

EZEKIEL: BLOSSOMING DURING LIFE'S MOST SEVERE CRISES

Part XXIII: God's Future Work To Reward His Servants According To Their Present Deeds

(Ezekiel 43:13-44:31)

I. Introduction

- A. There are times when serving the Lord seems to be a "no win" situation where sin just seems to blossom even among God's servants! Those who are trying to do a godly task are buffeted and discouraged by this incredible downside of ministry -- the presence of sin in even God's fellow servants!
- B. Ezekiel was given priceless insight into the future adjustments that God will make to reward the good and the bad servants of the Levitical priesthood, Ez. 43:13-44:31.

II. God's Future Work To Reward His Servants According To Their Present Deeds, Ez. 43:13-44:31:

- A. God gave the prophet, Ezekiel, insight into the Millennial Temple, Ez. 40:1-4.
- B. Among the items presented in the vision of this temple was the altar of burnt offering, Ez. 43:13-27. There will be burnt offerings in the coming Millennial Temple, and we explain why later in this lesson!
- C. God will assign a prince under Messiah to worship the Lord by offering sin offerings for himself and for his sons after him, Ez. 44:1-3 with Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, fn. We know that this prince is not the Messiah as he needs a sin offering (45:22) and he has sons (46:16). It may be the earthly prince who survives the Great Tribulation, or it could be the resurrected King David, B.K.C., O.T., p. 1309!
- D. Though foreigners had formerly done the menial work in the temple (44:4-9), since the **apostate** Levites had gone astray and led the nation away from God, they would take the place of foreigners and **these** Levites would do the **menial chores** in the Millennial Temple, Ez. 44:10-11. **These Levites would not be allowed to come near the holy place**, Ez. 44:12-14.
- E. On the other hand, a select group of Levites, the sons of Zadok, had remained faithful to the Lord during the general apostasy of the other Levitical priests and the nation of Israel. For their faithfulness during this apostasy, God promised them special service during the Millennial Kingdom, Ez. 44:15-31:
 1. God singled out the sons of Zadok to minister in the holy things and the holy places due to their remaining true to God's Word and service during Israel's past apostasy, Ez. 44:15-16 with 1 K. 1:7-8, 32-34. Zadok had refused to join Adonijah in his effort to be the next king after David instead of waiting on the Lord's choice in Solomon to be king. Accordingly, he was given the honorable position of serving the Lord under Solomon and onwards.
 2. These sons of Zadok would wear linen to minimize perspiring in serving the Lord, something that would profane the teaching of holiness via "self-help" emphases, Ez. 44:17-19.
 3. They would not shave their heads bare or let it grow too long as both were signs of mourning, 44:20 with Lev. 21:5; 10:6). They would avoid extremes and rejoice before the Lord.
 4. Instead of being controlled by alcohol, the sons of Zadok would not drink strong drink to be able to serve the Lord with the best of their faculties, v. 21.
 5. The sons of Zadok would marry only virgins instead of widows or divorced women so that there would be no question as to their holiness in marital relationships, Ez. 44:22.
 6. In this position, they would teach the people to distinguish between the holy and the profane (v. 23), they would make judgments on righteous issues (v. 24), and faithfully keep God's laws (v. 25-31).

Lesson: *Though it might have been discouraging or even intimidating for the sons of Zadok to have remained true to the Lord and His Word in the days of Ezekiel, their faithfulness will be rewarded by honorable service assignments in the resurrection where the other less spiritual groups of Levites would have menial tasks in the temple.*

Application: *We ought to be encouraged to remain faithful to the Lord regardless of the actions to the contrary of even other servants of God. God is still sovereign, and He will reward or withdraw rewards in the resurrection for obedience to Him now, cf. 2 Cor. 5:10-11. We will also be judged on what we did with the opportunities presented us to obey God in this life (Luke 19:12-27) and on what we did with the abilities God entrusted to us to use for His glory (Matthew 25:14-30).*