

Wednesday Night Discussion

Date: 5/8/24

7:00—7:30 Teaching Overview

Chapter Snapshots: *Ezekiel is told to document the dimensions and details of the Millennial Temple.*

Chapter 40 – The New Temple. Ezekiel is transported in a vision to a high mountain in Israel where he sees a man with a measuring rod. The man begins to measure an elaborate temple, which is described in detail. This marks the beginning of a new section focused on the Temple and its role in the restored Israel.

Chapter 41 – The Inner Temple. Ezekiel’s vision continues with the man measuring the inner sanctuary of the temple, including the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. The chapter provides intricate details about the measurements and structures, symbolizing God’s dwelling among His people.

Chapter 42 – The Rooms for the Priests. In this chapter, Ezekiel is shown the rooms for the priests, which are adjacent to the Temple. These rooms are where the priests will eat the most sacred offerings and change their garments before entering the inner court, signifying their consecration.

Text and Topic(s): In Ezekiel 43:1-27, the Prophet witnesses the glory of the Lord returning to the Temple through the east gate, the same way it had departed earlier in his visions. The Lord declares that He will dwell among the Israelites forever, and instructs them on the consecration of the altar.

1. **1** He led me to the gate, the one that faces east, **2** and I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east. His voice sounded like the roar of a huge torrent, and the earth shone with his glory. **3** The vision I saw was like the one I had seen when he came to destroy the city, and like the ones I had seen by the Chebar Canal. I fell facedown.
2. **4** The glory of the Lord entered the temple by way of the gate that faced east. **5** Then the Spirit lifted me up and brought me to the inner court, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple. **6** While the man was standing beside me, I heard someone speaking to me from the temple.
3. **7** He said to me, “Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place for the soles of my feet, where I will dwell among the Israelites forever. The house of Israel and their kings will no longer defile my holy name by their religious prostitution and by the corpses of their kings at their high places.
4. **8** Whenever they placed their threshold next to my threshold and their doorposts beside my doorposts, with only a wall between me and them, they were defiling my holy name by the detestable acts they committed. So, I destroyed them in my anger. **9** Now let them remove their prostitution and the corpses of their kings far from me, and I will dwell among them forever.
5. **10** “As for you, son of man, describe the temple to the house of Israel, so that they may be ashamed of their iniquities. Let them measure its pattern, **11** and they will be ashamed of all that they have done. Reveal the design of the temple to them—its layout with its exits and entrances—its complete design along with all its statutes, design specifications, and laws. Write it down in their sight so that they may observe its complete design and all its statutes and may carry them out. **12** This is the law of the temple: All its surrounding territory on top of the mountain will be especially holy. Yes, this is the law of the temple.
6. **13** “These are the measurements of the altar in units of length (each unit being the standard length plus three inches): The gutter is 21 inches deep and 21 inches wide, with a rim of nine inches around its edge. This is the base of the altar. **14** The distance from the gutter on the ground to the lower ledge is 3½ feet, and the width of the ledge is 21 inches. There are 7 feet from the small ledge to the large ledge, whose width is also 21 inches.
7. **15** The altar hearth is 7 feet high, and four horns project upward from the hearth. **16** The hearth is square, 21 feet long by 21 feet wide. **17** The ledge is 24½ feet long by 24½ feet wide, with four equal sides. The rim all around it is 10½ inches, and its gutter is 21 inches all around it. The altar’s steps face east.”
8. **18** Then he said to me, “Son of man, this is what the Lord God says: These are the statutes for the altar on the day it is constructed, so that burnt offerings may be sacrificed on it and blood may be splattered on it: **19** You are to give a bull from the herd as a sin offering to the Levitical priests who are from the offspring of Zadok, who approach me in order to serve me.” This is the declaration of the Lord God.

