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“Israel and the End Times – Part Three of Three”

Ezekiel 40 – 48

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The last nine chapters of the book of Ezekiel deal with the Kingdom Age, which is also known as the Millennial Reign, a time when Christ returns to the earth to rule and reign for 1,000 years. What will life be like during that time? Where will Christians be and what will Christians be doing? In his third message in this series, Pastor Gary teaches about the Second Coming of Christ and the Millennial Reign.

### Historical Background

1. The book of Ezekiel was written about 2,500 years ago (circa mid-6<sup>th</sup> century), and some of Ezekiel’s prophecies have been fulfilled, including the re-establishment of the nation of Israel, which occurred on May 14, 1948.
2. Pastor Gary said, “[In] order to understand the prophetic end-times that Ezekiel [wrote] about, one must first understand the unique role that the nation of Israel has played in history and will play in prophesy. Helpful to us is the fact that... Ezekiel wrote in chronological order.”
3. Ezekiel’s End-Times Prophecies
  - a. Ezekiel 36–37 – The re-establishment of the State of Israel (1948)
  - b. Ezekiel 38–39 – The Battle of Armageddon
  - c. Ezekiel 40–48 – The Kingdom Age (aka, the Millennial Kingdom)
4. The Glory of the Lord Returns!
  - a. [Ezekiel 43:1–5](#) – *“Afterward he brought me to the gate, the gate that faces toward the east. And 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. It 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. And the glory of the LORD came into the temple by way of the gate which faces toward the east. The Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the temple.”*

- b. **Psalm 24:7-10** – *“Lift up your heads, O you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O you gates! Lift up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, He is the King of glory.”*

## 5. The Eastern Gate

- a. This gate is also known as the Golden Gate.
- b. This gate is the only gate in the old city of Jerusalem that has been walled up.
- c. This gate was first walled up in 810 A.D. by Muslims.
- d. In 1102 A.D. the gate was briefly opened up by the Crusaders.
- e. Saladin, the first sultan of Egypt, walled it up again in 1187 A.D. after taking over Jerusalem.
- f. The gate was walled up in 1541 A.D. by the Ottoman sultan, Suleiman, who knew the Jewish Scriptures, so, in a defensive move, he walled up the gate because he knew that the Messiah was prophesied to come through that specific gate.
  - i. Suleiman, in a vain attempt, tried to make sure that the Messiah didn't try to enter the city through this gate by starting a Muslim cemetery!
  - ii. Pastor Gary said, “It may not be, necessarily, this exact gate that [Jesus] walks through, and I say that because the Bible says that when Jesus returns again, there will be a great earthquake. And, I suspect, that everything's going to be leveled on the temple mount. [Presently] you have no Jewish temple, [and] two Muslim sanctuaries: The Dome of the Rock, and the Al Aqsa Mosque. Jesus [won't] share the territory with other gods. [So], when he returns, the walls might be leveled, and certainly, the mosques will be leveled, and he will set himself up to rule and reign. ... There will be some gate on the eastern side that Jesus will walk through. Irrespective of what Suleiman tried to do Jesus is coming again, and he is going to make his way from the Mount of Olives over the Kidron Valley into the city of Jerusalem through the east gate. And nothing and no one will stop him from setting up his throne in the temple of Jerusalem.”

## 6. The Temple

- a. The first temple was built by King Solomon circa 970 to 931 B.C.
  - i. This temple stood about 500 years, and was destroyed in 586 B.C. by King Nebuchadnezzar.
- b. The second temple was built under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah circa 445 to 442 B.C.
  - i. King Herod the Great refurbished the second temple (known as the third temple) during a period of about 46 years.
  - ii. This temple was destroyed in 70 A.D. by Roman Emperor Titus Vespasian.
- c. The third temple will be occupied by the Antichrist for seven years, according to the prophet Daniel, but this temple will be destroyed during the great earthquake.
- d. The fourth temple will be occupied by Jesus Christ!

