

(Through the Bible) Ezekiel 40-48

by Chuck Smith

Chuck Smith explores the visions of Ezekiel 40-48, highlighting the new temple, sacrifices, and the return of Jesus Christ in glory.

Duration: 1:22:03

Scripture: Ezekiel 40:4, Ezekiel 45:9-10, Matthew 5:13-22

Topics: "End Times", "Evangelism"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the significance of Jesus' ascension into heaven and his promise to return in the same manner. The sermon also mentions a vision of a temple with a spring of water flowing towards the east, emphasizing that this temple is related to the house of Israel in the kingdom age, not the church. The speaker then talks about the importance of sharing the message of God's love and the dedication of a baptismal site on the Jordan River. The sermon concludes with a reminder to let our actions as Christians shine brightly and create a thirst for Jesus Christ in others.

Transcript

We want to get into the study of Ezekiel tonight and right off the top, I would like to confess to you that of all of the Bible and the passages in the Bible, I understand this the least. I do not pretend to have a full and complete understanding of Ezekiel chapters 40 through 48. In fact, I have greater difficulty with these passages than I do any other section of the Bible.

And because I do lack personally in an understanding of this section, I do find it extremely difficult to minister from this particular section of the scriptures. I can't wait till I get back and get into the book of Daniel. And when we return, we'll take your next assignment will be Daniel, the first six chapters.

And I can hardly wait to get into Daniel because that I understand. Now, Ezekiel up to this point, I have, I feel a pretty good grasp and understanding of it. But beginning tonight with chapter 40 and going through the end, I get lost.

I don't understand it completely. And to help an understanding because he is describing the new temple that is to be built now from the description of this temple, it will be a temple that will be built during the kingdom age. After the return of Jesus Christ, this will not be the temple that would be rebuilt during, uh, the, in the very near future under the, uh, decree that is made by the antichrist.

But this is yet future. Now we've passed out diagrams for you by which we have sought to more or less draw a diagram for you of this new temple that it is to be built. Notice that basically it is square and the outer walls of this temple are 500 cubits long and 500 cubits broad.

Now this is the, the building itself. Outside of this, there is the wall that is 5,000 or 500 reads. Now to help you understand, we get into cubits, reads, and we're into types of measurements that are not familiar with us.

According to the definition, the cubit here is a cubit plus a span, the cubit that he measured with, which would be the cubit is the length from your elbow to your fingertips. And the span of course, is, uh, from your thumb to your fingertip. So the length from your elbow to your fingertip, about 18 inches plus the span gives you about 24 inches.

So you're dealing with cubits of 24 inches. Now, as you look at this diagram again, you notice this outer, uh, wall of the building would then be about a thousand feet, 500 cubits, which would make it about a thousand feet, which means that that is a fairly good size building, uh, comprising a hundred thousand square feet within, uh, the perimeters of the building. Uh, so then you notice this inner court, that inner court is a hundred cubits square, which would mean about 200 feet square.

So again, uh, you begin to get the size of this building. It is quite large indeed and inner court 200 feet. The, this building from wall to wall is about 180 feet.

So you add another 20 feet and the same distance back and you have the inner court here, which is about a 200 foot square. Uh, so that helps you then to get the overall, uh, idea of the overall size of the building. It is a quite, uh, quite a large building, the new temple that will be built plus the wall that goes around it at 5,000 or 500 reads a read is five of these cubits, which would be 10 feet in length.

So the wall around the whole thing would be almost a mile square. Now at the present time in Jerusalem, there is no area where this could be built, especially on the temple Mount, the temple Mount that was vastly enlarged by King Herod is nowhere near a mile square. In fact, the whole old city of Jerusalem is just about a mile square.

So when Jesus returns and prior to the return of Jesus Christ, there are to be many cataclysmic events. The book of revelation, for instance, describes a tremendous earthquake that is going to Joel Jerusalem so that a 10th part of the city will be destroyed. This plus the other cataclysmic events that are described in the book of revelation, uh, the present situation of Jerusalem with the earthquake.

And of course, when Christ returns, there'll be a great cataclysmic event in that the Mount of olives will be splitting in the middle and a new Valley will be formed. And no doubt with the new Valley that is formed and this great shaking of the earth, a new mountain will be shoved up and this mountain will be called Mount Zion and it will be very high in the side of all of the earth. According to the prophecies that are in Isaiah and in Jeremiah, so that the new temple will be built then upon this new Mount Zion.

And, uh, thus, uh, the, uh, the large area that is devoted for the temple, but you see the diagram here of the buildings themselves. And thus, as you go through Ezekiel, beginning with chapter 40, as Ezekiel is taken by the spirit and is shown this new temple of God, it's in the 20th year of our captivity, which would have been the year five 72 BC in the beginning of the year, which would have been April the 10th day of the month in the 14th year after the city was smitten in the self, same day the hand of the Lord was upon

me and brought me feather in the visions of God. He brought me into the land of Israel.

He set me up on a very high mountain by which was the frame of the city on the South. So there is a very new high mountain that rises up, uh, there in Israel, uh, in the area of Jerusalem. And he brought me feather and behold, there was a man whose appearance was like the appearance of brass with a line of flax in his hand and with a measuring rod, he stood in the gate and the man said unto me, son of man, behold with your eyes and here with your ears and set your heart upon all that I will show you for to the intent that I might show them unto thee, you have been brought here.

So he meets the man who introduces himself and says, now, you know, pay careful attention to all these things I'm showing you because for this purpose, you've been brought here and then declare all that you see to the house of Israel. So in these passages we are dealing in the kingdom age and with the house of Israel, we are not dealing with the church and really this temple that is to be built and its worship is not related to the church, but it is related to Israel in the kingdom age. And so it is to be really like be related to the house of Israel.

