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# Revelation

## 2020 - Lesson

### 20D

## From Ezekiel

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- Welcome to the third night of our examination of the Kingdom
  - In our study of Revelation, we're taking time to explore life in the coming Kingdom in depth
    - The Kingdom is the 1,000-year period that follows our current age, beginning at Christ's Second Coming
    - That period is only described in a handful of verses in Revelation 20
    - And once you pass the brief mention of the Kingdom in Revelation 20, John says this world ends altogether
    - And then we move into an entirely new world described in Revelation 21 & 22
  - But before we get there, we have more to understand about the Kingdom
    - And because the book of Revelation itself doesn't say much about that time, we're spending a few weeks outside the book
    - We're studying various Old Testament passages where the life and times of the Kingdom are described often and in great detail
  - I've divided this section of our study into four parts:
    - Order of Creation, nature, geography, borders and government
    - Daily life and death
    - The Temple, worship and Kingdom Law
    - Final War against Satan
  - Today we examine the temple operation of the Kingdom, including the sacrifice system and Kingdom Law
    - For those of you who are regular students of VBVM, you will recognize most of tonight's teaching
    - Most of what I cover tonight and next week will come from our recent Ezekiel study
    - That's because virtually everything we know about the Kingdom temple and the final war is given in Ezekiel and nowhere else
- So tonight, we will start with a tour of the temple itself, followed by a discussion of worship and sacrifice under the new Kingdom Law
  - The only temple mentioned in the book of Revelation is the temple constructed during Tribulation
    - John measures it in Chapter 11 and the Antichrist desecrates it at the midpoint of Tribulation
    - But Daniel 12 told us that the Tribulation temple will be cleansed of the image of the beast 30 days after the Lord's return
    - That detail suggests that the temple itself will continue on in a new and better form
  - And Ezekiel confirms the existence of a temple in the Kingdom, and more than that, he describes it in great detail
    - Over nine chapters, Ezekiel gives his readers a tour of the entire building and its operation

- Since that study already exists, we will just summarize what we learned there in this study
- And for the sake of time, we will include Scripture references to the relevant passages in Ezekiel but we won't read them all
- Ezekiel's description of the temple starts this way:

**Ezek. 40:2** In the visions of God He brought me into the land of Israel and set me on a very high mountain, and on it to the south there was a structure like a city.

**Ezek. 40:3** So He brought me there; and behold, there was a man whose appearance was like the appearance of bronze, with a line of flax and a measuring rod in his hand; and he was standing in the gateway.

**Ezek. 40:4** The man said to me, "Son of man, see with your eyes, hear with your ears, and give attention to all that I am going to show you; for you have been brought here in order to show it to you. Declare to the house of Israel all that you see."

- Ezekiel was given the privilege of seeing and describing the Millennial temple for Israel
  - He said it was positioned on a high mountain and the structure was so massive it was like a city all its own
  - That's very different than the current topography of Jerusalem where the temple is at a height similar to the surrounding area
- Ezekiel was also told to measure the dimensions of the building precisely
  - He takes these measurements so that we can appreciate the massive scale of the building
  - And from that we also know that this building was very different from any that came before it
- So let's walk through the building together based on the dimensions and descriptions that Ezekiel provides to us
  - And the easiest way to get oriented is to compare the structure we're studying to others we know from history
    - Consider the size of the Millennial Temple in comparison to these structures
    - The Tabernacle, Solomon's temple, an American football field, and Herod's temple
  - The size of this temple reflects the need for some many millions of people to stream to this place from all over the world
    - This temple will save all humanity, not just the Jewish people
    - This reinforces the truth that Israel is the center of the world and all worship and government will center on this nation
  - And the reality of an operating temple of this scale, priests, guards and the like remind us of how prevalent sin will be in that world
    - We will be above it all, ruling, but we will still see it all around