## 7. Ezekiel's prophecies about the temple

- a. Chapters 40-42 - Description of the Temple
- b. Chapters 43-44 - Worship in the Temple
- c. Chapters 45-48 - Land around the Temple

## 8. Church Timeline

- a. Jesus' crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension has already taken place, circa 30 A.D.
- b. The Church Age has been ongoing since circa 30 A.D.
- c. The Rapture of the Church is a future event.
  - i. **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18** - *But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words."*
  - ii. It's not a certainty that the 7-year Tribulation will begin immediately after Christians have been raptured, but it's a fact that the Great Tribulation will follow the Rapture.<sup>1</sup>
- d. Jesus' Second Coming will occur just prior to the Battle of Armageddon.

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<sup>1</sup> The Great Tribulation is described in specific detail in **Revelation 6-18**.

- i. Jesus' Second Coming will be much different from his first coming, in a manger in Bethlehem!
  - ii. When Jesus comes again, he will be riding a white horse, and he will have fire in his eyes as he makes war with all of the nations that have come against Israel and the God of Israel.
- e. After Jesus has conquered his enemies at the Battle of Armageddon, the Kingdom Age or the Millennial Reign will begin.
  - i. Jesus will go to Jerusalem entering through the east gate (this gate is seen from the Mount of Olives), and he will establish himself on the throne in the Temple that has yet to be built.
  - ii. Jesus will rule and reign for 1,000 years, after which there will be a new heaven and a new earth.
  - iii. **Revelation 20:6** - *"... they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."*
  - iv. The priests who serve during the Millennial Reign will be Jewish Believers, who are specifically from the tribe of Levi and are descendants of Aaron and Zadok.
    - 1. **Ezekiel 44:15** - *" 'But the priests, the Levites, the sons of Zadok, who kept charge of My sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from Me, they shall come near to Me to minister to Me; and they shall stand before Me to offer to Me the fat and the blood,' says the Lord God."*
  - v. Gentile Believers will serve under the Lord to help administrate the rest of the world in roles like governors, mayors, etc.

#### What Will Be Different About The Millennial Reign And The Temple?

- 9. The Millennial Reign of Christ will be a time of unprecedented peace because Jesus is on the throne!
  - a. **Isaiah 11:7-8** - *"The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den."*
  - b. **Isaiah 65:20** - *"No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; for the child shall die one hundred years old, but the sinner being one hundred years old will be accursed."*
- 10. Believers who survive the Great Tribulation and go into the Millennial period will live life like we do today, in that they will build homes, have families, etc.
- 11. During this time Satan will be bound!
  - a. **Revelation 20:1-3** - *"Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having*

*the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.”*

- b. This doesn't mean that there won't be sin because those who are saved during the Tribulation will still have a sin nature.
- c. Without the influence of Satan and under the rule and reign of Christ, sin and crime will be markedly reduced. There will be no more wars, and all laws will be righteous.

12. Old Testament sacrifices will be reinstated in the new temple.

- a. **Ezekiel 43:18-21** – *“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. 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. You shall take some of its blood and put it on the four thorns 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. Then you shall also take the bull of the sin offering, and burn it in the appointed place of the temple, outside the sanctuary.”*
- b. Pastor Gary said, “The Old Testament sacrifices that the Jews practiced were implemented as a way to provide temporary atonement for their sins until such time that Christ could be revealed on the cross. When Christ was revealed on the cross, he became the permanent sacrifice for all people, for all times, for all sin. So, when the people in the Old Testament were sacrificing animals they were looking ahead to the cross, they were looking forward to the cross... During the Millennial Reign when the sacrifices are brought back, it will not be for the purpose of looking forward but for looking backwards and remembering the cross. For the people who are born during this Millennial period of time, they [will] be disconnected from the cross and from his sacrifice. [Jesus] will be ruling and reigning from the Temple and he [will] calls them to make sacrifices looking back, [so] they would have a tangible reminder of what Christ did for [them] on the cross. The sacrifices don't save anybody, [and] they never [have]. ... In a similar way when we have the Lord's Supper, we are looking back to the cross. We are reminding ourselves of what Christ [has done] for us in the past for our sins in the present and in the future. [This] is something they will practice in memoriam, in reminder, in memory, of what Christ [has done]. [This] is for the people who are living during the Millennial Reign. We who return with Christ, we are already in our glorified bodies [and] we are not a part of this. We are just helping [Jesus].”

