

# God's Glory Fills the Temple

Ezekiel 43:1-12

SS Lesson for 11/02/2014

**Devotional Scripture:** Ps 138:1-8

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# Introduction

## Overview and Approach to Lesson

The lesson describes how **God's Glory Fills the Temple** and how Israel's disobedience led to God's departure and how their obedience led to His return. The **study's aim** is to grasp the severity of keeping God at a distance from us by sinning and neglecting our relationship with Him. The **study's application** is to ensure that we walk in fellowship with God and do all we can to protect the relationship we have in Christ. (Adapted from *the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary*).

### Key Verse: Ezek 43:4-5

*4 And the glory of the Lord came into the temple by way of the gate which faces toward the east. 5 The Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the temple.*

### Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

In a dramatic reversal of the departure of the Lord's glory (Ezek 43:10-11) Ezekiel saw **the glory of... God returning from the east** to dwell once again in His nation. **The glory of the Lord entered the temple through the gate facing east. Then the Spirit lifted Ezekiel up** (Ezek 3:14; 8:3; 11:1, 24; 37:1) **and brought him into the inner court** in front of the temple proper, **and the glory of the LORD filled the temple**. God said the new temple is to be **the place of His throne... the place... where He will live among the Israelites forever** (43:7; cf. 43:9). **The temple** will serve as God's earthly dwelling place among His people. God assured Ezekiel that this home would be permanent. **Never again** would Israel **defile His holy name** (Ezek 20:39; 39:7) by worshiping **lifeless idols**, bringing destruction on the nation (43:7-8). The man (an angel, 43:6; cf. 40:3) standing next to Ezekiel told him to **describe the temple to the people of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their sins**. A clear vision of God's ideal plan would remind the people of the sins that had led to the destruction of the old temple. Another reason in sharing the design with the nation was to motivate the people to return to God and rebuild the temple: **so that they may be faithful to its design and follow all its regulations**. Though this prophecy was not fulfilled after the return from the Babylonian Captivity (and thus awaits a future fulfillment), the potentiality for fulfillment was there.

### Commentary from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator

Have you ever had the opportunity to watch a sunrise over the ocean? You sit on the darkened beach, water stretching as far as your eyes can see. Suddenly, color begins to invade the sky. Yellows and oranges push away the darkness like the lifting of a shade. It is beautiful! You really need to be on the East Coast to get the full effect of being welcomed into the day by the sun, just as you need to be on the West Coast for the full splendor of watching the sun disappear into the evening. In a vision, Ezekiel was taken on a journey. He had the opportunity to see the Lord's temple—not as it currently was but as it should be. In Ezekiel's time, the temple was full of sin and abominations that were displeasing to God. The Lord was telling the prophet that He was about to clean His house. God said to Ezekiel, "Thou son of man, shew the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities: and let them measure the pattern. And if they be ashamed of all that they have done, shew them the form of the house, . . . and write it in their sight, that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them" (Ezek. 43:10-11). God will not share His glory with another. Our God is holy. Our God is worthy of all the honor and the praise that we can offer Him. He is the King of kings. He is the Lord of lords. Our God is gracious and merciful, but He will not be mocked. He gave His most precious possession when He sent His Son to pay the price for our sins; therefore, He has high expectations of us. When His love captures our hearts, we no longer view His standard as a restriction or an obligation; rather, we live righteously out of our love for Him. There can be no new beginning without an ending. Just as the sunrise in the east announces the beginning of a new day, so the entrance of the glory of the Lord through the East Gate offers us hope for change. Ezekiel said, "So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house" (Ezek. 43:5). There must be a point of entrance for everything in our lives. Sometimes we look back and can pinpoint the moment that we opened the door to sin, to pain, and to the lies of the enemy. If we can open the door to the enemy of our souls, then we can also open a door in our heart to God. Jesus, speaking to believers in Revelation 3:20, says that He is standing at that door and knocking. He is waiting for us to open the door. Once we open the door to His

glory in our lives, we can be forever transformed. "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. 3:18). The glory of the Lord came into the temple through the East Gate. The glory of the Lord comes into the temple of our lives when we confess our sins, let go of unforgiveness and bitterness, and trust Him to work everything out for our good. Lord, come and cleanse us. Renew a right spirit within us, and allow Your glory to overtake us.

