

# Ezekiel

## Oracles of Hope and Restoration

Ezekiel 39:27-29

February 15, 2020

### Today

**Ezekiel 39:27-29** - When I have brought them back from the nations and have gathered them from the countries of their enemies, I will show myself holy through them in the sight of many nations. <sup>28</sup> Then they will know that I am the LORD their God, for though I sent them into exile among the nations, I will gather them to their own land, not leaving any behind. <sup>29</sup> I will no longer hide my face from them, for I will pour out my Spirit on the house of Israel, declares the Sovereign LORD.

Not all is doom and gloom. Last week we saw glimpses of restoration – especially in Ezekiel’s vision of the dry bones coming back to life {37:1-14}.

Now we come to chapter 40.

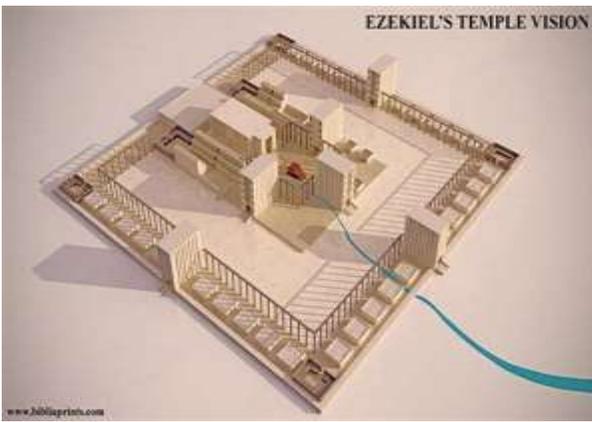
It’s day 10 of the New Year 573 BC - It has been 25 years since Ezekiel was taken to Babylon and 14 years since the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. Once again Ezekiel is minding his own business when The Lord brought him in vision to the Land of Israel. There Ezekiel saw a man who looked like bronze. He stood in the gateway with a linen cord and a measuring rod, which was approximately 10 ½ - 12 feet long. **{Revelation 11:1}**

- **Ezekiel 40:4** - The man said to me, "Son of man, look with your eyes and hear with your ears and pay attention to everything I am going to show you, for that is why you have been brought here. Tell the house of Israel everything you see."

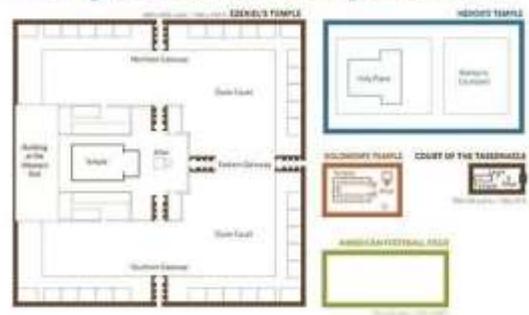
Based on the fall-to-fall Jewish Calendar – the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month is New Year’s Day *{Rosh Hashana}*. The 10<sup>th</sup> day is the Day of Atonement – the day the Sanctuary is Cleansed and Restored. It is fitting that Ezekiel would be given a vision of the Restored Temple on this important day.

The Man begins the detailed process of measuring the Temple **{there are 318 precise measurements and 37 architectural terms – “doorposts”, “windows”, etc.}**:

- Wall around the Temple = 1,000 feet each side – in other words it’s square.
- Eastern Gate
- Outer Gate
- Northern Gate
- Southern Gate
- Gateways to the Inner Court
- Place where sacrifices were prepared
- Chambers for singers and Priests
- The Inner Court and Vestibule
- The Sanctuary
- Side chambers on the Wall
- Building at the Western End
- The Temple Area
- Chambers for the priests
- Outer dimensions of the Temple



## Temple Size Comparisons



As we know – 4 years before the destruction of the Temple God left {11:23}, but now after giving Ezekiel the Blue Prints for this new and enormous Temple, something remarkable happens:

- **Ezekiel 43:1-5** - Then the man brought me to the gate facing east, <sup>2</sup> and I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east. His voice was like the roar of rushing waters, and the land was radiant with his glory. <sup>3</sup> The vision I saw was like the vision I had seen when he came to destroy the city and like the visions I had seen by the Kebar River, and I fell facedown. <sup>4</sup> The glory of the LORD entered the temple through the gate facing east. <sup>5</sup> Then the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple.

