treasurer, who counted them out to Sheshbazzar, the Prince of Judah.

This was the inventory : gold dishes 30 , silver dishes 1,000 , silver pans 29 , gold bowls 30 , matching silver bowls 410 , and other articles 1,000.

In all, there were 5,400 articles of gold and of silver. Sheshbazzar brought all these along when the exiles came up from Babylon to Jerusalem.

-2- One of the first acts of the Jews returned from exile, is to rebuild the Altar of Sacrifices, and then to lay the foundations of the new Temple, on its previous site ; and that, in spite of the increasing hostility of the Pagan Population which had replaced the Jews after their deportation:

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Ezra : 3 : 1-3 :

When the seventh month came and the Israelites had settled in their towns, the people assembled as one man in Jerusalem.

Then Jeshua, son of Jozadak, and his fellow Priests and Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, and his associates began to build the Altar of the God of Israel to sacrifice burnt offerings on it, in accordance with what is written in the Law of Moses, the man of God.

Despite their fear of the peoples around them, they built the Altar on its foundation and sacrificed burnt offerings on it to The Eternal, both the morning and evening sacrifices.

Ezra : 3 : 10-13 :

When the builders laid the foundation of the Temple of The Eternal, the Priests in their vestments and with trumpets, and the Levites (the sons of Asaph) with cymbals, took their places to praise The Eternal, as prescribed by David, King of Israel. With praise and thanksgiving they sang to The Eternal :

"He is good ; His Love to Israel endures forever."

And all the people gave a great shout of praise to The Eternal, because the foundation of the House of The Eternal was laid.

But many of the older Priests and Levites and family heads, who had seen the former Temple, wept aloud when they saw the foundation of this Temple being laid, while many others shouted for joy. No one could distinguish the sound of the shouts of joy from the sound of weeping, because the people made so much noise. And the sound was heard far away.

This beautiful dash of collective enthusiasm is bluntly broken by an intrigue of the new autochtones and adversaries of the Jews, who succeed in making sign by the new Persian Emperor, Artaxerxes I, an Edict prohibiting this rebuilding of the Jewish Temple.

And this prohibition is respected, willy-nilly, under the whole reign Artaxerxes I.

But, after the advent of a new Persian Emperor, Darius, and on the injunctions of the Prophets Haggai and Zechariah, the rebuilding of the Temple can resume.

-3- Indeed, Darius has come out in favour of the Jews, concerning the new controversy opposing Jews and Pagan autochtones, and he has published an Edict in favour of the rebuilding of the Temple :

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In addition, this Edict of Darius (and Cyrus) fixes the global dimensions for the Temple :

Esdras : 6 : 1-12 :

King Darius then issued an order, and they searched in the archives stored in the treasury at Babylon.

A scroll was found in the Citadel of Ecbatana (summer residence of the Emperor) in the province of Media, and this was written on it :

Memorandum : in the first year of King Cyrus, the King issued the following Decree concerning the Temple of God in Jerusalem :

Let the Temple be rebuilt as a place to present sacrifices, and let its foundations be laid.

It is to be sixty cubits (30 meters) high and sixty cubits (30 meters) wide, with three courses of large stones and one of timbers.

The costs are to be paid by the royal treasury.

Also, the gold and silver articles of the House of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took from the Temple in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon, are to be returned to their places in the Temple in Jerusalem; they are to be deposited in the House of God.

Now therefore, Tattenai, governor of Trans-Euphrates, and Shethar-Bozenai and you, their fellow Officials of that Province, stay away from there. Do not interfere with the work on this Temple of God. Let the Governor of the Jews and the Jewish elders rebuild this House of God on its Site.

Moreover, I hereby decree what you are to do for these elders of the Jews in the construction of this House of God :

The expenses of these men are to be fully paid out of the royal treasury, from the revenues of Trans-Euphrates, so that the work will not stop.

Whatever is needed—young bulls, rams, male lambs for burnt offerings to the God of heaven, and wheat, salt, wine and oil, as requested by the Priests in Jerusalem—must be given them daily without fail, so that they may offer sacrifices pleasing to the God of Heaven and pray for the well-being of the King and his sons.

Furthermore, I decree that if anyone changes this Edict, a beam is to be pulled from his house and he is to be lifted up and impaled on it. And for this crime his house is to be made a pile of rubble.

May God, who has caused his Name to dwell there, overthrow any King or people who lift a hand to change this Decree or to destroy this Temple in Jerusalem.

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I Darius have decreed it.
Let it be carried out with diligence

The particularly benevolent attitude of this Persian Dynasty was, probably due, inter alia, to the beneficial action of some Jewish influential courtiers at the Persian Court, as it will be the case of Nehemiah, for example, which was the cupbearer of the Emperor, and who will obtain the permission to leave for Judaea, of which he will become Governor. There, he will be able to supervise, finally, the completion of the rebuilding of the Temple, and he will undertake, also, the rebuilding of the ramparts of Jerusalem.

