



Introduction:

- **The Title:** Ezekiel uses visions, prophecies, parables, signs, and symbols to proclaim and dramatize the message of God to His exiled people.
- **The Prophet:** very little is known about the man Ezekiel. He was a contemporary of Jeremiah.
- **His Name:** In Hebrew his name means “*strengthened by God*”.
- **Birth:** Thirtieth year refers to Ezekiel’s age at that time (593 B.C.). That would put his birth date in 623 B.C. Ezekiel was like Jeremiah in that he was of priestly heritage. He was the son of Buzi. His father may have been of the Zadok line.
- **In Exile:** When Ezekiel was about 18 years old, the Babylonians made their first invasion into Palestine and carried away Daniel (605 B.C.). Then in 597 B.C. they came again and took Ezekiel among the captives.
- Ezekiel’s home was Tel-abib. According to 33:21, Ezekiel was taken captive in the year 597 B.C. He refers to his captivity as occurring in the 12th year before the time when the city of Jerusalem was destroyed, which came in 586 B.C. Then, in 40:1 he speaks of an event that occurred in the 25th year of his captivity; he says this was “*in the 14th year after that the city was smitten*”.
- **Call & Commission:** Ezekiel indicates that his call to the prophetic ministry came in “the 5th year of King Jehoiachin’s captivity”. This would have been about 593-592 B.C. He continues in service at least until the 27th year of his captivity, according to 29:17. This would have been 571 B.C.
- **Message:** There are at least five recurrent themes that run through the book.
 - **First** – The character of God – He is a holy God to be worshiped.
 - **Second** – The sinfulness of Israel – Israel’s persistent unfaithfulness to the gracious covenant of God.
 - **Third** – The inevitable fact of judgment in the face of these bold and brazen sinful practices.
 - **Fourth** – The individual responsibility in the face of inevitable judgment on the nation as a whole. The possibility of salvation to a remnant is projected.
 - **Fifth** – The promise of future restoration (e.g. Millennium). Repentance is for the individual and has implications for the community as a whole.
- **Visions:** Ezekiel is known as the prophet of visions. The very first verse says, “... the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God.

- 1) **THE PERSON OF THE TEMPLE WORSHIP** (vss. 1-9)
- 2) **THE PLACE OF THE TEMPLE WORSHIP** (vss. 10-12)
- 3) **THE PRESCRIPTION OF THE TEMPLE WORSHIP** (vss. 13-17)
- 4) **THE PROCESS OF THE TEMPLE WORSHIP** (vss. 18-27)

1. **THE PERSON OF THE TEMPLE WORSHIP** (verses 1-9)

Afterward he brought me to the gate, the gate that faces toward the east. ²And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east. His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory. ³It was like the appearance of the vision which I saw – like the vision which I saw when I came to destroy the city. The visions were like the vision which I saw by the River Chebar; and I fell on my face. ⁴And the glory of the LORD came into the temple by way of the gate which faces toward the east. ⁵The Spirit lifted

me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the temple. ⁶Then I heard Him speaking to me from the temple, while a man stood beside me. ⁷And He said to me, "Son of man, this is the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever. No more shall the house of Israel defile My holy name, they nor their kings, by their harlotry or with the carcasses of their kings on their high places. ⁸When they set their threshold by My threshold, and their doorpost by My doorpost, with a wall between them and Me, they defiled My holy name by the abominations which they committed; therefore, I have consumed them in My anger. ⁹Now let them put their harlotry and the carcasses of their kings far away from Me, and I will dwell in their midst forever.

Ezekiel saw the Lord returning through the east gate. This was the same gate though which He had earlier departed. He had also seen it when the Lord had come to destroy the city and in the initial vision by the river Chebar.

Verse 2 – In earlier chapters of this prophecy, emphasis was given to the departure of God’s glory from the temple. Thus, the Lord abandoned His people to destruction and dispersion. Here, in the millennial temple, the glory of God returns to dwell. The **SHEKINAH** glory of God’s presence will be in effect!