## **Lesson Introduction and Background**

### **From the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary**

On Sunday, May 22, 2011, an EF-5 tornado, the most severe kind, devastated nearly one-third of the city of Joplin, Missouri. "It was a searing scene straight from the book of Revelation," said one account of the damage. Yet from the aftermath there emerged numerous testimonies of faith, hope, and love from the Christians there, from those firmly committed to the "kingdom that cannot be shaken" (Hebrews 12:28). God worked through their relief efforts. God was there. The prophet Ezekiel also lived through a disaster, though it was not of the natural kind such as we classify the results of a tornado to be. The disaster he witnessed was the invasion of his homeland of Judah by the Babylonians under King Nebuchadnezzar, who ravaged the land and took thousands of its citizens (including Ezekiel himself) captive to Babylon. There on foreign soil, about a thousand miles from home, Ezekiel witnessed something else: dramatic visions conveying a message that God was still in control. His Word had lost none of its power. The captive people needed to hear and believe this. God was there.

The Babylonians conducted a series of three deportations against Judah in the years 605, 597, and 586 BC (2 Kings 24:1-25:21). Daniel was taken captive in the first of these (Daniel 1:1-6), while Ezekiel the "priest, the son of Buzi" was taken captive in the second (Ezekiel 1:1-3). Of interest is the mention of the "thirtieth year" in Ezekiel 1:1, which apparently is a reference to Ezekiel's age at the time he received God's call. This age is noteworthy, since it was the age at which Levites (the tribe from which all priests came) began their sacred service to the Lord (Numbers 4:46, 47), perhaps after first serving a five-year apprenticeship (8:24). God had special plans for Ezekiel: this priest was destined to be a prophet of the Lord to the exiles in Babylon (Ezekiel 2:1-3:6, 10-15). Ezekiel's name means "God strengthens" or "God makes hard"—quite appropriate given the circumstances of his ministry (compare 3:7-9).

At the point in the book of Ezekiel where our lesson begins, that man had been serving as the Lord's prophet in Babylon to a people who had been in exile some 25 years. The date noted in Ezekiel 40:1 calculates to 573 BC. A certain "man," introduced in 40:3, served as a kind of tour guide for Ezekiel throughout the visions of Ezekiel 40-48. The visions involved the prophet's being taken "to the land of Israel and set on a very high mountain" (Ezekiel 40:2). It was there he saw the "man whose appearance was like bronze; he was standing in the gateway with a linen cord and a measuring rod in his hand" (v. 3). This individual may well have been an angelic being of some kind. He commanded Ezekiel to watch carefully everything he was about to be shown, because the prophet was to declare all he saw to the house of Israel (Ezekiel 40:4). The experience shares certain parallels with what the apostle John was told in Revelation 1:3, 19.

## **Major Theme Analysis**

*(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)*

### **The Approach of the Glory (Ezek 43:1-5)**

- 1 Afterward he brought me to the gate, the gate that faces toward the east.
- 2 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.
- 3 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.
- 4 And the glory of the Lord came into the temple by way of the gate which faces toward the east.
- 5 The Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the temple.

## Sound of the glory (1-2)

*Sounds like thunder (Ps 29:3)*

3 The voice of the Lord is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the Lord thunders over the mighty waters.

*Sounds like wings of the Cherubim (Ezek 10:5)*

5 The sound of the wings of the cherubim could be heard as far away as the outer court, like the voice of God Almighty when he speaks.

*Sounds like a still small voice (1 Kings 19:11-14)*

11 Then He said, "Go out, and stand on the mountain before the Lord." And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; 12 and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice. 13 So it was, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. Suddenly a voice came to him, and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" 14 And he said, "I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts; because the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life."

*Sounds like loud rumbling (Ezek 3:12-13)*

12 Then the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me a loud rumbling sound — May the glory of the Lord be praised in his dwelling place!— 13 the sound of the wings of the living creatures brushing against each other and the sound of the wheels beside them, a loud rumbling sound.

*Sounds like harps (Rev 14:1-2)*

Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. 2 And I heard a sound from heaven like the roar of rushing waters and like a loud peal of thunder. The sound I heard was like that of harpists playing their harps.

## Vision of the glory (3-4)

*Visions of God's glory like glowing metal full of fire (Ezek 1:27-28)*

27 I saw that from what appeared to be his waist up he looked like glowing metal, as if full of fire, and that from there down he looked like fire; and brilliant light surrounded him. 28 Like the appearance of a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the radiance around him. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. When I saw it, I fell facedown, and I heard the voice of one speaking.