Now, behold, there was a wall on the outside of the house roundabout in the man's hand, a measuring rod of six cubits long. Uh, the cubit, uh, is about 18 inches, 10 feet, uh, by the cubit and a hand breadth about 12 feet. He measured the breadth of the building one rod in the height one rod.

Then he came to the gate, which looked toward the east. Now you notice on the bottom of your diagram, we've drawn here the gate towards the east. We've only drawn three steps.

There are seven steps leading up into that gate and the gate itself becomes a corridor because on either side you have these rooms, uh, that go along and then the area known as the porch sort of a porch, portico, uh, arch porch area, uh, that is in the pavement there. Uh, and uh, it describes the porch and the arches and, uh, the, uh, various, uh, carvings of the cherubim, uh, that are upon, uh, these, uh, arches and on these posts. Now I'm not going to try to, uh, go through and, uh, and, and follow this all with you.

It gets very laborious and therefore I'm going to allow you, uh, that opportunity if you so desire to get the thing in your mind, uh, to take the diagram that we have prepared for you and, uh, and, and as best you can follow it through, read it out and, and, and see if you can more or less, uh, figure this whole thing out. Uh, you have, uh, the inner court in verse 27 toward the south. Now you'll notice that there are gates that come in on three sides, both into the, uh, outer court area here and then in three more gates corresponding with the outer gates into the inner court area.

Those steps coming into the outer court area are seven steps upward coming into the inner court. There are eight steps. So you are coming from a lower plane, rising to a higher plane, and then the temple house is yet on a higher level.

So the whole thing is ascending up, but you have the three gates, no gate to the west, but there are gates to the east, to the north and to the south, but none coming from the west. And so you come in through these gates into the outer chamber and then up through the steps into the inner court. Now, uh, only a certain, uh, group were allowed on into the inner court.

Those that were making the sacrifices themselves, you would find the altar of burnt offering in the middle of the inner court. And then on the west side, you find the temple house itself and, uh, the holy place, uh, within the temple house, uh, the holy place being 20, uh, by 20 or about a 40 foot, uh, cube area. Now, as

you go into these measurements, you'll find that they are many of them in multiples of 12, which I'm sure has some significance, but just what the significance is, I cannot tell you for sure, uh, because I don't know.

Uh, there's a lot of things that people can read into things. I would rather not read things into it, but just, uh, read it as it is. And that which I understand, tell you that which I don't understand, just let you know that I don't understand it, uh, what it's a significance or whatever, but I've noticed in going through many multiples of 12.

So in chapter 41, he continues to describe the temple and the post, uh, and all he, and, uh, he measured in verse four, you get into the temple house itself and to the holy place, which was 20 cubits before the temple. This is the most holy place. The temple house itself is 20 cubits by 40 cubits, uh, which would be about 40 by 80 feet, which is a fairly good size, uh, room in itself.

And he describes in verses 18 and 19, the cherubims that are carved, uh, upon the, uh, various, uh, and the palm trees and all, uh, on the, uh, doors of the inner house and upon the walls and, um, all of these carvings of, of the cherubim and palms and the temple and the sanctuary had two doors, verse 23, and the doors had two leaves of peace turning leaves. In other words, the double doors, much like we have coming in here and the doors, uh, opened, uh, as these doors do. Then he brought me into the utter court verse or chapter 42 to the north.

And he brought me into the chamber that was against the separate place. And, uh, as I say, I'm going to leave you, uh, with this, uh, you may take this, uh, diagram home and, uh, the separate place is that area you'll notice that surrounds the temple house itself. Uh, and, uh, he begins to describe for him here, this separate place that was about the temple house, uh, verse 13 there where the priest that approached the Lord shall eat the most Holy things.

So you see this little chamber for the priest and there are four of them, uh, off of this separate place where the priest eat, uh, before the Lord, uh, of the portion of the sacrifices that are brought and they shall, uh, lay the most Holy things, the meal offerings, the sin offerings, the trespass offerings for the places Holy. And when the priests enter therein, then shall they not go out of the Holy place into the utter court, but they shall lay their garments wherein they minister for they are Holy. They shall put on other garments and shall approach those things which are for the people.

So there are special robes for the priest when they're in this place and they're not to be, uh, worn outside. Now in chapter 43, he brought him then to the gate that looks towards the East. This is at the bottom of your diagram.

And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East and his voice was like the voice or like the noise of many waters and the earth shined with his glory. Here you have the return of the glory of God to Israel. Now earlier Ezekiel saw in a vision the glory of God leaving the temple and gradually as it left the temple, it settled at the gate towards the East and then it ascended and God's glory was removed from Israel.

Here we find the glory of God returning to Israel. And again, even as the glory of God departed by the gate to the East, so the glory of God returns by the gate to the East and his voice was like the noise of many waters in revelation chapter one, as John is describing Jesus Christ in his glory, he does declare that his voice was like the noise of many waters. I would assume that this reference here in Ezekiel is a reference

to the return of Jesus Christ in glory.

Then shall they see the son of man coming with clouds and great glory and he shall set his foot in that day on the Mount of Olives and it shall split in the middle and a new valley will be formed from East to West when the Mount of Olives is split in the middle. Now according to other passages of scripture, when Christ returns, you remember when he ascended, he went with his disciples to the Mount of Olives and when they had gone as far as Bethany, which is just over the top of the Mount of Olives, Jesus ascended up into heaven and the disciples were standing there gazing up into heaven as they watched the cloud catch him out of their sight and two men stood by them in shining apparel and said, ye men of Galilee, why stand ye here gazing into heaven for this same Jesus shall come again in like manner as you have seen him go into heaven. And so the coming of Jesus Christ as he went in glory up into heaven, he'll come again setting his foot on the Mount of Olives.

