

Ezekiel 40-43—The Millennial Temple

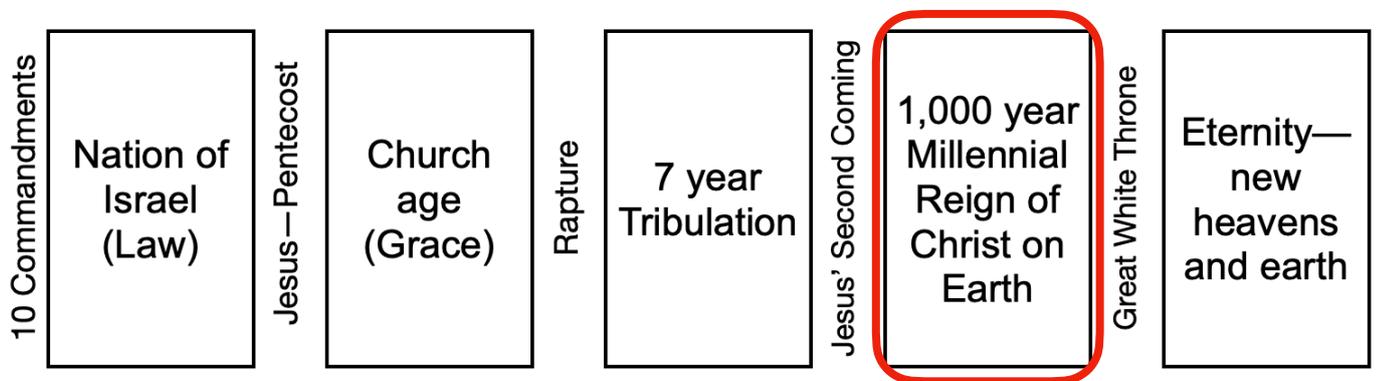
Memory Verse

Ezekiel 36:26-27 NKJV

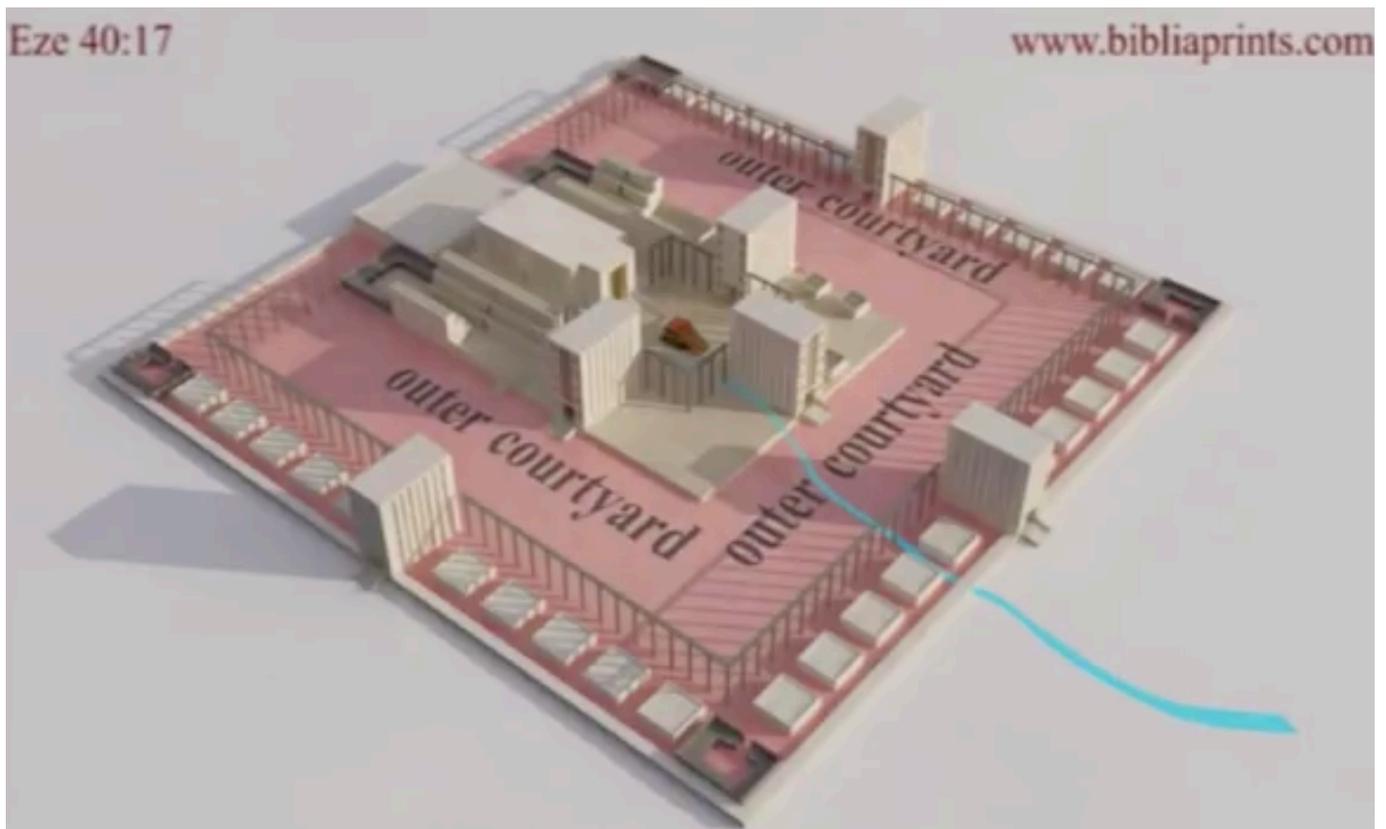
I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

