

Life-Study of Ezekiel Review – Section 4

The Vision of the Holy Building of God

The issue, the result, of God's recovery by life is a holy building, which is the consummation of the entire book of Ezekiel. **The issue of the glory of the Lord, the judgment of the Lord, and the recovery of the Lord is the building of God.**

Where the vision of the appearance of the glory of the Lord in chapter one was in the fifth year of the captivity, The vision of the building of God's house was in the twenty-fifth year of the captivity. This indicates that to see the building of God, Ezekiel needed more **maturity** in life. Further, Ezekiel did not see the vision concerning the building of God in the land of captivity. Rather, he was brought back to the holy land, to a high mountain in Jerusalem. In order to see something properly, we need the right position, the right standing, and the right angle. If we want to see God's building, we need to be on the mountain in Jerusalem.

Ezek. 40:3 – And He brought me there, and there was a **man**, whose appearance was like the appearance of **bronze**, with a line of flax and a measuring reed in His hand, standing in the gate.

Before Ezekiel saw the vision of the building, he saw the **vision of a man**. In chapter forty, He is not on the throne; He is at the gate of the building, **measuring**. The measuring here is related to judging. When the Lord comes to measure something, first He judges that thing. The Lord Jesus passed God's judgment, and now He has become a test to others. By His judgment He measures what belongs to God's building.

The holy temple is the place where God is, God's dwelling place. If we want to seek God, contact God, fellowship with God, and serve God, we need to realize that God has His dwelling place. The first item we need to see concerning the temple is the **wall**. The temple has a wall on all four sides. The wall is for separation, separating what belongs to God from what cannot belong to Him. The measurement of the wall indicates that it signifies **Christ Himself as a separating line**. Whatever is within Christ belongs to God's interests and to God's building, but whatever is outside of Christ is excluded from God's interests and God's building. When we come to the Lord Jesus and compare ourselves with Him, we are **exposed and condemned**.

Praise the Lord that He is not only the wall but also the **gate**. As the wall He excludes us and condemns us, but as the gate He **brings us into God's building**. We are in the sphere of God's building today because Christ as the gate has brought us in. In front of the gate is a stair of seven steps indicating that in order to get into the building, we need to go up. The entry of the gate is ten cubits wide. Whatever the Ten Commandments require, the entry of the gate fulfills. This indicates that the Lord Jesus fulfilled all the requirements of the Ten Commandments. He was "split" in His death and was resurrected, fulfilling all the requirements of the Ten Commandments. In this way He opened the gate. Only those who are qualified and who match God's glory and holiness can enter into the temple. The latticed windows signify the life-giving Spirit. Christ is full of the life-giving Spirit. The life-giving Spirit brings in air and light and keeps out all the negative things.

The Outer and Inner Court

The first thing we need to pay attention to in the **outer court** is the pavement. There are six different sections of pavement, and on each section there are five chambers. In addition to thirty chambers on the pavement, there are four small courts, one at each corner of the outer court. These four courts at the four corners are places for boiling the sacrifices. The main thing in the outer court is the **enjoyment of Christ as the offerings and sacrifices**. After we pass through the gate, we come to the outer court and enter into the chambers to eat, to enjoy, Christ, who is the reality of all the offerings. These chambers are built upon the pavement. This indicates that **whenever we are about to enjoy Christ, we need to be on a pavement made of stones; separated from the dirt of the earth**. The pavement connected to the gate indicates that the enjoyment of Christ is connected to the experience of Christ.

From the outer court we need to pass into the **inner court**. As we enter into the inner court, we also ascend higher. From this we see that entering into the inner court means that the more inward we travel, the higher we become. In the inner court we repeat our experience of Christ. We experience Christ again by passing through another gate. We experience the same Christ, but we experience more of Him. This ushers us into the inner court. When we pass through the gate to the inner court, the ministering begins immediately. Here in the inner court begins the **life that is for God**. In the outer court we have the enjoyment of Christ. But in the inner court we have improvement and progress, for here we are in something that is more inward and also higher. Here the priests are ready to **offer the burnt offering**, meaning that they are ready to be absolute for the Lord.