Jesus has come back Home!

This vision is a revelation of God's love for His people and His continuing desire to live among them.

- **Exodus 25:8** - Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them.

It also represented the restoration of His plan to work through Israel for the salvation of the world.

- **Genesis 28:14** - Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring.

But there were some conditions:

- **Ezekiel 43:10-11** - Son of man, describe the temple to the people of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their sins. Let them consider the plan, <sup>11</sup> and **if** they are ashamed of all they have done, make known to them the design of the temple-- its arrangement, its exits and entrances-- its whole design and all its regulations and laws. Write these down before them so that they may be faithful to its design and follow all its regulations.

The People of God had defiled the Temple in the grossest of ways by worshiping other gods within its walls. Now God wants them to consider their past behavior as well as His desired plans for them. **IF** they were ashamed and acknowledged their past record of transgressions and recommitted to go forward with God's plan for them, all that Ezekiel had foretold would certainly have come to pass = The building of this Temple was conditional. It was based on the people's desire for holiness and inner transformation.

We know that didn't happen. Ezra, Nehemiah and Haggai make no reference to this prophecy and there is no indication that the builders of the post-exile Temple made any attempt to build the new Temple according to these plans. This Temple has never been built.

43:13-46:24 are additional regulations regarding priests, feasts, worship, etc. all connected with this new City and Temple.

Now we come to Chapters 47 and 48. Here Ezekiel describes the land surrounding the Temple. There are many parallels with the description of the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21-22.

- Water flowed out from the Temple. 1750 ft from its origin the water came to Ezekiel's ankles. Another 1750 feet the water came to Ezekiel's waist. Another 1750 feet and the water was too deep and could not be crossed = The universal nature of the plan of Salvation. It was not intended for Israel alone but for the whole world. **{Revelation 22:1}**
- There will be Trees along both sides of the river. They will bear fruit every month. Their leaves will not wither and the fruit will not fail. Their fruit will be for food and their leaves for medicine. **{Revelation 22:2}**
- The Land will be divided equally. 13 plots of land = 1 plot for each Tribe of Israel and 1 plot for the Lord, where the New Temple and New City will be located.
- There will be 12 gates in this New City – 3 each north, south, east and west. Each gate will be named after one of the 12 Tribes = North are Rueben, Judah and Levi. East are Joseph, Benjamin and Dan. South are Simeon, Issachar and Zebulun. West are Gad, Asher and Naphtali. **{Revelation 21:12-13}**
- The name of this New City will be "The Lord Is There". **{Revelation 21:3; 22:3}**

With these words, “The Lord is There”, Ezekiel brings his ministry to a close. God had given him the difficult task of confirming the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple as well announcing that God had withdrawn His divine presence from the Temple because of the people’s sin. But God also granted Ezekiel the privilege of announcing that He had returned and still desired to dwell among them.

## **Take Aways**

**This Temple has never been built** – If the returning Jews had been faithful and accepted the conditions offered by Ezekiel – I believe there would have been a literal fulfillment of this prophecy. God gave Israel another 490 years; however, the people were not faithful. It is true that never again as a nation did they fall into idolatry, however, formal worship replaced sincere religion and human traditions replaced the revealed will of God. By their insistence on keeping the letter of the Law they lost sight of the Spirit of the Law. Finally Jesus came, in part, in a last-ditch effort to bring Israel back to Himself – they killed Him.

- **Ellen White (COL 305):** The law of God unmixed with human tradition was presented by Christ as the great standard of obedience. This aroused the enmity of the rabbis. They had set human teaching above God's word, and had turned the people away from His precepts. They would not give up their man-made commandments in order to obey the requirements of the word of God. They would not, for the truth's sake, sacrifice the pride of reason and the praise of men. When Christ came, presenting to the nation the claims of God, the priests and elders denied His right to interpose between them and the people. They would not accept His rebukes and warnings, and they set themselves to turn the people against Him and to compass His destruction. For the rejection of Christ, with the results that followed, they were responsible. A nation's sin and a nation's ruin were due to the religious leaders.

Therefore, this prophecy could not be fulfilled as God originally intended. The ultimate fulfillment is found in the eternal home of God and His people as described in Revelation 21-22.