*Visions of God's glory like a bright cloud (Matt 17:5)*

5 While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"

*Visions of God's glory like a rainbow in the clouds (Ezek 1:28)*

28 Like the appearance of a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the radiance around him. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. When I saw it, I fell facedown, and I heard the voice of one speaking.

*Visions of God's glory with Cherubim and Seraphs surrounding (Isa 6:1-3)*

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. 2 Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. 3 And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory."

## **Spirit of glory (5)**

*The Spirit of glory provides power to witness (Acts 1:8)*

8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

*The Spirit of glory is a gift from God (Acts 2:38)*

38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

*The Spirit of glory speaks through His servants (Acts 4:25)*

25 You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David: "'Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?

*The Spirit of glory strengthens and encourages (Acts 9:31)*

31 Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace. It was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord.

*The Spirit of glory baptizes (Acts 11:16)*

16 Then I remembered what the Lord had said: 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'

*The Spirit of glory sanctifies (Rom 15:16)*

16 to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles with the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

## **The Explanation of the Glory (Ezek 43:6-8)**

6 Then I heard Him speaking to me from the temple, while a man stood beside me.

7 And He said to me, "Son of man, this is the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever. No more shall the house of Israel defile My holy name, they nor their kings, by their harlotry or with the carcasses of their kings on their high places.

8 When they set their threshold by My threshold, and their doorpost by My doorpost, with a wall between them and Me, they defiled My holy name by the abominations which they committed; therefore I have consumed them in My anger.

## **Holiness of the glory (6-7)**

*Holy because His glory fills the earth (Isa 6:3)*

3 And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory."

*Holy because He is majestic in His Holiness (Ex 15:11)*

11 "Who among the gods is like you, O Lord? Who is like you — majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders?

*Holy because the heavens declare His Holiness (Ps 19:1)*

19 The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

*Holy because He is Almighty and Everlasting (Rev 4:8)*

8 Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under his wings. Day and night they never stop saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."

*Holy because He is holiness (1 Peter 1:15)*

15 But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; 16 for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."

*Holy because He is perfect (Matt 5:48)*

48 Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

### **Defilement that separated the glory (7-8)**

*Defilement comes from planning iniquity (Mic 2:1)*

2 Woe to those who plan iniquity, to those who plot evil on their beds! At morning's light they carry it out because it is in their power to do it.

*Defilement comes from our own evil desires, not from being forced to do anything (James 1:13-15)*

13 When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; 14 but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

*Defilement comes from pretending to be clean, but at the same time being actually defiled (James 3:9-10)*

9 With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. 10 Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be.

*All defilement starts with some desire from within (James 4:1-3)*

4 What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? 2 You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. 3 When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

### **The Challenge of the Glory (Ezek 43:9-12)**

9 Now let them put their harlotry and the carcasses of their kings far away from Me, and I will dwell in their midst forever.

10 "Son of man, describe the temple to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and let them measure the pattern.

11 And if they are ashamed of all that they have done, make known to them the design of the temple and its arrangement, its exits and its entrances, its entire design and all its ordinances, all its forms and all its laws. Write it down in their sight, so that they may keep its whole design and all its ordinances, and perform them.

12 This is the law of the temple: The whole area surrounding the mountaintop is most holy. Behold, this is the law of the temple.

### **Challenge to abandon unfaithfulness (9-10)**

*Abandon unfaithfulness because it causes our own actions to recoil on us (Ps 7:15-16)*

15 He who digs a hole and scoops it out falls into the pit he has made. 16 The trouble he causes recoils on himself; his violence comes down on his own head.

*Abandon unfaithfulness because it is caused by bad choices (Prov 1:29-31)*

29 Since they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the Lord, 30 since they would not accept my advice and spurned my rebuke, 31 they will eat the fruit of their ways and be filled with the fruit of their schemes.

*Abandon unfaithfulness because we cannot do evil and still be in the will of God (Jer 18:9-10)*

9 And if at another time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be built up and planted, 10 and if it does evil in my sight and does not obey me, then I will reconsider the good I had intended to do for it.

*Abandon unfaithfulness because it proves that we don't know God (Titus 1:16)*

16 They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good.

*Abandon unfaithfulness because it proves we are stubborn and have forsaken God's word (Jer 9:13-14)*

13 The Lord said, "It is because they have forsaken my law, which I set before them; they have not obeyed me or followed my law. 14 Instead, they have followed the stubbornness of their hearts; they have followed the Baals, as their fathers taught them."