A great cataclysmic event takes place as the Mount of Olives splits, no doubt creating what we will get to later. This new stream that will issue from the Southern part here of the, I mean from the Eastern part here down on the bottom part of your page, the new stream that will issue from the temple of God, which will flow down to the Dead Sea and we'll get to that after a while. But a part of this, this is all a part of this great geological structural change that will take place when the Mount of Olives splits and when the city is shaken and the preparation for the return of Jesus Christ, the establishing of his kingdom and the earth shine with the glory as Christ returns there in verse two.

Now, as he returns that surrounded, of course, with the angelic beings, the cherubim, Bible speaks about his coming with the angels. It also speaks about his coming with the church, coming with clouds and great glory. Clouds symbolically are numbers of people, throngs of people.

Paul said, when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory. Then shall they see the Son of Man coming with the angels to judge the earth. Then so, uh, the saints that came with him, revelation 19.

So Christ coming with a heavenly multitude to establish God's kingdom upon the earth and the glory of the Lord came into the house by the way of the gate, whose prospect is toward the east. So the spirit took me up and brought me into the inner court and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house and I heard him speaking unto me out of the house and the man stood by me and he said unto me, son of man, place the place of my throne and the place of the souls of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever. And my holy name shall the house of Israel no more defiled, neither they nor their Kings by their Hortum, nor by the carcasses of their Kings in the high places in their setting of their threshold on by my thresholds and their post by my post and walls and so forth.

My holy name, uh, they will not defile anymore by their abominations, which they've committed. Now let them put away their Hortum and the carcasses of their Kings far from me. And I will dwell in the midst of them forever.

And so the declaration of God's coming, uh, the coming of the kingdom, uh, to dwell in the midst of the people. So Ezekiel is commanded to show these things to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities and let them measure the pattern and all. Now he, in verse 13 gives you the measure of the altar and we have the altar there in the center of the whole building complex.

And this altar is a fairly good size altar. Uh, it has four horns on the corners of the altars and, uh, they offer the sacrifices in verse 19 through the end of the chapter. The priest make the offerings, uh, of the sacrifices and all, uh, the, the various offerings, sin offering, burn offering, and, uh, the, um, uh, peace offerings.

Now here's where one of the problems arises. And that is why would sin offerings be made in the kingdom age? For we know that the old Testament sacrifices all pointed to that one sacrifice of Jesus Christ, whereby our sins would be purged once and for all. And in Hebrews, we are told that Christ has suffered once and for all, that he is the sin offering of which all of the old Testament offerings were just a shadow.

The substance is of Christ. Why then will they be offering sacrifices again in the new temple during the kingdom age? And many suggestions have been offered for the reason for these sacrifices. Some of them saying, well, this is all symbolic.

They really aren't offered. I cannot accept that. Many people spiritualize them.

I cannot accept that. I think that it speaks very plainly that there will be these offerings offered during the kingdom age. Now, as we look at the old Testament sacrifices that were made, we realized number one, that they did not actually put away sins.

The Lord said, and when they make the sacrifice, it shall be for a Kofar, which Hebrew word is covering. And so the sins will be covered. It doesn't say they would be put away.

They would be covered. Now in Hebrews, we read that it is impossible that the blood of bulls or goats could put away sin, but all they could do was to speak of the better sacrifice, which was to come. That is of Jesus.

So the old Testament sacrifices did not put away sin, but they testified of that sacrifice that would come by which sins would be put away once and for all. I believe that the only explanation that can be given for sacrifices here in the temple, in the kingdom age, is that these sacrifices are memorial sacrifices looking back at what Christ has done. Even as the old Testament sacrifices looked forward, did not put away sin, but gave anticipation for the sacrifice that would be offered.

Even now, these are offered in memorial as we look back at that sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Now you remember that Jesus took bread and broke it and gave to his disciples and said, take, eat. This is my body broken for you.

He took also the cup after supper and he said, take drink. This is the blood in the new covenant that is shed for the remission of sins. For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you do show the Lord's death until he comes.

This do he said in remembrance of me. And even as we have our communion services and we break the bread and we drink the cup in remembrance of what Jesus did in his death for our sins. So when sacrifice is offered sacrifices are reinstated in the kingdom age.

They will not be for the purpose of putting away sin, but they will be memorial offerings by which we will be reminded of that sacrifice by which the sins were put away. And we'll be looking back to the cross and the sacrifice that was made there by Jesus Christ, the sin offering being made here in the kingdom age and that is to me reading it the way it says, but in seeking to understand it, that is the only understanding that I

personally can come to the reason for there being a sin offering sacrifice in those days. Now, as we get to chapter 44, we come to a prophecy that is so often misinterpreted.

And I must confess to you that I have often misinterpreted this prophecy and as I read it more carefully and have read it more carefully this time, and this is one of the problems I have with this last portion of Ezekiel, that every time I read it, I seem to see something else that I didn't quite understand before. And my whole views have to change again, but he brought me back to the way of the gate of the outward sanctuary, which looks towards the East and it was shut. Now you go over to Jerusalem today and the East gate of the wall of Jerusalem is shut.

It has been walled shut. There are big stones and the gate is shut. And they will often point to this gate and declare to you that this gate being shut is actually the fulfillment of Ezekiel 44 and that this gate is shut and it's going to be shut until the Prince comes to enter through the gate.