Introduction

Ezekiel chapters 40-48 describe places, buildings, land allocations, and worship that are a part of Jesus' Millennial Kingdom, when He comes back to earth from heaven and He reigns for a thousand years on a beautifully renovated earth. The chart below shows when this fits in God's plan of the ages (red outline). The vertical writing represents the events that mark the transition from one time period (or dispensation) to the next.



The centerpiece of the rebuilt city of Jerusalem will be the Millennial temple, the magnificent temple that Jesus will build and where all people will come to worship Him. Jesus will rule the world from there. A diagram of what it will look like based on the detailed description given in Ezekiel chapters 40-47 is shown below.



Because the description of the Millennial temple and city is so detailed, we will use pictures and videos to help us to visualise it. The links to the three videos produced by www.bibliaprints.com are below (click to open them). These verse by verse walkthroughs of the Millennial Temple will be viewed in place of reading Ezekiel chapters 40:6-42:20—it's the closest thing to experiencing what Ezekiel saw as he was given a guided tour of the Millennial temple complex by the angel.

[*Ezekiel 40—The gates, outer court, inner gates, and the inner court of the temple*](#)

[*Ezekiel 41—The Measurements of the temple*](#)

[*Ezekiel 42-43—The outer court and the glory of God returns to the temple*](#)

The main focus of today will be to look at Ezekiel 40:1-5, which is the introduction to the whole vision, and to try to understand the significance of the Millennial temple, both to the Israelites and for us. We'll finish by looking at the videos and also an application.

Outline of Ezekiel 40-48

Chapter 40—The measurement of the courts of the temple

Chapter 41—The measurements of the temple

Chapter 42—The outer court being described

Chapter 43—The glory of God returns to the temple

Chapter 44—Only the sons of Zadok will be allowed to go into the inner court; the other priests were not faithful.

Chapter 45—Describes how the land around the temple/city is divided up, and that the Passover will be one of the feasts observed each year.

Chapter 46—Describes the sacrificial offerings that will be made, and how the temple will be closed throughout the week and only open on the sabbath.

Chapter 47—Describes the river of living water that flows from the temple, and the boundaries of the Land of Israel.

Chapter 48—Describes the divisions of the lands given to each of the 12 tribes of Israel, and the gates of the city of Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 40:1-5—Introduction to the vision

Ezekiel 40:1-5 NKJV

In the twenty-fifth year of our captivity, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was captured, on the very same day the hand of the Lord was upon me; and He took me there. ² In the visions of God He took me into the land of Israel and set me on a very high mountain; on it toward the south was something like the structure of a city. ³ He took me there, and behold, there was a man whose appearance was like the appearance of bronze. He had a line of flax and a measuring rod in his hand, and he stood in the gateway.

⁴ And the man said to me, “Son of man, look with your eyes and hear with your ears, and fix your mind on everything I show you; for you were brought here so that I might show them to you. Declare to the house of Israel everything you see.”

⁵ Now there was a wall all around the outside of the temple. In the man's hand was a measuring rod six cubits long, each being a cubit and a handbreadth; and he measured the width of the wall structure, one rod; and the height, one rod.