*Abandon unfaithfulness because it violates God's covenant (Deut 17:2-5)*

2 If a man or woman living among you in one of the towns the Lord gives you is found doing evil in the eyes of the Lord your God in violation of his covenant, 3 and contrary to my command has worshiped other gods, bowing down to them or to the sun or the moon or the stars of the sky, 4 and this has been brought to your attention, then you must investigate it thoroughly. If it is true and it has been proved that this detestable thing has been done in Israel, 5 take the man or woman who has done this evil deed to your city gate and stone that person to death.

*Abandon unfaithfulness because it dishonors God (Rom 2:23-24)*

23 You who brag about the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law? 24 As it is written: "God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you."

*Abandon unfaithfulness because it shows that we have forgotten all God has done for us (Heb 8:9)*

9 It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord.

## **Challenge to be obedient to God's Will (11-12)**

*Obedient to ensure of going the right way (Isa 30:21)*

21 Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it."

*Obedient so that God will make the way lighted and smooth (Isa 42:16)*

16 I will lead the blind by ways they have not known, along unfamiliar paths I will guide them; I will turn the darkness into light before them and make the rough places smooth. These are the things I will do; I will not forsake them.

*Obedient to receive the promise of success (Isa 1:19)*

19 If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land;

*Obedient to receive the promise of life and being a child of God (Rom 8:12-14)*

12 Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation — but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. 13 For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, 14 because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

*Obedient in every detail (1 Sam 15:14-26)*

14 But Samuel said, "What then is this bleating of sheep in my ears? What is this lowing of cattle that I hear?" 15 Saul answered, "The soldiers brought them from the Amalekites; they spared the best of the sheep and cattle to sacrifice to the Lord your God, but we totally destroyed the rest." 16 "Stop!" Samuel said to Saul. "Let me tell you what the Lord said to me last night." "Tell me," Saul replied. 17 Samuel said, "Although you were once small in your own eyes, did you not become the head of the tribes of Israel? The Lord anointed you king over Israel. 18 And he sent you on a mission, saying, 'Go and completely destroy those wicked people, the Amalekites; make war on them until you have wiped them out.' 19 Why did you not obey the Lord? Why did you pounce on the plunder and do evil in the eyes of the Lord?" 20 "But I did obey the Lord," Saul said. "I went on the mission the Lord assigned

me. I completely destroyed the Amalekites and brought back Agag their king. 21 The soldiers took sheep and cattle from the plunder, the best of what was devoted to God, in order to sacrifice them to the Lord your God at Gilgal." 22 But Samuel replied: "Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. 23 For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has rejected you as king." 24 Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned. I violated the Lord's command and your instructions. I was afraid of the people and so I gave in to them. 25 Now I beg you, forgive my sin and come back with me, so that I may worship the Lord." 26 But Samuel said to him, "I will not go back with you. You have rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you as king over Israel!"

*Obedient in spite of setbacks and the complaints of others (Ex 6:9-12)*

9 Moses reported this to the Israelites, but they did not listen to him because of their discouragement and cruel bondage. 10 Then the Lord said to Moses, 11 "Go, tell Pharaoh king of Egypt to let the Israelites go out of his country." 12 But Moses said to the Lord, "If the Israelites will not listen to me, why would Pharaoh listen to me, since I speak with faltering lips?"

## Conclusion and Other Thoughts

### ***Commentary Thoughts from Thomas L. Constable***

#### **The return of God's glory to the temple 43:1-12**

Having described the temple, God next revealed that He approved of it.

#### **The vision itself 43:1-5**

43:1-2 Ezekiel's guide next led him to the east gate in the outer wall. This was the wall of the millennial temple that he had been seeing and continued to see, not the wall of the Solomonic temple. There the prophet saw the glory of God approaching the temple from the east (cf. Deut. 33:2; Isa. 60:1-3). Ezekiel had seen God's glory departing from Solomon's temple to the east when the Babylonians destroyed it (ch. 8; 10:4, 18-19; 11:22-25). It did not return when Zerubbabel rebuilt it or when Herod the Great remodeled it (cf. Hag. 2:7). But now the Lord was about to take up residence in His millennial temple. God's voice was as the sound of a mighty waterfall (powerful and majestic; cf. 1:24; Rev. 1:15; 14:2), and His glory illuminated the land as it passed over it (cf. Exod. 34:29-30, 35; Mark 9:3; 2 Cor. 4:6; Rev. 1:16; 18:1). An interesting foreview of the departure and return of God's glory occurred when God's glory departed with the ark of the covenant into the Philistine camp (1 Sam. 4:19-22) and then returned when David brought the ark into Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6:17-19). Another parallel is Jesus' departure from Jerusalem in His ascension and His return to it at His second advent, both events happening on the Mount of Olives east of Jerusalem.

