I will be your God and you will be My people



Fall/Winter 2016-2017 Adult Bible Study

Ezekiel

By Elder Betsi Moise



♦ THE NEW TEMPLE

- Twenty-five years after captivity
- A Holy City, set apart
- The man and his message
- Walls and steps

♦ THE TEMPLE YARD

- The outer courtyard
- The priests chambers
- Sacred Ground

♦ THE RETURN OF THE GLORY OF THE LORD

- It's been 19 years
- God of Holiness
- People of wickedness
- The Call to be Holy

JUDGEMENT NEAR JUDGEMENT NOW HOPE AHEAD	_	Ezekiel's Vision	INWARD OUTWARD ONWARD
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	4	Jerusalem's Signs	
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	7	Condemnation	
	==	for Idolatry	
	12	Condemnation	
	15	for Leaders	
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THE RETURN OF THE GLORY OF THE LORD INTO THE TEMPLE 43:1-12

(6-7)The Lord's dedication speech – part 1: The God of holiness. It befits God's character to rule from a place of pure holiness. He intends to have an unbroken fellowship with His people. The angel who acted as Ezekiel's guide entered the inner area with him. But the voice that Ezekiel heard was not the angel's voice. It was the voice of God. In Ezekiel 43:7, we read God's reply. God would not just watch his people. He would live among them. And he would continue to do so always. His royal seat would be here, and he would rest his feet here. So God would remain among his people. A king relaxes in his palace. And in the same manner, God would be content as he lived among his loyal people.

(7-9)**The Lord's dedication speech – part 2:** The people of wickedness. His holiness is further emphasized by His separation from the wicked.

The Israelites' situation seemed hopeless. But God still offered them hope. Their behavior had been terrible. But God still offered them his kindness. They had refused his love and they had neglected his laws. But God still offered them his love. He would forgive. He would look after them. He would even live among them. These things were still possible. But first, they had to turn from their evil behavior.

- They were not loyal to God. That evil behavior had to end.
- They worshipped false gods. That evil behavior had to end.
- They did not respect the real God. That evil behavior had to end.

And if they ended these things, God had a wonderful promise for them. He would live among them. He would be as their husband. And they would be as his loyal wife. Their love would be complete.

(10-12)**The Lord's dedication speech – part 3:** The call to holiness. The viewing of the blueprints of the Temple will make the people realize how wicked they had become and how holy they would need to be to worship God successfully.

That is why God showed this vision to Ezekiel. The descriptions in this vision may seem strange to us today. But those descriptions were familiar to the people in exile, who had lost their temple. Because of that event, they may have thought that nothing could mend their relationship with God. But God was showing them that they could have a new kind of relationship with him. They should study this plan. Then they would see how it described God's perfect character. They would see that they must respect the difference between holy things and other things. They would see that they must love God with their whole hearts. They would see that they must confess their sins. They would see that God still wanted to have a relationship of love with his people. And they would see that they must always be loyal to God. But the rules of Ezekiel's temple were different. This temple was so holy that all the surrounding land was holy too. People did not carry on their normal activities there. They were on holy land before they entered the temple. And they were on holy land after they left the temple. They began to worship before they entered. They continued to worship after they left. Those were the rules for the new *temple that Ezekiel saw.

Questions for Discussion:

- 1. Compare and contrast the behavior of the Jewish people in the temple of Jerusalem and the way people behave in the vision of the New Temple.
- 2. Nobody can enter the Temple except through the gates—why do you think that is?
- 3. What do the Palm Trees symbolize? Psalm 92:12-15, Song of Solomon 7:7-8
- 4. Describe the largest building in the Temple area (41:12-15a). What does the description tell you about the nature of God?
- 5. What do you think? Many people believe that this new temple will exist in the future and Jesus, the Messiah, will return to rule as king, and He will then establish this temple. Other people do not think that this new temple will actually exist. They believe God is using this vision of the new temple to teach people about the Holiness of God, and what it means to be holy through sacred worship and willing obedience. Read Mark 13:14, John 3:1 -16 and John 4:23-24.
- 6. Compare the cherubim in the Temple building to Ezekiel's vision in the beginning chapters—what does that say about God's angels?
- 7. Jesus describes God's house as having many rooms in John 14:2. Considering Ezekiel's vision, what do you suppose is the meaning of the large number of rooms?
- 8. At the beginning of Chapter 43, Ezekiel recounts God's Glory at the Chebar river (Chapter 1) and God's Glory leaving the Temple in Jerusalem (Chapter 10). What causes him to remember these to instances, and why does he fall to the ground?

Ascending to the New Temple

The Psalms of Accent Psalms 120—134

Many Psalms have an ancient title. We cannot be sure whether these titles are original, but the meaning in each is clear.

The title of Psalms 120 to 134 are called the Psalms of Accent or 'step songs'.

It is interesting to note the author of these Psalms begins in a foreign country (Psalm 120).

And his Psalms end in the "holy place" in the "temple" (Psalm 134).

Consider these Psalms as a series of upward steps. And with each step, there is a closer relationship with God. That is a good way to describe a traveler's long journey to worship God at the temple especially so, as the temple was on the top of a hill.