The measures of the Temple to be rebuilt, as issued by Cyrus-Darius raise problems : Indeed, these measures (30 meters in height x 30 meters in width) are, roughly speaking, the double, of the measures of the Temple of Solomon (15 meters x approximately 15 meters):

One can possibly advance two types of explanation for these radical modifications:

a/- The concern of influential Jews at the Court of Cyrus and Darius to be able to have a greater latitude for installations of the interior Square and possible installations intended for the Priesthood and for the Levites.

b/- Nevertheless the doubling height can let to suppose, there again, a handling of Herod, by scribe copyist interposed, in order to be able to have a Scriptural base (as is the case with *Chronicles*) allowing him, as will see infra, to arrange the height of the Jewish Sanctuary, according to his own cosmogonical vision and according to his secret ambition.

-3- The second Temple will be finally rebuilt, certainly, and the Sacrifices are celebrated there according to the prescribed Rites, but the very Heart of the Sanctuary, the Ark of the Covenant has disappeared.

And, besides the traumatic experience of the Temple having been lost during seventy years, this constitutes most probably, one of the reasons that one can date from the dynastic High Priest, Ezra, the importance which will be brought, from now on, and systematically, on the Study of the Sacred Scriptures : This Study will, in the course of centuries, gradually take the emotional place of the disappeared Ark of the Covenant, and then, after the destruction of the 3rd Temple of Herod, will also take the place of the sacrificial Ritual of the vanished Jewish Sanctuary.

To this end, Ezra has made in the Temple a public reading of the Sacred Scriptures conducted by himself and Priests, with detailed comments and explanations given by the Levites to all the Jews gathered for this purpose. Then all the Jerusalem population makes the solemn oath to observe scrupulously this Law (*Nehemiah : 8-10*).

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And, in order to form a "Hedge" of honor and safeguard, around these Sacred Scriptures, the Rabbis, present in all Jewish Communities and of which a considerable number are issued from common People, gradually, will develop the "Oral Tradition".

And this Oral Tradition, after the destruction of the third Temple, will be able, then, in its turn, to acquire its final Letters of Nobility, when being fixed in writing, and, consequently, will be able to feed the endless ocean of Rabbinical Literature.

-4- The rebuilding of the second Temple was undertaken by the Prince of Judah, Sheshebazzar (of whom some advance the assumption that it was the name given by Cyrus to Zerrubbabel) under the direction of the Governor, Zerrubbabel, and of the High Priest, Jeshua.

This second Temple of the return from exile, is usually called Temple of Zerrubbabel.

This second Temple, will be also called, thereafter, Hasmonean Temple, by reference to the Jewish dynasty resulting from the Maccabees, who embellished it and restarted its glory. This second Temple, including its foundations will be replaced by the third Temple built by Herod, and which, usually, called Temple of Herod.

An error, made of a simplifying amalgam, makes that one commonly covers with the same term the second Temple (of Zerrubbabel, then Hasmonean) and the third Temple (of Herod) by calling them both, "the second Temple".

Concerning the second Temple itself, former to that of Herod, one has very few information as for its precise description and decoration.

On the other hand, concerning this second Temple, we have at our disposal some rather significant information, in particular, thanks to the work of Aristeas or pseudo-Aristeas, and, incidentally, thanks to the work of Flavius Josephus, on, inter alia, the following points :

- the situation of the second Temple in relation to the Citadel which dominated and protected it ;
- the vestments of the Priests and High Priest ;
- the procedure of the Worship ;
- the supply of this second Temple with live Waters, intended, at the same time, to achieve all the Purification Rites of the Worship, and to allow washings, under pressure, of the Squares and implements soiled by bloody sacrifices (cf. our Study detailed in last part E of this Book).

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-5- Contrasting with the extremely precise information which relate to the third Herodian Temple in the *Tractate Middoth*, the few rare indications, concerning ancient elements of the preceding Temples, which are mentioned in Rabbinical Literature, are of an extremely delicate use, because it is often difficult, not to say impossible, to determine if ancient traditions which are reported, relate to the first, or to the second, or to the third Temple.

Moreover, one of the characteristics stylistics of Rabbinical Literature is to cultivate, deliberately, the chronological amalgam, or rather the indistinct unification of different periods, in order to better emphasize the chain of their perpetual Immanence.

Nevertheless, by deduction of the various Sacred, Rabbinical and Pagan Texts which are at our disposal, it can be advanced that the principal following elements had completely disappeared from the second Temple, as compared to the first Temple of Solomon :

a- the Ark of the Covenant and Tables of the Law;

b- the two large Statues of Cherubim who had their wings spread in the Most Holy Place ;

c- The twelve bulls which supported the large Bronze Laver, "the bronze Sea".

--- As could be noted, for example, by Pompey at the time of his capture of Jerusalem, the Most Holy Place of the second Hasmonean Temple, from now on, is absolutely empty.

--- As for the Porch with two Columns of the 2nd Temple, it is probable that it was identical to the Porch of the first Temple of Solomon.