43:3 This vision reminded Ezekiel of the vision of God that he had seen by the river Chebar (1:3), when he saw God coming to judge Jerusalem (cf. 1:4- 28; 9:1, 5; 32:18). He responded by prostrating himself before the Lord again (cf. 1:28; 3:23).

43:4-5 Yahweh's glory entered the temple through the east gate, the same gate through which Ezekiel had formerly seen it leave the city. The Holy Spirit transported Ezekiel in his vision to the inner court, and there he saw that God's glory had filled the temple (cf. Exod. 24:9-17; 34:29-30; Luke 2:8-10). Similarly the glory of God had come upon and filled the tabernacle at its dedication (Exod. 40:34-35) and Solomon's temple at its dedication (1 Kings 8:10-11; 2 Chron. 5:13-14; 7:1-3).

#### **The significance of the vision 43:6-12**

43:6 The prophet heard someone speaking to him from the temple, and there was a man, probably Ezekiel's guide, standing beside him (cf. 1:16).

43:7-8 The one speaking from the temple, undoubtedly the Lord, told Ezekiel that the temple was His throne, the place where He would rest His feet (take up residence) and live among the Israelites forever (cf. 1 Kings 8:12, 13, 27; 1

Chron. 28:2; Ps. 99:5; 132:7; Isa. 66:1; Jer. 3:17; 17:12). He announced that the Israelites and their leaders would no longer defile His holy reputation (cf. 39:7). They had done this by their religious prostitution and spiritual unfaithfulness to Him and by burying some of their kings too close to the temple precincts (cf. 1 Kings 21:19, 24-26). They had built their defiling graves too close to the temple, with only a wall between, not allowing some distance between them (sacred space) to honor God's holiness. The Israelites had formerly defiled His name by their sinful acts that were abominable to God (cf. 8:1-18). That was the reason He had burned them in judgment. He had been angry with them.

43:9 If the Israelites would put away their harlotry (physical and spiritual) and would refrain from burying their dead too close to holy ground, the Lord promised to dwell among them forever. While the place of burial may seem insignificant to modern Westerners, it was important to ancient Near Easterners since it expressed respect or disrespect. This is one of many places in which a prophet conditioned the coming of God's kingdom on Israel's repentance (cf. Hag. 2:4-7; Zech. 12:10—14:9; et al.). The prophets presented the coming of the kingdom as contingent on the sovereignty of God and the enablement of the Holy Spirit as well.<sup>581</sup>

43:10-11 The Lord instructed Ezekiel to describe the temple that he had seen in his vision to the Israelites. It would so impress them with the glorious future that God intended to give them that they would feel ashamed of their iniquities. They should examine the plans of the future temple carefully because they would inspire obedience in the people. If the exiles responded positively to Ezekiel's revelation, they should study the vision carefully and conform to the instructions that accompanied it. Ezekiel was about to receive information about what the Israelites should do. So far the vision dealt with what they would see.

43:12 The overriding lesson of the vision was that holiness was to permeate everything connected with the future of the mountain-top temple.

*(Adapted from URL: <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/ezekiel.pdf>)*

### ***Concluding Thoughts from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary***

When encountering road construction while driving, most of us become at least a little frustrated with the waiting that results. But we eventually come to an “End Construction” sign. I often think that that is exactly what I would like to have happen in my life: end construction—permanently! Being “under construction” provides a helpful way to think about the Christian life: we are always “works in progress.” Whether we have been Christians for 60 days or 60 years, there is always room to grow. We may not be guilty of the specific practices cited by Ezekiel, but we can be guilty of spiritual adultery nonetheless. Consider James 4:4: “You adulterous people, don’t you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God?” God’s presence filled both Solomon’s temple and Ezekiel’s visionary temple. Is he welcome in ours?

### ***Practical Points from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator***

1. The more we see of God's glory, the more we are humbled by Him (Ezek. 43:1-3)
2. The Lord always dwells with His people, no matter where they are (vss. 4-5)
3. We should be as desirous of living with God as He is of dwelling with us (vss. 6-7)
4. The holiness of God demands that His people separate themselves from sin (vss. 8-9)
5. Prophecy serves as a rebuke to lackadaisical attitudes toward serving God (vss. 10-11)
6. Holiness characterizes God and all He does, and it should mark His people (vs. 12)