### 13. The Dead Sea

- a. The Dead Sea, which is the lowest point on earth and has a salinity of 37%, will be completely transformed into a body of fresh water!
- b. [Ezekiel 47:8-12](#) - *“Then he said to me: ‘This water flows toward the eastern region, goes down into the valley, and enters the sea. When it reaches the sea, its waters are healed. And it shall be that every living thing that moves, wherever the rivers go, will live. There will be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters go there; for they will be healed, and everything will live wherever the river goes. It shall be that fishermen will stand by it from En Gedi to En Eglaim; they will be places for spreading their nets. Their fish will be of the same kinds as the fish of the Great Sea, exceedingly many. But its swamps and marshes will not be healed; they will be given over to salt.’ ”*

### What Will Be Absent During The Millennial Reign And The Temple?

### 14. The curtain that separated the holy place and the most holy place won't be there.

- a. [Ezekiel 41:3-4](#) - *“Also he went inside and measured the doorposts, two cubits; and the entrance six cubits high; and the width of the entrance, seven cubits. He measured the length, twenty cubits; and the width, twenty cubits, beyond the sanctuary; and he said to me, ‘This is the Most Holy Place.’ ”*

### 15. Pastor Gary said, “Jesus has abolished that curtain. That curtain was the symbol of the fact that there was a disconnect and a distance between God and man... there is no need for a curtain any [longer].

- a. [Hebrews 10:19-20](#) - *“Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh...”*

### 16. Many of the articles that would have been found in the Temple are missing.

- a. There will be no silver or gold in the new Temple because Jesus in his glory is the beauty that adorns the sanctuary.
  - i. Regarding Solomon's Temple, King David personally contributed 100,000 talents (3,750 tons!) of gold, which would be worth approximately 50 billion dollars today!
- b. There will be no table of show bread in the new Temple because Jesus is the bread of life.
  - i. [John 6:35](#) - *“And Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger...”*
- c. There will be no menorah in the new Temple because Jesus is the light of the world.
  - i. [John 8:12](#) - *“Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, ‘I am the light of*

*the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.' ”*

- d. There will be no ark of the covenant because Jesus is the mercy seat and he is our atonement.

### What Will Be Present In The Millennial Reign And The Temple?

- 17. Ezekiel saw the glory of the Lord depart <sup>2</sup> the Temple because the people had defiled themselves with idolatry and perversion of all kinds. <sup>3</sup>
  - a. God will remove his presence when there is unrepentant compromise.
  - b. The sad account of Samson is one biblical example of the way unrepentant compromise caused the Lord to leave Samson's life.
    - i. **Judges 16:20** - *“And she said, ‘The Philistines are upon you, Samson!’ so he awoke from his sleep, and said, ‘I will go out as before, at other times, and shake myself free!’ But he did not know that the LORD had departed from him.”*
- 18. Ezekiel saw the glory of the Lord in the new Temple.
  - a. **Ezekiel 44:4** - *“Also He brought me by the way of the north gate to the front of the temple; so I looked, and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD; and I fell on my face.”*
  - b. Pastor Gary said, “[This] is a statement of mercy from our Lord. He will return to the place where he at one point was not honored, not wanted, but he continued to pursue his people. He continues to pursue you and me. And the glory of the Lord will one day return to the city of Jerusalem and to the world by his very presence. It's a terrible thing when the presence of the Lord is no longer in a place. Even in his omnipresence God can choose to withdraw his glory from a place where he is not honored and not wanted.
- 19. Pastor Gary said, “If you feel the absence of the Lord's presence, the good news is that in his mercy, he does not stay angry forever. He will return from the place he had departed. The return of the Lord is a reminder of the glory of the Lord. But we need to humble ourselves. We need to get right with God. ... [The Lord delights] to show mercy to those who humble themselves and return to him!”
  - a. **Micah 7:18** - *“Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage. He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy.”*

\* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New King James Version (NKJV)

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<sup>2</sup> Ezekiel 10

<sup>3</sup> Ezekiel 8