- Because of Christ's perfect rule, the effects of sin will be greatly mitigated and controlled
  - But it will still be in the world, which will make Christ's perfect rule all the more amazing to see operating
- The structure is a perfect square, and it includes an outer wall with three gates and an inner wall with three more gates (no west gate)
  - There are two courtyards formed by these walls and there is the temple building proper with several supporting buildings around it
    - Let's enter from the east gate, which is the main entrance at the start of the Kingdom [*Tour will be via slides*]
    - The gate is 100 ft long, 50ft wide and has a 100ft door and a 120ft porch
    - Notice that in the measurements the recurring numbers are 5 and 6 (the 5 found in the .5 cubit walls separating spaces)
    - The number 5 is the number of grace, while the number 6 is the number for sinful man
  - So symbolically, this gate reminds people that this is a place where sin meets grace
    - The spaces of sin (6 cu) where people congregate are divided or broken up by the walls of grace (.5 cu)
    - The symbolic sense is that sin will be broken here
  - After exiting the inner east gate, we walk into a large open courtyard, and as we move forward we reach the inner east gate
    - This gate leads into the temple courtyard proper
    - There are palm trees marking this entrance and exit
    - And there are tables for sacrifice at the entrance of this inner gate
  - Entering into the courtyard we find a high altar with steps leading up
    - And behind it the steps leading into the temple itself
    - There is no door on the temple nor is there a veil separating the inner rooms
    - That is different to the earlier tabernacle and temples that had veils on the entrance and leading to the Holy of Holies
  - Also, the Millennial temple will have only one piece of furniture inside
    - Only an altar of incense will exist in the temple
    - Previously, there were other items required, but they are gone now because they pictured Jesus
    - Since Jesus is present, we have no need for those symbols
    - But incense pictures intercession before the Father, so that item remains since Jesus' role as intercessor for sin still remains as well
- Around the temple we also find three additional buildings in that day, two for the priests and one that is not defined in Ezekiel except for its measurements
  - The priestly chambers flank the temple on the north and south sides, and in here priests begin their work day

- They change clothes in these chambers before and after work
  - There are galleries here for viewing the offering of burnt sacrifices in the temple courtyard
- Looking more closely at the temple, we find a small river emerging from the building leading us back outside the temple
  - The river emerges from under the foundation of the temple
  - It runs through a channel in the courtyard and under the inner east gate and the outer east gate
- At that point it splits and runs both east and west as we learned last week
  - When it hits the Dead Sea in the east, it turns the salt sea into a fresh water lake
  - The symbolism of living water emerging from the temple is a testimony to the world of Christ's presence in the temple
  - We will talk more about this symbolism in a future week of this study when we look at the New Heavens and New Earth
- This temple will be the center of worship in the Kingdom, and that worship involves Jesus, sacrifice, priests and feast days as it did under the Jewish Law
  - First, let's discuss Jesus' place in the temple, beginning with Jesus' place in the earlier temples
    - In the first tabernacle built by Moses, the Lord occupied the Holy of Holies as the Shechinah Glory of God
    - Later, after Solomon built the temple, the glory of the Lord entered the temple to rest above the mercy seat again
    - The Lord eventually departed the temple in Ezekiel's day in response to the sin of Israel and the coming judgment
  - When He departed, the glory of the Lord left in a very certain way starting at the doorway of the temple

**Ezek. 10:4 Then the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub to the threshold of the temple, and the temple was filled with the cloud and the court was filled with the brightness of the glory of the Lord.**

- First the glory of the Lord moved from the Holy of Holies to the temple doorway
- It moves through the length of the Holy Place in the temple, Ezekiel says, and as it does the temple was filled with the cloud
- Then He moves from the temple to the east gate of the temple structure escorted by cherubim

**Ezek. 10:18 Then the glory of the Lord departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim.**

**Ezek. 10:19 When the cherubim departed, they lifted their wings and rose up from the earth in my sight with the wheels beside them; and they stood still**

**at the entrance of the east gate of the Lord's house, and the glory of the God of Israel hovered over them.**

- Finally the glory of the Lord moves outside the temple across the Kidron Valley and to the top of the Mt. Of Olives

**Ezek. 11:23** The glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city and stood over the mountain which is east of the city.

**Ezek. 11:24** And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God to the exiles in Chaldea. So the vision that I had seen left me.

