

## Handout: Ezekiel Lesson 15

The seventh and last of Ezekiel's oracles relating to Israel's restoration in Chapters 38-39 in the previous lesson presents several theological lessons for Christians on this side of salvation history:

1. The oracle presents Yahweh as the unrivaled, sovereign Lord of human history. He allows powerful nations to rise up, and He puts them down according to His Divine Plan.
2. The sanctity of Yahweh's Divine Name is bound to the status and welfare of His covenant people. When they suffer under the dominion of foreign powers, it causes the questioning of His holiness and glory. The restoration of His covenant people is the ultimate vindication of His Name and reputation.
3. Yahweh is a God of grace and mercy. He does not withhold His forgiveness from those who have rebelled against Him when they repent and turn back to Him. He restores them to the full benefits of a covenant relationship and the intimacy of fellowship with Him.
4. When experiencing God's grace and mercy, instead of feeling it is something deserved, the recipient of God's mercy should be overwhelmed with a feeling of humility and unworthiness.
5. Yahweh keeps His covenants. He is faithful to the promises He has made, and He will not abandon His people in their time of need. As a seal of His covenant promises, He pours out His Spirit on them (Ez 39:29). The seal of the Holy Spirit is divine confirmation of the covenant union.

The anointing by God's Spirit is especially true for the New Covenant people of God:

1. The Spirit's action on Jesus' disciples and the Jews of Jerusalem on Pentecost Sunday (Acts 2:4, 33, 38).
2. The Spirit's action on the newly converted Samaritans (Acts 8:14-17).
3. The Spirit's action on the Gentile proselytes of Judea (Acts 10:44-48).
4. The Spirit's action on the Gentiles of Asia Minor (Acts 19:-6).
5. The Spirit's action on the emissaries of Christ who carry the Gospel message. For example, St. Paul writes of the possession of the Holy Spirit as the divine confirmation of the covenant and the basis of the believer's confidence and security (2 Cor 1:22; Eph 1:13; 4:30).

The formula statement "the hand of Yahweh..." introduces each of Ezekiel's four visions in 1:3, 8:1 (10:1 in NAB), 37:1, and 40:1:

1. The inaugural vision of God's chariot of fire and the scroll (Ez Chapters 1-3) in July, 593.
2. The vision of the Temple abuses and God's glory leaving the Temple (Ez Chapters 8-11) in September, 592 BC.
3. The vision of the bones in the Valley of Death (Ez Chapter 37); no date.
4. The vision of the future Temple (Ez Chapters 40-48) in March/April 573 BC.

Ezekiel 40:1-48:35 presents a lengthy narrative of Ezekiel's vision of the new Temple, the new Israel, and the new Jerusalem. The date for the vision is the 10<sup>th</sup> of Abib (March/April) 573 BC. It will be the same date in 30 AD that Jesus rides into the city of Jerusalem on Palm/Passion Sunday.

→ over

The fourth vision divides into four parts:

1. Ezekiel receives a guided tour of an idealized Temple complex (Chapters 40-42).
2. He witnesses the glory of Yahweh returning to the rebuilt Temple, whose departure he saw in the first Temple vision in 10:18-22 (Chapter 43:1-12).
3. Then, his angelic guide gives him instruction in the Torah relevant to the new structure and the community gathered around it (Chapter 43:13-46:24).
4. Finally, the guide defines and describes the land beyond the Temple (Chapters 47-48).

There were two different cubit measurements used in the ancient Near East: the common cubit of six palms/handbreadths (18 inches/45cm) and the older “great” or “royal” cubit of seven palms/handbreadths (21 inches/53cm). The angelic guide uses the “great” or “royal” cubit used in the building of Solomon’s Temple. The “rod” in 40:3 and 5 was a little longer than 10 feet/3 meters.

In 40:47-49, the guide leads Ezekiel into the Temple proper. The inner court was a square. It is odd that there is no mention of an Altar of Sacrifice in the inner courtyard as in Solomon’s Temple. Ten steps lead up to the Temple’s entrance. There are three essential elements to the Sanctuary’s spaces that run east to west, increasing in sanctity:

1. The Ulam that is the vestibule or porch (40:48-49) is 35 feet long by 21 feet wide.
2. The Hekal that is the Nave or Holy Place (41:1-2) is 71 feet long by 25 feet wide.
3. The Debir that is the Holy of Holies (41:3-4) is a cube 35 feet by 35 feet by 35 feet.

The furnishings in Solomon’s Jerusalem Temple:

1. The Ark of the Covenant and Mercy Seat in the Debir/Holy of Holies (1 Kng 8:1-7).
2. The two golden statues of cherubim that stood above the Ark in the Debir/Holy of Holies (1 Kng 6:23-28a; 8:6-7).
3. The golden table(s) for the permanent offering of the Bread of the Presence in the Hekal/Holy Place (1 Kng 7:48; 2 Chr Chapters 4-5; 28:14-17).
4. The solid gold lampstands in the Hekal/Holy Place (1 Kng 7:49; 2 Chr 4:7)
5. The bronze Altar of Burnt Offerings in the courtyard in front of the Sanctuary entrance (1 Kng 8:22; 2 Chr 4:1).
6. The Golden Altar of Incense in the Hekal/Holy Place in front of the curtain that covered the entrance to the Debir/Holy of Holies (1 Kng 6:20-21).
7. The Bronze Basin in the courtyard of the Altar of Sacrifice for the priests to ritually wash their hands and feet before entering the Hekal/Holy Place (1 Kng 7:23-26; 2 Chr 4:2-5, 10).
8. Ten bronze wheeled water stands (2 Kng 7:27-39; 2 Chr 4:6).

Michal E. Hunt Copyright © 2018 [www.AgapeBibleStudy.com](http://www.AgapeBibleStudy.com)