(II Chronicles 7:1-3; I Kings 8:10-11; Matthew 16:27; Matthew 25:3; NKJV)

Verse 3 – This appearance of God to Ezekiel is glorious, just as the vision in chapters 8-11, which pictures His coming, by angels, to judge Jerusalem. God’s appearance is also glorious as in the vision of 1:3-28. Just as in the other visions of God’s glory.

Verse 5 – The future kingdom glory of God will fill His temple, as He filled Moses’ tabernacle (Exodus 40) and later Solomon’s temples (I Kings 8). *(Zechariah 2:3-5; NKJV)*

Verses 6-12 contain God’s exhortation to Israel from the inner sanctuary. He announces the Temple must be holy and free from whoredom, which means temple prostitution. The Jerusalem Temple is here pictured as the throne of God; in other places heaven is described in this manner. Thus, Ezekiel pictures heaven having come down to earth. They are also to be separated from the graves and palaces of their kings, which were located on the same hill as Solomon’s Temple.

Verse 7 states that the King of glory claims the millennial temple as **His** place to dwell. Remember, there will be human un-resurrected people in the kingdom, who entered when Christ returned and destroyed all the wicked. They will worship at this actual temple. The Temple will, once again, be the focus of the worship of the Messiah as it was to be in the Old Testament.

- “Place of **MY** throne”
- “...the soles of **MY** feet”
- “...where **I** will dwell...”
- “...and **MY HOLY NAME**...”

The King of glory claims the millennial temple as His place to dwell. *(Zechariah 6:13; NKJV)*

Verses 8-9 – The future temple will be most holy, protected from 1) harlotry such as the Israelites had engaged in (II Kings 23) and 2) defiling tombs of kings that Israel had allowed in the sacred temple area (Ezekiel 21).

- “...consumed them in **MINE ANGER**.” (vs. 8)
 - “... and **I WILL DWELL** in the midst of them forever.” (vs. 9)
2. **THE PLACE OF THE TEMPLE WORSHIP** (Verses 10-12)

¹⁰*“Son of man, describe the temple to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and let them measure the pattern. ¹¹And if they are ashamed of all that they have done, make known to them the design of the temple and its arrangement, its exits and its entrances, its entire design and all its ordinances, all its forms and all its laws. Write it down in their sight, so that they may keep its whole design and all its*

ordinances and perform them.¹² This is the law of the temple: The whole area surrounding the mountaintop is most holy. Behold, this is the law of the temple.

This Millennial Temple will be the physical focus of the worship of the Messiah during the Millenium Reign of Christ!! Here is the key to the entire vision of chapters 40-48. These glorious future plans show how much Israel forfeited by their sins, idolatry, rebellion, and apostasy!!! Every detail should produce repentance in Ezekiel's hearers and readers.

3. THE PRESCRIPTION OF TEMPLE WORSHIP (verses 13-17)

¹³ "These are the measurements of the altar in cubits (the cubit is one cubit and a handbreadth): the base one cubit high and one cubit wide, with a rim all around its edge of one span. This is the height of the altar: ¹⁴ from the base on the ground to the lower ledge, two cubits; the width of the ledge, one cubit; from the smaller ledge to the larger ledge, four cubits; and the width of the ledge, one cubit. ¹⁵ The altar hearth is four cubits high, with four horns extending upward from the hearth. ¹⁶ The altar hearth is twelve cubits long, twelve wide, square at its four corners; ¹⁷ the ledge, fourteen cubits long and fourteen wide on its four sides, with a rim of half a cubit around it; its base, one cubit all around; and its steps face toward the east."

Verses 13-18 give a description of the altar of burnt offering. The altar is consecrated by the application of the blood of the sin offering for seven days on its four horns, the four corners of the upper ledge, and the rim of the base. This is to purge and purify it. And they shall consecrate themselves literally means to fill its hand, that is, to invest it with office. After God's regulations are carried out then and only then can it be said. *"I will accept you."* He will accept their offerings because their conduct will be pleasing to Him.