- From there the glory of the Lord disappeared and it has not returned to the temple since that day
- So when it comes time for the Lord to once again reside in His temple, He arrives in the same way He departed
  - According to Ezekiel 43, the glory of the Lord enters the temple on the first day of the Kingdom in this manner

**Ezek. 43:1** Then he led me to the gate, the gate facing toward the east;

**Ezek. 43:2** and behold, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the way of the east. And His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory.

**Ezek. 43:3** And it was like the appearance of the vision which I saw, like the vision which I saw when He came to destroy the city. And the visions were like the vision which I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell on my face.

**Ezek. 43:4** And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate facing toward the east.

**Ezek. 43:5** And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house.

**Ezek. 43:6** Then I heard one speaking to me from the house, while a man was standing beside me.

**Ezek. 43:7** 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 among the sons of Israel forever. And the house of Israel will not again defile My holy name, neither they nor their kings, by their harlotry and by the corpses of their kings when they die,

**Ezek. 43:8** by setting their threshold by My threshold and their door post beside My door post, with only the wall between Me and them. And they have defiled My holy name by their abominations which they have committed. So I have consumed them in My anger.

**Ezek. 43:9** "Now let them put away their harlotry and the corpses of their kings far from Me; and I will dwell among them forever.

- So the Lord lives in the Kingdom in that day in the form of His Shechinah glory once

more, resident in the house of the Lord, the temple

- He lives there continually, never leaving the temple again
  - He resides in the temple and out of view of the world
  - In fact, after He enters the east outer gate is shut forever, never to open again in the days of the Kingdom

**Ezek. 44:1 Then He brought me back by the way of the outer gate of the sanctuary, which faces the east; and it was shut.**

**Ezek. 44:2 The LORD said to me, “This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no one shall enter by it, for the LORD God of Israel has entered by it; therefore it shall be shut.**

- The Lord is the only One Who enters by way of the east gate of the temple
  - No one will take the same journey that the Lord took, which clearly symbolizes the Lord’s work of atonement
  - His entry into the temple is a symbolic representation of Christ entering by His blood to be our High Priest interceding for sin
- Christ entered once for all, which is symbolized by His entry into the temple through the east gate never to leave and re-enter
  - And the gate is shut because neither can anyone else enter the way Jesus did
  - This is why we said earlier that no one will be sitting down for coffee with Jesus in the Kingdom
  - Jesus never leaves the temple because to leave and return would suggest He must continue to qualify Himself
  - And since the east gate is permanently closed, David, the Lord’s prince, uses the closed off space as his temple office
- So the only time believers and glorified saints see Jesus in the temple is when we come to the temple to worship Him
  - Ezekiel tells us that can happen on two feast days, Sabbaths, and new moon celebrations
    - There are only two feasts in the Kingdom, the feast of Passover and the Feast of Booths
    - Under the Law of Moses, there were seven feasts each calendar year
    - And all seven pictured some aspect of Jesus’ ministry of redemption
  - The first three feasts represent aspects of Jesus’ first coming
    - The last three picture aspects of His return and in the middle is Pentecost
    - Pentecost represents the Church period between the two appearances of Jesus
  - But in the Kingdom, there are only the first and last feasts, because they are the only two that still have spiritual meaning in the Kingdom time
    - The first, Passover, represents Jesus’ redemption of His people through His

sacrifice as our Lamb

- And the feast of Tabernacles or booths represents God dwelling among His people, which is still present in that day as well
- In addition to these feast days, we may go to the temple on Sabbaths and new moon days:

**Ezek. 46:3** “The people of the land shall also worship at the doorway of that gate before the LORD on the sabbaths and on the new moons.

**Ezek. 46:9** “But when the people of the land come before the LORD at the appointed feasts, he who enters by way of the north gate to worship shall go out by way of the south gate. And he who enters by way of the south gate shall go out by way of the north gate. No one shall return by way of the gate by which he entered but shall go straight out.

- When we go up, we enter by either the north gate or south gate, and we must exit out the opposite gate, Ezekiel tells us
  - That forces us to cross the courtyard, and in the process we can see directly into the Holy of Holies where the glory dwells
  - This will be the only opportunity for us to see the Lord’s glory in this day
  - Remember, we will still communicate with Him constantly and we will have seen Him before in the throne room earlier
- But Ezekiel also states that nothing unholy can have access to the temple, meaning unbelievers

**Ezek. 44:8** “And you have not kept charge of My holy things yourselves, but you have set foreigners to keep charge of My sanctuary.”