But if you'll read the whole thing carefully, you'll come to, first of all, the realization that the Prince here is not Jesus Christ. For as we move along a little further, the Prince has sons who he gives his inheritance to. The Prince is mentioned some thirteen times here and he will be a Prince, but not as we so often have thought of as Jesus Christ.

The gate that is here shut is open for the Prince. He uses it as an entry and as an exit, that is the gate towards the East, and it's only for his entrance into the court. Those others who come in come from the gates to the North and the South.

But it is not the gate that is called today the Golden Gate on the East wall of the ancient wall of Jerusalem. Now the reason why that gate is closed and walled up is someone misinterpreted this prophecy a long time ago of the Prince or the Messiah coming in through the East gate and they thought that they would hinder his coming by sealing up that gate towards the East. But as I read this more carefully, I find that this is the gate to the sanctuary.

It will be in this new temple and it is the gate into the sanctuary itself and thus cannot be that gate towards the East that you find blocked over there. And I suggest that you read this again more carefully. Now I found this a great disappointment because I love to point out that gate to the people and read to them this prophecy out of Ezekiel and show to them how look it's sealed, it's shut, and it's going to remain that way until you know the Messiah, the Prince enters in.

But the Prince here is not referred to as the Messiah nor is he referred to as David. Now in other places we do have the Prince David and the reference there and the Prince definitely there is Jesus Christ. But this Prince is never referred to as David here in 44th chapter onward and it speaks much about the Prince and as I say it speaks of his sons to whom he gives an inheritance and his servants.

And that pretty much precludes Jesus Christ as the Prince. But as we read it, he brought me back to the way of the gate of the outward sanctuary and it looks towards the East and it was shut. Then said the Lord unto me, this gate shall be shut.

It is not to be open and no man shall enter in by it because the Lord, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it. Therefore it shall be shut. The glory of the Lord entered in by the East gate and for that reason it was to be shut.

But it is for the Prince, the Prince he shall sit in it to eat bread before the Lord. He shall enter by the way of the porch of the gate and he shall go out by the way of the same. And then he brought me to the way of the North gate before the house and I looked and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord and I fell on my face.

So coming around to this gate to the North as Ezekiel looked in, even as the glory of the Lord filled the temple of Solomon, so the glory of the Lord filled the temple area and Ezekiel falls upon his face. The Lord said unto me, son of man, mark well and behold with your eyes and hear with your ears all that I say concerning all of the ordinances of the house of the Lord and all of the laws thereof and mark well the entering in of the house with every going forth of the sanctuary. So he's told now by the Lord to make a careful account of this market.

Well, thou shalt say to the rebellious, even to the house of Israel, thus saith the Lord God, all ye house of Israel, let it suffice you of all your abominations in that you have brought into my sanctuary strangers who were uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh. Paul, the apostle speaks about circumcision of the heart. Uh, and many times people who go through a ritual that has a symbolism soon begin to trust in the ritual, but there is no reality and thus it is a meaningless ritual.

The ritual of circumcision was actually to speak of a people who were not living after the flesh, but living after the spirit, the cutting off of the flesh. And so it was the denial of the flesh life to live the life of the spirit. But the right itself did not guarantee that many people had gone through the right of circumcision were still living after the flesh.

And so the whole ritual was totally, uh, negated by the fact that they were living after the flesh. Now the ritual of baptism is to signify that your old man was crucified and you're living the new life after Jesus Christ. The old man after the flesh is dead.

He's buried in the waters of baptism, and now you have a whole new life in the spirit. But the ritual is totally meaningless. If after the baptism, you are still living after the flesh, the old life of the flesh and after the nature of the old man.

And I don't care how many ways or times you've been baptized. It's totally, it's only a ritual and it becomes a meaningless ritual unless there is the reality that has been carried through in your life. And so the important thing is not if you've experienced the ritual, but have you experienced the reality of which the ritual is a symbol.

And so he speaks here of the uncircumcision of the heart. And Paul picks that up in the book of Romans showing to the Jews that the right of circumcision was totally negated by the fact that they were still living after the flesh for God wants the circumcision of the heart, not of the flesh. And it's the circumcision of the heart that counts.

That is what has gone on within your heart is what really matters to God, not what you've done in outward rituals. And this is where people today who are trusting in rituals are in great danger because it could be just a meaningless thing that you have gone through. And the church has many rituals that become totally meaningless unless there is the corresponding reality in your life.

The ritual means nothing apart from the reality that has happened in your life. So you say, well, I take communion. So I've been baptized.

So those are marvelous rituals. They are very meaningful rituals if the truth has been actualized in your own experience. But there are many people that are just trusting in the fact that they have taken the communion.

So my sins are washed or I've been baptized. So, you know, I'm a new creature, but there's got to be a corresponding reality in our lives. And so God is speaking against these that have come in before him, uncircumcised in their hearts and in their flesh.

And so in this future temple, there will be nothing allowed in that defiles or that is defiled. Now there's an interesting thing to me as we get down to verse 17. It shall come to pass that that is when the priest enter in at the gates of the inner court, they shall be clothed with linen garments and no wool shall come upon them while they minister in the gates of the inner court and within.

So once they come into that inner court, the area where the priest came to minister to the Lord, the offering of the sacrifice and so forth, there was to be only linen garments worn no wool. They shall have on linen bonnets on their heads, linen breeches on their loins. They shall not gird themselves with anything that causes sweat.

Now that to me is extremely interesting. God really doesn't want you to sweat when you're serving him. But perspiration is quite often a sign of the lack of inspiration.

