

## Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

### Part 389 – Ezekiel Brought Back Through The Priests Shall Not Eat (Ezekiel 44:1-31)

1. When Ezekiel was brought back, in this vision, to the way of the gate of the outward sanctuary; who did the Lord say was the only one that could enter into this shut gate?

The prince: *“(1) Then he brought me back the way of the gate of the outward sanctuary which looketh toward the east; and it was shut. (2) Then said the LORD unto me; This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, 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. (3) 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 that gate, and shall go out by the way of the same” (Ezekiel 44:1-3).*

- Ezekiel had been brought to an outward court (**Ezekiel 40:17**).
- Now he is back to what we studied previously. We discussed the glory of the Lord entering the temple in the previous chapter (**Ezekiel 43:1-4**).
- It is for the prince with a later qualifier that we shall read about (**Ezekiel 46:1-2**).
- There was a place for the king (**II Chronicles 23:12-13** and **II Chronicles 34:30-33**).
- There were specific times, during the days of the tabernacle, when the princes of the tribes came to offer offerings to the Lord (**Numbers 7:11-78**).

2. When Ezekiel was brought the way of the north gate, what was Ezekiel told to “mark well”?

All that He saw and heard concerning all the ordinances of the house of the Lord: *“(4) Then brought he me 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 upon my face. (5) And the LORD said unto me, Son of man, mark well, and behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears all that I say unto thee concerning all the ordinances of the house of the LORD, and all the laws thereof; and mark well the entering in of the house, with every going forth of the sanctuary” (Ezekiel 44:4-5).*

- Ezekiel falls on his face when the glory of the Lord filled the temple much like one would expect considering what we see in the Scriptures (**Genesis 17:1-3**, **Joshua 5:13-15**, **Matthew 17:1-8**, and **Revelation 1:9-20**).
- “Mark well” (**Job 33:31-33**).
- See and hear so he could go and show (**Ezekiel 40:4** and **Matthew 11:1-6**).
- All of it, not just what Ezekiel was interested in (**II Peter 1:20-21**; cf. **Deuteronomy 4:4**, **Deuteronomy 12:32**, and **Proverbs 30:5-6**).

3. What abominations were shown to Ezekiel concerning the rebellious house of Israel?

The bringing in of the uncircumcised into the sanctuary of the Lord, general abominations, and offenses in the temple: *“(6) And thou shalt say to the rebellious, even to the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; O ye house of*

*Israel, let it suffice you of all your abominations, (7) In that ye have brought into my sanctuary strangers, uncircumcised in heart, and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in my sanctuary, to pollute it, even my house, when ye offer my bread, the fat and the blood, and they have broken my covenant because of all your abominations. (8) And ye have not kept the charge of mine holy things: but ye have set keepers of my charge in my sanctuary for yourselves. (9) Thus saith the Lord GOD; No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel” (Ezekiel 44:6-9).*

- Israel was rebellious (**Deuteronomy 9:24, Deuteronomy 31:27, Isaiah 30:1-9, Isaiah 65:1-5, Jeremiah 5:20-23, Ezekiel 2:3, Ezekiel 12:9, and Ezekiel 20:13**).
  - They had caused offenses in the temple (**II Chronicles 36:14, Ezekiel 8:5-16, and Ezekiel 22:26**).
  - They brought strangers, uncircumcised in heart (**Deuteronomy 10:16**; cf. **Jeremiah 7:1-15**) and in the flesh (**Ephesians 2:11-17**), into the sanctuary of the Lord (**Jeremiah 51:51, Lamentations 1:10, Acts 21:27-30, and Acts 24:1-6**; cf. **Leviticus 22:24-25**).
  - It was NOT that strangers could not enter in among Israel (**II Chronicles 2:17**) to some limited degree. The fact is, they were to be kind to strangers (**Exodus 23:9, Leviticus 19:34, Deuteronomy 10:19, etc.**), but they could not let them into the Lord’s house (though it did happen in certain extenuating circumstances; i.e. **Jeremiah 28:3**).
  - Also, keep in mind that “strangers” could include Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites.; some of which were of the bloodline (**Genesis 19:30-38 and Genesis 36:1**). Israelites were also sometimes scattered and thus strangers when they came back to the land of Israel (**Deuteronomy 30:1-4 and Jeremiah 32:37-44**).
  - Know this though, for Israel to be pure they had to distance themselves from strangers (**Nehemiah 9:1-3**) as they would have been from their land’s beginning had they followed the Lord’s will (**Deuteronomy 7:1-12**).
  - To enter the Lord’s house, you had to be clean (**Psalms 24:1-4**).
  - They were covenant breakers (**Deuteronomy 31:16 and Nehemiah 9:26-29**).
  - They did not keep the charge of His holy things (**Numbers 18:1-3**).
  - No outsiders (**Isaiah 52:1, Joel 3:17, and Zechariah 14:21**).
  - While the application today is certainly different, there is an unwavering principle we must still adhere to (**II Corinthians 6:14-7:1, Ephesians 5:6-11, and II John 1:6-11**).
4. Since the Levites erred, were they removed from ministering in the sanctuary?  
No, they had to bear their iniquities, but was permitted to serve: “(10) *And the Levites that are gone away far from me, when Israel went astray, which went astray away from me after their idols; they shall even bear their iniquity. (11) Yet they shall be ministers in my sanctuary, having charge at the gates of the house, and ministering to the house: they shall slay the burnt offering and the sacrifice*

