

SAM What's our study for today?
LOU We're going to look at the last nine chapters of the Book of Ezekiel.
SAM What are they about?
LOU They tell about a vision that God gave to the prophet Ezekiel.
SAM What did he see in the vision?
LOU The land of Israel, Jerusalem, the temple.
SAM I guess everything was in ruins, since Israel was in exile.
LOU No, the vision was not of the present, but of some time in the future. Ezekiel saw a magnificent land, a beautiful city, a glorious temple, and a blessed community.
SAM How far in the future did the vision take Ezekiel?
LOU We're not sure. Some think Ezekiel saw how God intended for Jerusalem and its temple to be rebuilt when the exiles returned home.
SAM Is that what happened?
LOU Not exactly. The temple described in Ezekiel's vision has never been built. Some think it will be built after Jesus returns, during His millennial reign.
SAM Are there other ideas?
LOU Some see the vision as symbolic of the church age or heaven, but the descriptions and measurements seem more literal than figurative. The passage reads like other Bible texts that describe the construction of the tabernacle, Solomon's Temple, or Noah's

ark.
SAM What else is in this section?
LOU The vision describes worship in the temple, with particular attention to the altar, the priests, sacrifices, offerings, holy days and feasts. Also the division of the land among the tribes of Israel.
SAM Did you say sacrifices?
LOU Yes, animal sacrifices.
SAM That doesn't seem to fit in with a temple during the millennial reign of Christ.
LOU Some believe that during that time the Jewish people will offer animal sacrifices looking back on Christ's sacrificial death, just as in Old Testament times the sacrifices looked forward to His death.
SAM This is all pretty confusing to me.
LOU That's not unusual. These chapters have puzzled a lot of people through the years, just trying to understand what the vision is about and what it means. At one time, according to the Holman Bible Dictionary, people under age 30 were not allowed to read Ezekiel 40–48.
SAM You're kidding!
LOU No, that's what they say.
SAM Well, then, get out of my way. I'm ready to dig in and see what God has to say to me through the last nine chapters of Ezekiel.
LOU Let's do it.

Teacher's Toolbox

*Getting your class into God's Word
and God's Word into your class*

ExcitingBibleStudy.com

Bible Series


Ezekiel 40–48


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HOW TO USE TEACHER'S TOOLBOX: Make a four-page folded teacher's leaflet from the first two sheets by printing two-sided (or by putting the blank sides together). The other two sheets are for duplicating, displaying, distributing, or otherwise using as called for in the lesson plan.

 **Faith at Home** – A specific application of today's Bible passage to family life, to be used for individual reflection, family discussion, or class activity.

 **Faith at Home**
 Before attending your next worship service, lead your family to prayerfully anticipate the presence of God in that service.

Getting Started

Skit

- Enlist two people to present the skit on page 4. Give each a copy.
- After the skit, invite learners to open their Bibles to Ezekiel 40-48.

Exploring God's Word

Passage outline

- Write the following outline on the chalkboard, or display Item 2.

Ezekiel's Magical Mystery Tour of Israel (Ezekiel 40-48)

- Tour of the Temple (Ezek. 40-42)

- Glory of God (Ezek. 43:1-12)
- Worthy Worship (Ezek. 43:13–46:24)
 - Rising River (Ezek. 47:1-12)
- Tribal Territories (Ezek. 47:13–48:35)

Getting a taste

● Help the class get an overview of the content of these chapters by having them look at a few representative verses from each section. Have someone read aloud the following verses. After the verses are read, share the commentary given here in bold face.

○ 40:1-4. **It had been 14 years since the fall of Jerusalem, and 25 years since the exile began. Through visions, God transported the prophet Ezekiel to Israel. He was encouraged to pay close attention to everything he saw and heard.**

○ 40:5. **Ezekiel’s tour guide was a man “whose appearance was bronze.” The man constantly measured walls, doors, rooms, and windows as he led the prophet through the entire temple area, from the outer courtyard to the inner sanctuary.**

○ 43:4-5. **The man took Ezekiel outside so he could see the glory of the Lord approach and then fill the temple.**

○ 44:15. **Specific instructions were given for how the priests were to carry out the sacrifices of worship in the temple.**

○ 47:1-5. **With no other source but the temple itself, the flow of water continues to increase and deepen until it is a river that no one can cross.**

○ 48:30-35. **The land is divided among the tribes of Israel, and the city is renamed, “The Lord is there,” which, in Hebrew is “Yahweh-Shammah,” which sounds something like the Hebrew for Jerusalem, “Yerushalayim.”**

Focusing on one section

● Have learners focus on Ezekiel 43:1-12, which tells of the glory of God entering and filling the temple. Ask someone to read the passage aloud.

Study guide

● Give each person a pencil and a copy of the following study guide, but without the answers provided here in parentheses (duplicate Item 1). Have them choose someone to work with as they study the passage and complete the study guide.

Study Guide

Study Ezekiel 43:1-12 and answer the following questions.

1. When the man in his vision escorted Ezekiel to the east gate of the temple, what did he see? (the glory of God coming from the east)

2. Of what did the vision remind Ezekiel? (of earlier visions he had experienced)

3. How did Ezekiel respond to his vision? (fell facedown)

4. Where did the Spirit take Ezekiel as God’s glory filled the temple? (the inner court)

5. What specific sins of Israel does God mention? (defiling God’s name, prostitution, idolatry)

6. What did God say that He intended to do? (live among His people forever)

7. What did God indicate would motivate the people to build the temple Ezekiel saw in his vision? (shame for their sins)

● Allow ten minutes for members to complete the study guide. Then ask the questions, letting volunteers respond.

Making It Personal

Group discussion

● Use the following questions to

Wrapping It Up

● **Just going through the motions of worship is a waste of time and energy. If we will genuinely worship God in spirit and in truth, He will receive our worship, He will fill our temple with His glory, filling us with His Holy Spirit. That is worth the time and energy that sincere worship requires.** Have someone lead the class in prayer.

guide a group discussion about how we can experience God’s presence in worship today.

○ **Think about the difference that God’s glory made to that temple. What was it like before God’s glory entered it? What was it like afterwards?**

○ **How important is the presence of God to worship? Do we need Him when we worship? Why or why not?**

○ **When we gather as a congregation for a worship service, is God there? How can we know?**

○ **What difference does the presence of God make in our worship?**

○ **What would keep God from attending a worship service? What would keep Him away?**

○ **What would draw God to a worship service? What would make Him feel welcome? What would cause Him to want to be there?**

○ **What can you, as an individual, do to invite God’s presence into your worship regardless of what anyone else in the congregation does?**

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