Ezekiel 40:1-2 NKJV—God takes Ezekiel to Jerusalem in a vision

In the twenty-fifth year of our captivity, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was captured, on the very same day the hand of the Lord was upon me; and He took me there. ² In the visions of God He took me into the land of Israel and set me on a very high mountain; on it toward the south was something like the structure of a city.

v 1 **In the twenty-fifth year of our captivity ... in the fourteenth year after the city was captured:** This last vision recorded in the book of Ezekiel is by far the longest and most glorious, covering chapters 40-48 and describing in detail the Millennial temple and surrounding areas and showing how people will worship God during those 1,000 years when Jesus rules the earth from the Temple in Jerusalem.

It's been about 12 years since God gave Ezekiel a message for the people (that we know of), and it's now 14 years since the Babylonians defeated and destroyed Jerusalem—things have been quiet for Ezekiel as far as new revelations and prophecies go. This is the second last prophecy according to the dates assigned to the various prophecies given to Ezekiel, the last one chronologically being the prophecy concerning Nebuchadnezzar, Tyre, and Egypt, found in Ezekiel 29:17–20.

v 1 **The beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month:** If Ezekiel was referring to Israel's religious (versus the civil) calendar, then this day is when they would begin preparations for the Passover (10 Nisan). The Passover commemorates God redeeming the people of Israel out of Egypt and the creation of their nation. The passover was one of the main feasts where all the people of the land were commanded to go to Jerusalem so they could offer their Passover lamb at the temple—which of course they could no longer do because the temple of God had been destroyed by the Babylonians, and they were now in exile in Babylon, living as slaves. Thus, this promise of a new temple and a glorious kingdom with the Messiah reigning, was the perfect message, given at the ideal time, as the people would have been keenly longing for both a return to their homeland, and also for there to be a temple where they could once more worship God. Remember that for the Jew, the temple represents the presence of God.

v 1 **The hand of the Lord was upon me:** The vision originated from God and is therefore real and true. Remember that not every vision or dream is from God: There are many false prophets with false dreams and false visions. God commands us to test what people say so we can discern the truth from a lie. The only way not to be deceived is to know your Bible!

Let two or three people prophesy, and let the others evaluate what is said
1 Corinthians 14:29 NLT

Dear friends, do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit. You must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God. For there are many false prophets in the world.

1 John 4:1 NLT

“Even the priests and prophets are ungodly, wicked men. I have seen their despicable acts right here in my own Temple,” says the Lord.
Jeremiah 23:11 NLT

v 2 **In the visions of God He took me into the land of Israel and set me on a very high mountain:** Although it doesn't say the name of the mountain that God took Ezekiel to, what is clear is that Ezekiel had a good view of the temple mount in Jerusalem. In fact, it would make sense that this mountain was actually Mount Zion in Jerusalem. What we learn from Isaiah 2:1-4 that, "*the mountain of the Lord's house [Jerusalem] shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills...*". In the Millennial period Jerusalem will be the highest point on the earth; the geography of the earth will be very different to what we see now. Another reason that this **very high mountain** is Jerusalem is that Ezekiel is actually there, taking a guided tour through the future Millennial temple in Jerusalem.

v 2 **Something like the structure of a city:** This new Millennial temple complex will be so much bigger than any temple complex built previously. To Ezekiel, it would look just like an ancient city used to look, being large and surrounded by massive walls and gates.

Why would a temple need to be this big? We'll see later that it will be many times larger than even Solomon's temple. It's because people from all over the world will be coming to worship Jesus at the temple in Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 40:3 NKJV—The angel who will measure the temple and surrounds

He took me there, and behold, there was a man whose appearance was like the appearance of bronze [an angel]. He had a line of flax and a measuring rod in his hand, and he stood in the gateway.

v 3 **There was a man whose appearance was like the appearance of bronze:** This is most likely an angel, though some believe he could be Jesus Himself. The text doesn't say either way. Whoever or whatever he is, he will be Ezekiel's tour guide, showing Ezekiel all around the Millennial temple and surrounding areas.

v 3 **He had a line of flax and a measuring rod:** verse 5 tells us that the **rod** was 6 cubits or about 3 metres in length. One cubit is about 0.5 metres.