And when you don't have inspiration, you're quite often you need perspiration to get through. Now Jesus said, my yoke is easy. My burden is light.

One thing God never wants is that man complaining of his service or what he has given to God. That is why the new Testament teaches us that you are to determine in your own heart what you're to give. No one should be pressuring you, pushing you, exciting you to give, but every man should determine in his own heart that which he is going to give to the Lord.

And then he should give to God with a joyful heart or with a hilarious spirit for God loves a hilarious giver. God wants you to be hilarious over everything you've given to him. He never wants you to be begrudging or griping about what you've given.

God doesn't want any service that requires sweat. God doesn't want any complaining over what has been given to him. Therefore, if you cannot give to God hilariously, you would be better off not giving at all.

Especially if you find yourself complaining or griping about what you have given to God. What an insult to God that I would go around complaining or griping about what I gave. That is why we are extremely careful here never to try to excite people to give to God or even to encourage people to give to God.

In fact, you notice that you were at the third service, I think it was this morning, when Mark was making the announcements after he said the ushers will now come to receive the offering. I've told the young men, now look, we don't take offerings from people. We receive offerings.

We'll be glad to receive what you want to give to God, but we're not going to take anything from you. We don't want to take anything from you. If you want to give to God, we'll receive it.

But it's completely up to you what God has laid upon your heart. There'll never be any pressures for pledges or anything else, because that is something between you and God, and when you give it to God,

you should be giving it hilariously, happily, joyfully unto the Lord, and that the Lord accepts and will bless you for it. But he doesn't want you going out of here saying, oh, you know, I don't know what I'm going to do.

I've given so much to God. Oh, God just can't stand that, and he doesn't want that kind of giving, nor does he want pressured service, where I'm under a pressure, I'm sweating, you know, as I'm serving God. And so, it's very significant to me that they are to wear only linen.

They are not to wear anything that would cause sweat. Now, when they go out to the people, then they change their garments, and the garments that they ministered in, they lay them there in the holy chambers. Now, neither are they to shave their heads, nor allow their locks to grow long.

They shall only pull their heads. Neither shall any priest drink wine when he enters into the inner court. Again, God does not want service under any false stimulant.

We remember when the tabernacle was first erected there in the wilderness, and the fire of God came and kindled the coals on the altar, and the sacrifice was consumed. An exciting moment because here was spontaneous combustion. They had set the sacrifice upon the altar.

They were ready to institute the whole thing. When fire came from God, and the altar was kindled, an exciting moment because the glory of God ascended upon the tabernacle. And all of the people fell on their faces when they saw this, and it was a glorious, exciting moment.

God manifested His presence in the midst of the people. And the two sons of Aaron grabbed their little censers, and they put incense in them, and they went to offer incense before the Lord, but they lit their censers with fire that God called strange fire. And the fire came out from the altar, and the two sons of Aaron were killed, were consumed by the fire that came from the altar.

And then the Lord, in instructing Moses, said, Tell Aaron and his sons that they are not to drink wine when they come, or before they come, to offer before the Lord the sacrifice, or when they come before the Lord to serve, not to be drinking wine. Because God does not want service out of any kind of a false stimulus. God wants your mind to be totally clear.

I know what I'm doing. I'm not being, you know, falsely stimulated as I am serving God. I know that God has forgiven me, but I am guilty of having stimulated people to serve God with false stimulants.

I used to offer to the children bicycles if they would bring so many to Sunday school. The one who brings the most will get a free trip to Disneyland. And I used to offer all kinds of incentives to get the kids, you know, to hustle their friends into Sunday school.

And these incentives that I was offering to the children were actually false stimulants. And I was guilty of offering these kind of false incentives for serving God. The only incentive that God wants you to serve Him with is the incentive of a heart of love.

Paul said, For the love of Christ constrains me. And the only real service that God will accept from you is that service that comes from a heart of love. That's the only stimulant any of us should ever need.

We sing the chorus, I will serve you because I love you. And that's what it's all about. That's the stimulant for serving God.

God doesn't want you to serve Him under any other stimulant. He doesn't want you to serve Him in order that you might please the pastor or please the committee chairman or please the board or whatever. He wants you to serve Him only because you love Him.

And that is why we have steered so totally away from any kind of contest or anything else that would create a false stimulant for people to serve God. That's why we never ask people to serve God. So many times people come up and they say, We've been coming to Calvary for a long time and we used to be involved in church and we love teaching Sunday school.

How do you get to, how do you become a Sunday school teacher here? And we said, well, you just found out you have to ask. No one's going to come asking you putting a Sunday school book in your hand and saying, would you please, you know, teach our second graders in the third service? You know, if you want to serve the Lord, there are plenty of opportunities for you to serve Him, but no one's going to be pressuring you or pushing you to do it. God's got to do that work in your heart and you're going to serve Him out of your love for Him.

And that way we don't have to be kicking everybody week by week to keep them going. You know, we don't have to be pushing. I went back to Lubbock, Texas and pastored or not pastored, I ministered for a week or so in a Southern Baptist church in Lubbock.

And the pastor back there said something I thought was extremely interesting. He said, we decided to let every program in the church die a natural death. He said, we decided to take off the artificial systems and let everything die that couldn't survive on its own.

We weren't going to, you know, keep things going with artificial support systems. He said, we've been doing that for too many years and they just allowed all of the programs in the church to die that just didn't carry with their own momentum. I thought that was extremely wise.

Pretty much we do the same thing here. We do not have any artificial life support systems by which we're keeping any programs alive. And we're very blunt and plain about it.

If God wants a thing to go, it'll go. He's able to make it go. And we're not going to try and push it when God's trying to kill it.