*for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister unto them. (12) Because they ministered unto them before their idols, and caused the house of Israel to fall into iniquity; therefore have I lifted up mine hand against them, saith the Lord GOD, and they shall bear their iniquity. (13) And they shall not come near unto me, to do the office of a priest unto me, nor to come near to any of my holy things, in the most holy place: but they shall bear their shame, and their abominations which they have committed. (14) But I will make them keepers of the charge of the house, for all the service thereof, and for all that shall be done therein” (Ezekiel 44:10-14).*

- The Levities that had erred (**Nehemiah 9:34** and **Ezekiel 22:26**).
- Like all, they too had to bear their sins (**Proverbs 1:31**).
- They were going to have to confess, repent, and cleanse themselves; but they would be priests in the future (**Ezra 6:1-10:19**).
- The priesthood didn’t change till Christ (**Hebrews 4:14-7:28**).

5. Were there some in the priesthood that appeared to remain true to the Lord?

*Yes: “(15) But the priests the Levites, the sons of Zadok, that kept the charge of my sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from me, they shall come near to me to minister unto me, and they shall stand before me to offer unto me the fat and the blood, saith the Lord GOD: (16) They shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to my table, to minister unto me, and they shall keep my charge” (Ezekiel 44:15-16).*

- The name Zadok goes back as far as the priesthood in **II Samuel 8:17**.
- This context shows that every priest did not err. There was a faithful remnant of them as with all the children of Israel (**II Kings 19:30-31**).
- Even among the Scribes there were some faithful (**Jeremiah 35:1-19**).

6. What was Ezekiel shown about the priest’s garments and hair when they came into the inner court?

*“(17) And it shall come to pass, that when they enter in at the gates of the inner court, they shall be clothed with linen garments; and no wool shall come upon them, whiles they minister in the gates of the inner court, and within. (18) They shall have linen bonnets upon their heads, and shall have linen breeches upon their loins; they shall not gird themselves with any thing that causeth sweat. (19) And when they go forth into the utter court, even into the utter court to the people, they shall put off their garments wherein they ministered, and lay them in the holy chambers, and they shall put on other garments; and they shall not sanctify the people with their garments. (20) Neither shall they shave their heads, nor suffer their locks to grow long; they shall only poll their heads” (Ezekiel 44:17-19).*

- The priestly garments and grooming were specified by the Lord even as far back as the origin of the Law of Moses (**Exodus 28:1-43**).

7. What was Ezekiel shown about wine and marriage for the priests?

*"(21) Neither shall any priest drink wine, when they enter into the inner court.*

*(22) Neither shall they take for their wives a widow, nor her that is put away: but they shall take maidens of the seed of the house of Israel, or a widow that had a priest before" (Ezekiel 44:21-22).*

- No wine (**Leviticus 10:9**; cf. **Proverbs 31:4-5**).
- Marriage law for priests (**Leviticus 21:1-14**).

8. Could it be said that priests were responsible for teaching and judgment in addition to ministering to the things regarding the temple?

*Yes: "(23) And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean.*

*(24) And in controversy they shall stand in judgment; and they shall judge it according to my judgments: and they shall keep my laws and my statutes in all mine assemblies; and they shall hallow my sabbaths" (Ezekiel 44:23-24).*

- Again, this was commanded aforetime (**Leviticus 10:10-11** and **Deuteronomy 33:8-10**).
- To discern (**Hebrews 5:12-14**).
- We see this happening after captivity (**Nehemiah 8:1-18**).
- Judge controversial things (**Deuteronomy 17:8-13**).

9. What lengths were to be taken to assure the priests were clean before the Lord?

They had to remain undefiled, with limited exceptions, and once defiled had to take seven days apart the offer to the Lord a sin offering: *"(25) And they shall come at no dead person to defile themselves: but for father, or for mother, or for son, or for daughter, for brother, or for sister that hath had no husband, they may defile themselves. (26) And after he is cleansed, they shall reckon unto him seven days. (27) And in the day that he goeth into the sanctuary, unto the inner court, to minister in the sanctuary, he shall offer his sin offering, saith the Lord GOD. (28) And it shall be unto them for an inheritance: I am their inheritance: and ye shall give them no possession in Israel: I am their possession. (29) They shall eat the meat offering, and the sin offering, and the trespass offering; and every dedicated thing in Israel shall be theirs. (30) And the first of all the firstfruits of all things, and every oblation of all, of every sort of your oblations, shall be the priest's: ye shall also give unto the priest the first of your dough, that he may cause the blessing to rest in thine house. (31) The priests shall not eat of any thing that is dead of itself, or torn, whether it be fowl or beast" (Ezekiel 44:25-31).*

- cf. **Leviticus 21:1-22:33**