9. **20** “You are to take some of its blood and apply it to the four horns of the altar, the four corners of the ledge, and all around the rim. In this way you will purify the altar and make atonement for it. **21** Then you are to take away the bull for the sin offering, and it must be burned outside the sanctuary in the place appointed for the temple.
10. **22** “On the second day you are to present an unblemished male goat as a sin offering. They will purify the altar just as they did with the bull. **23** When you have finished the purification, you are to present a young, unblemished bull and an unblemished ram from the flock.
11. **24** You are to present them before the Lord; the priests will throw salt on them and sacrifice them as a burnt offering to the Lord. **25** You will offer a goat for a sin offering each day for seven days. A young bull and a ram from the flock, both unblemished, are also to be offered.
12. **26** For seven days the priests are to make atonement for the altar and cleanse it. In this way they will consecrate it **27** and complete the days of purification. Then on the eighth day and afterward, the priests will offer your burnt offerings and fellowship offerings on the altar, and I will accept you.” This is the declaration of the Lord God.

Let’s Dive Deeper

One: The book of Ezekiel began with an amazing vision of God’s glory. Chapters 8-11 describe how God’s glory gradually departed from the temple and the city because of the people’s sins. Ezekiel concludes with another awe-inspiring vision: God’s glory, power, and love, filling the temple again. *What temple?* Ezekiel is shown the *Millennial Temple* that will be constructed at the end of the tribulation. Without knowing this, v18-27 could be confusing. The biggest point of confusion is the idea that people will be participating again in the ritual of animal sacrifices after Jesus Himself has already made the highest and final sacrifice. Some insist that the sacrifices described here cannot be literal, or actively a part of reality, because Jesus’ perfect sacrifice for sins fulfilled all of God’s requirements and made OT sacrifices obsolete, i.e., no longer necessary (see Heb. 9:10-15; 10:1-4, 8). Some think that perhaps Ezekiel used OT terms to describe the benefits of Jesus’ atoning (sin-covering) sacrifice. They are correct in that Jesus is the one and final (sin-atoning) sacrifice! However, it must be remembered that animal sacrifice never *removes the sin* that separates a person from God. Also, these verses do not suggest that the offerings here *will take away sin* any more than the offerings under the Mosaic Covenant did; rather, it is believed that they will point **back** to the ONE and FINAL offering of Jesus on the cross just as the Old Testament offerings pointed **forward** to the death of Jesus. Animal sacrifices have always served as an object lesson for the sinner. Demonstrating that sin was and is a horrible offense against God, and that the result of sin is death (Romans 6:23). Most *premillennial* scholars agree that the purpose of animal sacrifice during the millennial kingdom serves as a memorial. Therefore, just as Communion is a *reminder* of the death of Jesus to the Church today, animal sacrifices will be a reminder during the millennial kingdom of what He did for Israel. To those born during the millennial kingdom, animal sacrifices will again be *an object lesson*. During that future time, righteousness and holiness will overcome, but those with earthly bodies will still have a sinful nature, and there will be a need to teach about how offensive sin is to a holy and righteous God. Animal sacrifices will serve that purpose (Hebrews 10:3). It’s also important to highlight that there is a clear distinction between *Israel* and *the Church*. Just because God will have finished His work of sanctification and glorification of the Church at the time of the Rapture, there is no reason to assume He has finished His work of instruction, testing, and sanctification of Israel. Also, these offerings will not be voluntary but mandatory (Ezekiel 43:13-46:15). During this time, God will accept the Jewish people based on these animal sacrifices (43:27), which makes reconciliation for the house of Israel (45:15, 17). The offerings will not take away sin (see Heb. 10:4), but they will be effective in sanctifying the Israelites ceremonially because of His infinitely holy presence in their midst. Later, these sacrifices will serve as effective vehicles of *divine instruction* for Israel and to the nations during the Millennial Kingdom—ultimately pointing them to Jesus as their Priest-King; who, at the end of the Millennium, they will need to place their faith in (Rev 20:7-10).

7:30—7:45 Think Through the Main Scripture Individually — 7:45—8:00 Tie up and Pray

Personal Study: Take a few moments to reread the main scriptures and highlight or jot down what stands out to you.

I observed in verse _____ that: _____

Additional Scriptures: **Matthew 24:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:4; Revelation 11:1-2; Hosea 3:4-5; Danial 9:24-27; John 4:21**

Contemplative questions: Take a few minutes to consider the following questions *thoughtfully* and *reflectively*.

What will life be like during this time? See Isaiah 65:17-25. _____