Ezekiel 40:4 NKJV—Ezekiel is given instructions

And the man said to me, "Son of man, look with your eyes and hear with your ears, and fix your mind on everything I show you; for you were brought here so that I might show them to you. Declare to the house of Israel everything you see."

v 4 **Look with your eyes and hear with your ears, and fix your mind on everything:** The angel is telling Ezekiel to pay attention, because every detail is important, and will come to pass. This is real. As believers, this is what we have to look forward to when we come back to the earth to rule and reign with Jesus after His Second coming.

v 4 **Declare to the house of Israel everything you see:** Who was this prophecy for? The house or nation of Israel. Again, God hasn't given up on His people, even if they are still disobedient. Remember, God keeps His promises toward us because He is faithful and true, not because we deserve them.

*Now let's let's go forward in time and enjoy a glimpse of the future glory of Jesus' earthly kingdom that we will be a part of as we ****watch the videos listed at the start of the notes****.*

Application: God's mercy and my disobedience

Ezekiel chapters 8-11 describe the glory of God (His presence) leaving the temple. For the Jew, this meant that they no longer had access to the presence of God, that they could no longer approach Him or worship Him. Therefore, for the Jew, chapters 40-48 provide a visual picture of their future redemption, with God once again promising to physically regather them back to their land, rebuild the temple, and also spiritually regenerate them as a nation—there is nothing more important to them.

The sin of the people caused God to abandon His house (temple), but, because of His great mercy, God will again establish His temple and presence in Jerusalem.

Isaiah 59:1-3 NLT

Listen! The Lord's arm is not too weak to save you, nor is his ear too deaf to hear you call.

² It's your sins that have cut you off from God. Because of your sins, he has turned away and will not listen anymore.

³ Your hands are the hands of murderers, and your fingers are filthy with sin. Your lips are full of lies, and your mouth spews corruption.

We can all learn a lesson from this. The children of Israel are God's people, yet they chose, and today most of them still choose, not to enjoy a relationship with God. Instead they choose to make the passing pleasures of sin more important than their relationship with God. As a result, God disciplined them, and they spent almost 2,000 years in exile, kicked out of their own land, and being persecuted and hunted wherever they ended up.

However, even today, Israel still remains the people of God, and God will keep His promises to nation of Israel. God has already brought them back into the land for the second time as promised as promised in Isaiah 11:11 (even though they are still rejecting Him). During the Millennium He promises to; put His Spirit into their hearts, cause them to love and obey Him, and that He will dwell among them in His temple, ruling as King over all the earth. God will do this "for His Name's sake", and not because the nation of Israel was good or deserving of all God's blessings (see Ezekiel 36:16-36).

The first lesson I need to learn from the nation of Israel is that God's blessings and promises to me are not given to me because I deserve them, but simply because God wanted to love and bless me (and you). Therefore, once God promises something, He is always faithful to keep His promises, even if I'm disobedient.

There is a second lesson to learn from the children of Israel. Even though God's promises concerning the believer's eternal future are certain, if I disobey now, I will be disciplined now, and I will miss out on the sweet fellowship and friendship with God that I could be experiencing now—if I had only chosen to love and obey God and put Him first now. The reality is that, as a believer, in this life I am as close to God as I choose to be.

The following Scripture from Ezekiel shows how God disciplined His people Israel, but never abandoned them. Instead, God's discipline was designed to cause them to repent of their sin and come back into relationship with Him. God never stopped loving them, but He was not able to show them His love and bless them as He wanted to.

Put yourself in God's shoes by imagining yourself to be a father who loves and wants to bless his son, but the son chooses to be very rebellious. Therefore, instead of being able to bless the son, the father must discipline his son. This grieves the father in two ways—missed opportunities for communication and relationship (the son is not listening), and the painful experience of a parent having to discipline the child they love.

Ezekiel 36:16-36 NLT

Then this further message came to me from the Lord: ¹⁷ “Son of man, when the people of Israel were living in their own land, they defiled it by the evil way they lived. To Me their conduct was as unclean as a woman’s menstrual cloth. ¹⁸ They polluted the land with murder and the worship of idols, so I poured out My fury on them [I disciplined them]. ¹⁹ I scattered them to many lands to punish them for the evil way they had lived. ²⁰ But when they were scattered among the nations, they brought shame on My holy name. For the nations said, ‘These are the people of the Lord, but He couldn’t keep them safe in His own land!’ ²¹ Then I was concerned for My holy name, on which my people brought shame among the nations.