Let it die a natural death with dignity and don't keep the thing going with these artificial supports. So, uh, the priest were not to drink any wine when they entered into the inner court and their wives, they were, uh, not to take a wife who was a widow nor her who had been divorced, but they shall take maidens or virgins from the house of Israel or a widow whose husband was a priest. And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and the profane.

This is something that we were talking about this morning, how important it is for us to discern between what is holy and what is profane. And that's the ministry of the priest. They were causing the people to discern these things in any controversies, they would stand in judgment and judge.

According to my judgments, they shall keep my laws and statutes and all my assemblies and they shall howl my Sabbaths. And it goes on to give the laws and all respecting the priest there in the kingdom age, they shall not receive any inheritance for Lord is their inheritance. Much as the priest were at the time of Joshua, when they came into the land.

Now in chapter 45, he describes here the length and all of the city of the land itself. And it is described here as being in length, 25,000 reeds and in breadth, 10,000 reeds. And then the sanctuary 500 in length, 500 in breadth, square roundabout and 50 cubits around that for the suburbs.

And if this measured also measure the length, 25,000, the breadth 10,000, it shall be the sanctuary and the most holy place. The holy portion of the land shall be for the priest and the minister. So this is the area that God has set aside for those priests and those ministers in, uh, the land, the holy place for the sanctuary.

And you shall appoint the possession of the city 5,000 broad five and 25,000 long over against the oblation of the holy portion. It shall be for the whole house of Israel. Now the portions for the prince verse seven, one side of the other side of the oblation of the holy portion, the possession of the city before the oblation to the holy portion and before the possession of the city from the West side, Westward from the East side Eastward the length.

So be over against one of the portions in the West. And you see why I haven't gone through the whole thing. I get lost in this to tell you the truth.

And, and so there's a lot of this that I just file and say, all right, Lord, one day, you know, when I see it, maybe I'll understand it, but I just don't get it now. And, um, that's just the way it is. Now the Lord, the Lord commands the princes in verse nine to remove violence and spoil and execute judgment and justice.

Take away your exactions from my people. Sayeth the Lord God. In other words, quit taxing the people.

That's an interesting thing. And you shall have just balances, a just EFA and a bath and a bath and a bath shall be of one major. Now many times those, those merchants in those days had weights to sell with and weights to buy.

And you can see what could happen with that one set of weights to buy from you and another set of weights to sell to you. And, uh, so these measurements are the equal, those that you buy with and those that you sell with one. And he goes ahead and tells the, uh, measurements and, and the size of the measurements and so forth.

It will be in those days, things that we cannot really relate to. Now the cleansing of the sanctuary is spoken of in verse 18 with the Bullock without blemish and how that the priesthood to take the blood of it and put it upon the post of the house and upon the four corners and upon the post of the gates in the inner court. And now so do this the seventh day of the month for everyone that Ereth and for him that is simple.

So you reconcile the house and the feast of the Passover is to be reinstated. And that should be extremely interesting. Uh, when again, they have the feast of the Passover as they had celebrated in so many times in their history, fantastic, glorious events in the celebration of the peace of the Passover.

Now it describes in chapter 46, how the prince worships in this new sanctuary. Thus saith the Lord God, the gate of the inner court that looks towards the east shall be shut the six working days, but on the Sabbath it will be opened in the day of the new moon. It will be open.

So this gate on the inner court that you see here in your diagram, six days of the week will be closed. It will be open only on the Sabbath day and the prince shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate without and shall stand by the post of the gate and the priest shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace

offerings and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate and he shall go forth, but the gate shall not be shut until the evening. Likewise, the people of the land shall worship at the door of this gate before the Lord in the Sabbath and in the new moons and the burnt offerings of the prince shall offer unto the Lord.

So the fact that he is offering burnt offerings under the Lord, which are consecration offerings and all sort of precludes him being Jesus Christ, the meal offerings, and it describes the various offerings that he will offer. And when the prince shall enter, he shall go in by the way of the porch of that gate and he shall go forth by the way thereof. But when the people of the land come before the Lord in the solemn feast and enter, they are in her by the North gate and they leave by the South of where they enter by the South gate.

They leave by the North and it goes ahead and tells of the offerings and how the offerings are to be boiled and so forth in offering them unto the Lord. Now in chapter 47 we find this river that comes forth from this East gate afterward. He brought me again into the door of the house and behold the waters issued out from under the threshold of the house Eastward for the forefront of the house stood toward the East and the waters came down from under the right side of the house at the South side of the altar.

Now here from the house of God, this temple house, a spring of water bubbles out and begins to flow toward the East. This is also described in or spoken of in Zechariah and it certainly has its counterpart in Revelation chapter 22, that stream in heaven of which many of the aspects of this are similar to the one there. Now it comes out from the throne there of the temple from the South part of the East side and he took him out the North gate because the East gate was only for the prince and he measured a thousand cubits and he brought me through the water and it was ankle deep.

So he measured another thousand and he brought me through the water and the water was up to my knees and again he measured a thousand cubits and he brought me through the waters and they were to my loins and after he measured another thousand it was a river that I could not pass over for the waters were so high they were waters to swim in, a river that you could not just walk across. So here is an interesting thing, this river that begins here at the temple and begins to flow eastward from the temple towards the Jordan Valley, it increases as it goes. So at a thousand cubit or two thousand feet away approximately, it's only ankle deep.

By the time you get almost two thirds of a mile away, three quarters of a mile away, it's knee deep. You go another three quarters of a mile, two thousand feet and it's waist deep. Go another thousand feet and it's over your head.