4. THE PROCEDURES OF THE TEMPLE WORSHIP (verses 18-27)

¹⁸ And He said to me, "Son of man, thus says the Lord GOD: 'These are the ordinances for the altar on the day when it is made, for sacrificing burnt offerings on it, and for sprinkling blood on it. ¹⁹ You shall give a young bull for a sin offering to the priests, the Levites, who are of the seed of Zadok, who approach Me to minister to Me,' says the Lord GOD. ²⁰ 'You shall take some of its blood and put it on the four horns of the altar, on the four corners of the ledge, and on the rim around it; thus, you shall cleanse it and make atonement for it. ²¹ Then you shall also take the bull of the sin offering and burn it in the appointed place of the temple, outside the sanctuary. ²² On the second day you shall offer a kid of the goats without blemish for a sin offering; and they shall cleanse the altar, as they cleansed it with the bull. ²³ When you have finished cleansing it, you shall offer a young bull without blemish, and a ram from the flock without blemish. ²⁴ When you offer them before the LORD, the priests shall throw salt on them, and they will offer them up as a burnt offering to the LORD. ²⁵ Every day for seven days you shall prepare a goat for a sin offering; they shall also prepare a young bull and a ram from the flock, both without blemish. ²⁶ Seven days they shall make atonement for the altar and purify it, and so consecrate it. ²⁷ When these days are over it shall be, on the eighth day and thereafter, that the priests shall offer your burnt offerings and your peace offerings on the altar; and I will accept you,' says the Lord GOD."

These measurements of the altar of burnt offering are given in verses 13-17, then the offerings are described in verse 18-27. These offerings are NOT efficacious (successful in producing a desired or intended result), nor were the OT sacrifices. They were all symbolic of death for sin. They do NOT take away sin!! They were prospective; these will be retrospective. The OT sacrifices pointed to the coming ultimate sacrifice in that of the Death and Resurrection of the Son of God!!!

- **SIN OFFERING** - This offering was offered to atone for sins a person had committed. It was to restore a person's relationship with the Lord.
- **BURNT OFFERING** -
- **TRESPASS/GUILT OFFERING**
- **GRAIN OFFERING**

- **PEACE OFFERING**

Exact offerings, in language just as definitive as the literal descriptions in Moses' day, are also just as literal here. They are of a memorial nature; that are not efficacious any more than **OT** sacrifices were. As **OT** sacrifices pointed forward to Christ's death, so these are tangible expressions, not competing with, but pointing back to the value of Christ's completely effective sacrifice, once for all. (*Hebrews 9:28; NKJV*)

God, at that time, endorsed **OT** offerings as tokens of forgiving and cleansing worshipers on the basis and credit of the great Lamb they pointed forward to. He alone could take away sins. The tangible expression of worship, which the Israelites for so long failed to offer validly, will at last be offered acceptably, then with full understanding about the Lamb of God to whom they point. The bread and the cup, which contemporary believers find meaningful, do not compete with Christ's Cross, but are **TANGIBLE** memorials of its glory. So, will these sacrifices be! (*Genesis 3:6-7; Genesis 3:21; Hebrews 10:10; NKJV*)

Zadok the Priest played a significant role in the history of ancient Israel. He was a high priest who served during the reigns of King David and King Solomon. Zadok 1) aided King David during the revolt of his son Absalom, 2) he was instrumental in bringing Solomon to the throne, and 3) officiated at Solomon's coronation. After Solomon's building of the First Temple in Jerusalem, Zadok was the first High Priest to serve there. Zadok was a patrilineal descendant of Eleazar the son of Aaron the high priest, and his lineage is presented in the genealogy of Ezra as being of ninth generation of direct patrilineal descent from Phinehas the son of Eleazar. (*1 Kings 1:39-40; Hebrews 7:26-28; Isaiah 11:6-9; Isaiah 65:20-23; John 13:6-10; NKJV*)

Conclusion:

- The Zadok Priesthood is a sign of the importance of the remnant that the Lord has in every era/epoch. (Abel, Enoch, Noah, Josiah, etc.)
- The devotion/loyalty of God's people during the Millennium Kingdom will be exemplary to all the nations as was intended at the outset of God's calling of Israel as His chosen people.
- All believers in the church today are called priests because our bodies collectively are the temple of God (*1 Cor 6:19; Peter 2:9-10; NKJV*)

In summary, the Church saints are priests today, because the temple of God resides in our bodies, but in the Kingdom, the temple changes as does the law, and therefore the priesthood changes as well.