²² “Therefore, give the people of Israel this message from the Sovereign Lord: I am bringing you back, but not because you deserve it. I am doing it to protect My holy name [I make a promise and I need to keep it], on which you brought shame while you were scattered among the nations. ²³ I will show how holy My great name is—the name on which you brought shame among the nations. And when I reveal My holiness through you before their very eyes, says the Sovereign Lord, then the nations will know that I am the Lord. ²⁴ For I will gather you up from all the nations and bring you home again to your land [proving to the nations that yes, I can keep you safe in My own land].

Israel receives the New Covenant at Jesus Second Coming

²⁵ ***“Then [at the second coming] I will*** sprinkle clean water on you, and *you will* be clean. Your filth *will be* washed away, and you will no longer worship idols. ²⁶ *And I will* give you a new heart, and *I will* put a new spirit in you. *I will* take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart. ²⁷ *And I will* put my Spirit in you so that you will follow my decrees and be careful to obey my regulations.

²⁸ “*And you will* live in Israel, the land I gave your ancestors long ago. *You will be* My people, and *I will* be your God. ²⁹ *I will* cleanse you of your filthy behaviour. *I will* give you good crops of grain, and I will send no more famines on the land. ³⁰ *I will* give you great harvests from your fruit trees and fields, and never again will the surrounding nations be able to scoff at your land for its famines. ³¹ Then you will remember your past sins and despise yourselves for all the detestable things you did. ³² But remember, says the Sovereign Lord, I am not doing this because you deserve it. O My people of Israel, you should be utterly ashamed of all you have done! [godly sorrow]

³³ “This is what the Sovereign Lord says: When I cleanse you from your sins, *I will* repopulate your cities, and the ruins will be rebuilt. ³⁴ The fields that used to lie empty and desolate in plain view of everyone will again be farmed. ³⁵ *And when I bring you back,* people will say, ‘This former wasteland is now like the Garden of Eden! The abandoned and ruined cities now have strong walls and are filled with people!’ ³⁶ Then the surrounding nations that survive will know that I, the Lord, have rebuilt the ruins and replanted the wasteland. For I, the Lord, have spoken, and I will do what I say [in other words, I will keep My promises toward you even if you don’t deserve it].

Think about what we just read. Do the nation of Israel deserve any of the wonderful future blessings that God has promised them? Of course not—But remember, says the Sovereign Lord, I am not doing this because you deserve it. O My people of Israel, you should be utterly ashamed of all you have done! (Ezekiel 36:32)

As a believer, God’s Spirit in me is more than enough to help me to choose to love and obey God, enjoy a beautiful relationship with Him, and experience a fullness of a joy that nothing in this world can take away. The bottom line is that I don’t have to sin, but sometimes I, just like the children of Israel, choose to love the things of the world more than I love God. All believers, to some degree or extent, choose not to accept the wisdom, help, strength, and power that God has made available to us through the Holy Spirit living inside of us, and instead rely upon our own strength, knowledge, experiences, resources, and abilities—and of course end up failing. Why? Because we forget what Jesus said:

I am the Vine; you are the branches. Whoever lives in Me and I in him bears much (abundant) fruit. However, apart from Me [cut off from vital union with Me] you can do nothing.

John 15:5 (AMP)

If I'm doing what I want, then I'm not looking to God or depending upon God. I will sin. God will have to discipline me. My life becomes miserable because I lose my joy. The only solution is to repent, humbly asking God for forgiveness, again submitting my will to His will—again saying yes to what God wants and no to what my sinful nature wants.

The application here is that there is nothing that I can do that will separate me from God's love. The Israelites sinned badly against God—they were very wicked and rebellious—but God didn't leave or forsake them, though He did have to discipline them. As a believer, no matter how far I drift from God, no matter how much I sin, I will always belong to Him, and He will always keep His promises to me to:

1. forgive all my sins—justification, freedom from the penalty of sin
2. change me into His image (make me perfect)—sanctification, freedom from the power of sin
3. give me a new glorified body—glorification, freedom from the presence of sin

My rebellion and disobedience now just makes life harder for me now, and my future reward will be less than what it could have been if I had chosen to love God more and obey Him more now—however, my eternal future is secure—God will never cease to love me, just like He has never ceased to love the children of Israel, His chosen nation.

Romans 8:38-39 NLT

And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. ³⁹ No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Next week

We will cover the different views concerning this prophecy, why there will be animal sacrifices again, compare the laws and instructions given in these chapters to those given under the Mosaic law, as well as continue through the following chapters.