-6- We have, however, at our disposal a rather significant description of the second Temple, with a text of Hecataeus of Abdera, or, more probably, of pseudo-Hecataeus of Abdera. Hecataeus of Abdera is the Pagan Author of, inter alia, *History of Egypt*, written in Greek, in the 3rd-4th century BCE. His work has disappeared but Diodorus of Sicily (1st century CE) took as a starting point some of its extracts when compiling his *Collection of Historical Books* or *World History*.

According to certain scholars, pseudo-Hecataeus of Abdera would have been a Jew, probably of Egypt, in the 2nd century BCE, who would have written a work, *On the Jews*, and a work, *On Abraham*.

To write these two works, pseudo-Hecataeus of Abdera would have used extracts, drawn from the original work of the true Hecataeus of Abdera, and he would have taken as a starting point his style of presentation, in order to compose a work of propaganda making it possible to propose to Pagan readers a vision favorable to the Jews. Certain scholars even think that pseudo-Hecataeus of Abdera was a Jew of Jerusalem from a Priestly family.

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Fragments of the work of Hecataeus of Abdera, or pseudo-Hecataeus of Abdera, are quoted by Flavius Josephus, in his polemic work *Against Apion*, and by Eusebius of Cesarea, in his work, *Preparation for the Evangel*.

Whether the description of the second Temple which can be read there, is indeed written by Hecataeus of Abdera, or was taken again from Hecataeus of Abdera, or was written by pseudo-Hecataeus of Abdera, it seems, undoubtedly, based, from the start, on a personal visual observation, and precise information.

And the extreme austerity of the frontage of the Temple, such as it appears in this unique text, can, possibly, refer to a description of the second Temple, before its embellishment which will be achieved by the Hasmoneans.

But, in any event, and whatever the date at which the Temple was observed, this description of pseudo-Hecataeus of Abdera is the only one which accounts for the Enclosure of the second Temple and its Square. And it is rather probable that this Enclosure and this Square of the second Temple were, about, identical to those of the first Temple of Solomon, since old men cried during the inauguration of this second Temple, when remembering the first destroyed Temple which they had been able to contemplate when they were children, before being deported to Babylon.

Hecataeus of Abdera, or pseudo-Hecataeus of Abdera :

quoted by Flavius Josephus : *Against Apion* : I : 22 ,

and quoted also by Eusebius of Cesarea : *Preparation for the Evangel* : 9 : 4 :

Nearly in the centre of the City (Jerusalem) stands a stone wall enclosing an area about five plethra (**150 meters**) long, and a hundred cubits (**50 meters**) broad, approached by a pair of Gates.

Within this enclosure is a square Altar built of heaped up stones, unhewn and unwrought : each side is twenty cubits (10 meters) long and its height 10 cubits (5 meters).

Besides it stands a great Edifice, containing an Altar and a Lampstand, both made of gold and weighing two talents (50 kilos)

It should be noted, in connection with this description of pseudo-Hecataeus of Abdera, that the dimensions, indicated for the Altar of Sacrifices, correspond exactly to the measures which are indicated in *2 Chronicles* : 4: 1 concerning the Temple of Solomon.

One can note, also, that these figures of the Sacrifices Altar multiplied by 4 the dimensions prescribed by The Eternal to Moses, for the construction of this Altar of Sacrifices.

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Then, one can note that in *Exodus 27 : 9-19*, the Enclosure of the Sanctuary of Moses, determined by Hangings, measures **50 meters by 25 meters**.

And, one can note, also, that the dimensions of this **Enclosure**, for the first Temple of Solomon, were consigned, neither in *Kings*, nor in *Chronicles*.

On the other hand, one can, finally, note that the dimensions of the **Enclosure of the second Temple (150 meters by 50 meters)** indicated by Hecataeus of Abdera or pseudo-Hecataeus of Abdera, **multiply, thus, by 2 and by 3**, the measures of the **Enclosure of Moses' Tent of the Meeting (50 meters by 25 meters)**, exactly in the same specific way, as Solomon **had multiplied, by 2 and 3**, the dimensions of the Holy Place and of the Most Holy Place in the first Temple, compared to the measures of these same Places in the Tent of the Meeting.

-7- Therefore, this information, provided by Hecataeus of Abdera or pseudo-Hecataeus of Abdera, on the dimensions of the Enclosure of the second Temple, appear as rather authentic, because they seem based on a procedure in conformity with the Priestly architectural calculation, the proportions of which had to be deduced from the Biblical Data Prescriptions.

This information would appear, thus, as rather capital since it is, to date, the only precise information which one can have on the real dimensions of the Enclosure of the second Hasmonean Temple, before the works of Herod.

And, in any event, this information makes it possible to form an idea about the size of this Enclosure "*which stood nearly in the centre of Jerusalem*" at that time, and which could have been a **hillock of 150 meters by 50 meters**.

As will see infra, this modest **rectangle of 150 meters by 50 meters** of the Enclosure of the second Temple will be transformed into a **square of 180 meters by 180 meters** by Herod for the Enclosure of the third Temple.

In this connection, and without pre-empting the demonstration led in this Work (in E) it appears useful to point out that **the rectangle** of the present Haram (Esplanade of the Mosques) measures **480 meters** of length (approximately) by **280 meters (precise and incompressible)** of width.