And so this great river coming forth from the area of Jerusalem, originating there at the temple but yet picking up from other sources, begins to flow probably through the valley that is created when the Mount of Olives splits in the middle and flows on down to the Jordan plain. And he said to me, son of man, did you see that? And then he brought me and caused me to return to the bank of the river. Now when I had returned, behold the bank of the river, there were very many trees on either side.

And he said unto me, these waters issue out toward the east country. They go down to the desert and they go into the sea, which being brought forth into the sea, the water shall be healed. And it shall come to pass that everything that lives, which moves whether so ever the river shall come shall live.

And there shall be a very great multitude of fish because these waters shall come thither for they shall be healed and everything shall live whether the water comes. And it shall come to pass that the fishers shall stand upon it from En Gedi even to En Iglam and they shall be a place to spread forth the nets. Their fish

shall be according to their kinds, all of the kinds of the fish, even as you find in the Mediterranean just a great variety of fish.

So the interesting thing about this new river that will flow into the Dead Sea originating there at the temple in Jerusalem will bring a healing to the waters of the Dead Sea so that the Dead Sea will no longer be a Dead Sea, but the waters will support all kinds of fish and it'll be a great fishing spa. So you might want to go down there and open up a worm stand or something and you can go down there and be a successful man in the kingdom age. Because they'll be fishing all the way from En Gedi on down to En Iglam.

Now there are certain portions of the miry areas and the marshes of the Dead Sea that will remain salty, but for the main body of the Dead Sea the waters will be healed. And on these trees there flocks of fish that will come down to the Dead Sea and their fruit shall be for the meat of the people. Their leaf will not fade, neither will the fruit thereof run out or be consumed.

It shall bring forth new fruit according to his months because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary and the fruit thereof will be for meat and the leaf thereof for medicine. So these will be very interesting trees that each month will have a different kind of a fruit. They'll bear fruit year round which will be a very life-sustaining type of a food.

It'll be a very helpful fruit. Sustain your life. Good protein.

It'll be for meat. But the leaves will be used for healing for their medicinal value. So these trees.

Now in Revelation you get the river that flows from the throne of God there. And again you find the trees on either side bringing forth the fruit. And so they're, you know, of course God is able.

You say, well I don't know of any tree like that. Of course you don't. God hasn't developed it yet.

But he will develop it there in the kingdom ages. And what's so hard for God? To create an interesting fruit tree that has very nutritious fruit and bears all year round. And you'll want some of those in your garden.

And the leaves will be good for medicinal purposes. And the same things are described as along this river in heaven that is pure as crystal flowing from the throne of God in heaven. So read this along with Revelation 22 and you'll find the correlations that are there.

Now even as the tabernacle in the wilderness was built as a model in heaven. So this probably again is a model of the heavenly things. And this river is more or less a model of that river flowing from the throne of God in heaven described in Revelation 22.

Now the Lord gives them the borders of the land from Damascus on the north and down to the south and to the east and so forth. And then the tribes are divided into the land. And the northern most part of the land is given to the tribe of Dan.

South of him would be Asher and then Naphtali, then Manasseh, then Ephraim, and then Reuben, and then Judah. And then in the area of Judah of course you have this area for the priest and the temple and this new holy city that will be created during that period. And then this portion is set aside perpetually for the Lord and for the priest not to be sold.

And then the residue of this acreage in there will be for the prince. And then south from there you have the tribe of Benjamin, further south Simeon, and then Ishkar, Zebulun, and Gad as you're moving down into

the area of the Sinai. So that whole area of course will be green and lush and tillable.

Then is when the prophecy will be fulfilled. The desert will blossom as a rose. There will be springs in the deserts and streams and dry places and all.

And the land restored and the world restored really by the power of the Lord. Now the city is going to have twelve gates. And the gates will be named after the tribes of the children of Israel.

So the three gates on the north will be for Reuben, Judah, and Levi. On the east the gates will be named for Joseph, Benjamin, and Dan. On the south the gates will be named Simeon, Ishkar, and Zebulun.

And on the west Gad, Asher, and Naphtali. And it was round about eighteen thousand majors. And the name of the city from that day shall be Jehovah Shammah.

The Lord is there. The city of the Lord. And thus it gets that beautiful name Jehovah Shammah.

The Lord is there. So as I've shared with you, I'm glad we're through with this portion of Ezekiel. I do not again pretend to have a thorough, full understanding of these things.

In this area I know in part and I prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come then that which is in part will be done away with. But until the Lord brings us a more complete understanding, and I don't see why He needs to at this time.

Why should He give me a clear understanding of this now? When it's really for Israel, not for me anyhow. And the time isn't yet. It is yet a future time in the kingdom age.

It isn't necessary that I understand this part of it fully right now. I'm sure that one day I will. When I see the whole thing, I walk through the city and I walk through the gates and all.

And I look over the whole thing and I say, wow, yeah. Well, I go back to Ezekiel now. Man, it wasn't bad what the guy did, you know.

It's pretty good for a description of it. And I'll understand it more fully then. Though right now I'm still sort of foggy on the whole thing.

But when we get into Daniel, then we'll cook. Because Daniel speaks of the things that we are seeing coming to pass now in the world around us. And God has given to us a better understanding, because these are the things that relate to us and to our times when we get into Daniel.

Up until through chapter 39, they related to us in our times. Can see those clearly. But then as we get into the future, it isn't time yet that we should know these things.

And thus God hasn't revealed. And that's why you hear people who are seeking to argue against the pre-tribulation rapture theory. They say it is not a theory that was a part of the historic church doctrine.