The Altar

No matter which gate we take to enter the compound, eventually we will come to the **altar**. If we want to meet God, we must come to the altar. The altar is the center of the whole premises of the temple. This altar, which signifies the **cross**, is actually the **center of the universe**. As the center of the universe, the cross signifies the all-inclusive death of God, of man, and of all the creatures.

After we have been saved, we will meet the cross everywhere. Apart from the cross, it is impossible to contact Christ or to have Christian spiritual experiences. Although we meet the cross everywhere in our Christian life, we experience the cross in a particular way when we come to the altar at the center of God's building. To come to the altar at the center is to realize that **all that we are and all that we have were terminated at the cross**.

Only after passing through the altar can we come to the temple. This means that **without the proper realization and experience of the cross of Christ, we cannot have the reality of the church life**. It is only after we realize that we have been thoroughly terminated on the cross that we can have the real church life.

The Temple and Side Chambers

The temple is composed of three main sections: the porch, the outer temple (Holy Place), and the inner temple (Most Holy or the Holy of Holies). Ten steps lead up to the porch. When we go from the inner court into the temple, we must ascend an additional ten steps higher. From the steps we go on to the two pillars. The pillars signify Christ as God's witness bearing the house of God with a strength which is unlimited and immeasurable. The porch itself is used as a lobby. This makes the temple easy to approach. **In the church life we should have a lobby, making it easy for others to come in**. We need to have an atmosphere that is stretching out and making it easy for others to contact us and touch us.

After we pass through the porch, we come to the **outer temple**. The further inward we progress, the more narrow the way becomes. From our spiritual experience we know that **the closer we are**

to the Lord, the more we are restricted by Him. If we are loose and careless, this is a sign that we are far off from the presence of the Lord.

The side chambers which surround the house increase in height and in breadth on each storey. This indicates that as we progress inward, we ascend higher, and as we ascend higher, we become broader. The beauty of this temple is with the side chambers. If the side chambers were removed, the temple would be too simple and have no beauty. Although there are 90 chambers, there are only two doors. This indicates that it is easy to get in, but it is not easy to get out. The doors being open to the spaces that are left free indicate that there can be an entrance only when there is a surplus of grace.

The Building at the Back, the Walls, the Incense Altar, the Holy Chambers, and the Boiling Places

The building in the back signifies the riches of Christ. The riches of Christ are what Christ is. For example, Christ is life, light, reality, and the way. The fulness of Christ is the church as the expression of Christ. Christ is so rich that He is able to fulfill all the requirements and meet all the needs of both God and man and still have a large “building” left.

According to the record in Ezekiel, all the parts of the building related to the temple are covered with wood. Wood signifies humanity, especially the proper humanity of the Lord Jesus. In God’s building the primary material is humanity. This indicates that we need to be “Jesusly human.”

The incense altar is made wholly of wood. In the tabernacle and in the temple there were the altar, the lampstand, and the showbread table. But here in Ezekiel the altar is also the table. As an altar it is good for us to offer something to God, and as a table it is good for God to minister something to us. Whatever is on this altar-table must be Christ. In this temple there is no lampstand for giving light. Instead there are many windows letting in light and air. Thus there is no need of a lampstand. The holy chambers are for the priests to eat the offerings and also to place and store the offerings. It is here that the priests lay their priestly clothing. The priestly clothing signifies Christ expressed and lived out. In all these things we can see much improvement in the experience of Christ. It is here in the holy chambers that one reaches the highest peak of spiritual experience.

The design of the temple gives a strong impression of separation, progression, and balance. This is a picture of the church life. The church life is a life of absolute separation, a life of progression, and a life of balance. The church life is upright, square, and straight. The requirement of the indwelling Christ is not according to the law but according to His house. Everyone must be measured and checked according to the measurement of God’s house. If what we are and what we do cannot fit into the church life, it amounts to nothing in the sight of God and may even be an abomination to Him. May we be in resurrection, be in the position of ascension, and be most holy that we can be God’s habitation.

(Life-Study of Ezekiel – Messages 19 to 27)