It's something that has come along more recently. And because it was not taught in historic church doctrine, they sort of reject it as having any true authority. But to me that is not a substantial argument at all.

For there are, first of all, things that have been taught in historic church doctrine that I disagree with entirely. Origin taught baptismal regeneration. Origin taught the baptism of infants.

I don't think the Bible teaches either, but it was a part and is a part of historic church doctrine. Therefore there is historic church doctrine, which isn't biblical. Secondly, why should God reveal the things of the rapture of the church to Martin Luther when it wasn't going to happen in his time? Even as we don't understand fully these things in Ezekiel because they're not for our time.

And it isn't necessary that God make them clear to us because there are things for a yet future time for a different people. So because the rapture is for our time, even as God told Daniel when he was seeking understanding of the prophecies that he was writing, the Lord said, seal them up there for the time of the end. For at that time knowledge will be increased.

In Psalm, when it was writing concerning the future, he said, and the regathering of Israel and all, he said, these things are written for a generation to come. I'm not writing you these things for those that are living now. These are written for a generation to come.

So God has written things that are especially for us. And, and now that we are living in that day, there is a clear understanding. And though the rapture of the church might not be a part of historic church doctrine, it was sure a part of Paul's theology.

And when does church history begin? Paul surely taught it, but that it was lost during the history of the church. It must also be confessed that many other beautiful and glorious truths were lost during the history of the church. And really the church went through the dark ages and was actually a part of the cause of the dark ages.

For the church was guilty, the historic church was guilty of suppressing scientific knowledge and understanding because they were discovering things that were contrary to historic church doctrine. When they began to gaze through telescopes and discovered things about our universe that were contrary to historic church doctrine. The history of the church is not a glorious, I think, you know, Stephen was talking to the Sanhedrin and he rehearsed for them their history.

Now these people were always boasting in their fathers were our fathers, this, our fathers, that, you know, and our fathers, our ancestors, and they were always boasting this stuff and Stephen, man, he laid them low. He gave them their history and then he said, which of the prophets did your fathers not stone? And he told them how horrible their fathers were. Your history is pretty black men.

It's pretty dark. Well, let me say that. I feel the history of the church is very dark.

Indeed. I have no defense for the history of the church. I'm ashamed of it.

So anybody comes to me and starts talking about historic church doctrine. I'm embarrassed over what the church has done in its history. Surely it hasn't been a true representative of Jesus Christ in the world or there would be more people converted today.

The church has been a great stumbling block and it has hindered progress and development and it has suppressed men and peoples. I'm ashamed of church history. I don't try to defend it at all.

I apologize for it, but I don't have to make the same mistakes, nor am I responsible for the mistakes that they made. Now, a lot of you kids in college, you have a problem because the professors start bringing up things which have happened in church history. They start telling about the wars and how the church has slaughtered so many people and the horrible atrocities that have been done in the name of Christ.

And you're defenseless. And I found myself in university defenseless against these things. And I used to start to hang my head until the Lord caused me to realize, Hey, that's not me.

And that's not my understanding of Christianity to me. That isn't a true representative of Christianity. And I began to speak up and say, wait a minute, that's not really Christian just because they said they were Christians, just because they went by the church doesn't mean that they were truly Christians.

You get a bust of great nuts. It's not grapes. It's not nuts.

You don't know what it is. I don't have to answer for the mistakes of the church fathers. I'll have to answer for my own mistakes.

And thus I need to be seeking the guidance of the spirit that I don't make mistakes. You see, for I'm going to answer for me, but that puts a greater responsibility upon me because it is important that I seek God and I seek to live after the biblical injunctions that I seek to walk after the spirit that I seek to be led by the spirit that I seek to love as Christ loved and show a better example of what the Lord intended his children to be and to do. Now, even as people have judged the church by the mistakes of the past, so they are continuing to judge the church, but you can help rectify it by living as God would have you to live and be a good example so that they can point to you and say, well, yes, but there is a real Christian.

You know, it's interesting when we go to Israel, we'll be talking with a group of the Jewish people over there and they'll start saying, well, the church, this, the church, that, and the Christians, all the Christians are this, that, and the other. And we say, wait a minute, we're Christians. You know, you're talking about Christians and here we are.

We're Christians. What do you mean? Oh no, you're not Christians. You're Calvary chapel.

You're different. And it's interesting. They recognize a difference all over.

They recognize that if they say you're different, they'd really don't know where to put us yet. They really don't understand this yet. We come on with so much love and so much concern and interest and all for them.

We're just an enigma to them at the present time. I can hardly wait till we get these pastors all over there, uh, spreading love all over Israel to these people. And incidentally, uh, the 3rd of December we'll be at the baptismal site on the river Jordan that Calvary chapel purchased for Israel.

We gave money to the ministry of tourism to put up a baptismal they've asked me to speak at the dedication ceremonies. And so it'll be an excellent opportunity to speak to these people and let them know why we love them, why we're interested in the land, why we wanted a baptismal site on the Jordan river and what it's all about. And so pray for me on the 3rd of December, uh, because God's going to give us a good opportunity to share this dedication.

But you are the Bible that is being read by the world today. And the opinion of Christianity is being created by what you are. Jesus said, let your light so shine before men that when they see your good works, they will glorify your father, which is in heaven.

God help us that we will not be of those of which people say, well, if that's a Christian, I don't need any of that. But God help us to live in such a way as the salt of the earth will create a thirst in people for Jesus

Christ. God bless you.

God keep you fill you with his spirit and with his love. Watch over you that we might each of us grow into a greater apprehension of all that God is and desires to do for us. And may above all, you walk in love in Jesus name.

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