**Ezek. 44:9** ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “No foreigner uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, of all the foreigners who are among the sons of Israel, shall enter My sanctuary.

- Those who are uncircumcised in the heart, which is Bible terminology for unbelievers, may not enter the temple
- So that means an unbeliever will never see the glory of God in that day
- Unbelievers will be required to make sacrifices in the outer court yard with the help of the temple priests
  - The role of a priest is to be an intercessor for the people, a mediator who brings God to the people and the people to God
    - In the days before Jesus, God only accepted certain men as intercessors between Himself and the people of Israel
    - Those Levitical priests served by ministering in the temple according to the Mosaic Law



- But even then, Christ was the true high priest interceding for God’s children
- Then after Jesus came and the Church was started, Peter says we were all made to be priests, calling us a royal priesthood

**1Pet. 2:9** But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God’s OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

- We are all priests because we are all in a position to intercede for the world
  - We bring God to the world by shining the light of Christ before men through our good works
  - And we bring the people to God by our testimony of Jesus and our preaching of the Gospel
  - Nevertheless, Jesus remains the high priest who reconciles all believers to God
- But then in the Kingdom, we return to a time when there are only some who are designated as priests, but they will not be the Levites

**Ezek. 44:10** “But the Levites who went far from Me when Israel went astray, who went astray from Me after their idols, shall bear the punishment for their iniquity.

**Ezek. 44:13** “And they shall not come near to Me to serve as a priest to Me, nor come near to any of My holy things, to the things that are most holy; but they will bear their shame and their abominations which they have committed.

**Ezek. 44:14** “Yet I will appoint them to keep charge of the house, of all its service and of all that shall be done in it.

- Because of the unfaithfulness of God’s ministers in that day, He says the Levitical priests will officiate in a more limited way in the Kingdom
  - Notice in v.13 the Lord says they shall not come near Him in this time
  - This is different than under the Mosaic law, where the offerer kills his own sacrifice, not the priest
  - The priest offered the sacrifice on the altar and took blood into the Holy Place
- Only one family of priests will be allowed to serve Christ as before

**Ezek. 44:15** “But the Levitical priests, the sons of Zadok, who kept charge of My sanctuary when the sons of Israel went astray from Me, shall come near to Me to minister to Me; and they shall stand before Me to offer Me the fat and the blood,” declares the Lord GOD.

**Ezek. 44:16** “They shall enter My sanctuary; they shall come near to My table to minister to Me and keep My charge.

- Zadok was the high priest who remained loyal to David when the house of Saul was contending with David for the throne
- Zadok took the ark of the covenant and followed David as David fled the city of Jerusalem
- He knew David was the the Lord’s anointed, and because of Zadok’s faithfulness, the Lord makes Zadok’s sons priests
- But we remember from Isaiah last week that the Lord will also take some Gentiles and allow them to serve as priests as well
  - So there will be a joint Jew-Gentile priesthood to serve in the temple
  - They officiate over the sacrifices, and the Levites assist in the process by killing the animals and keeping the building organized
- In the Kingdom, these priests will have a more limited role
  - They will have oversight of the house and gates, slaughtering animals and ministering to the people who worship there
  - They now do the “dirty” work for the worshippers, ministering to them in the temple
  - When worshippers bring sacrifices, they will assist in the sacrifice, cutting and burning of these sacrifices in pits
- Finally, all of this discussion of priests and sacrifice begs a few questions about why such a system returns in the first place
  - For example, if Christ has always been our High Priest, why was any other priest even needed?
    - And if Christ was always our once for all sacrifice, why were other sacrifices ever required?
    - Over the centuries, many theologians have been troubled at the prospect of a return of a sacrificial system in the Kingdom
  - We remember the teaching of Hebrews

**Heb. 10:10** By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

**Heb. 10:11** Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins;

**Heb. 10:12** but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD,

**Heb. 10:13** waiting from that time onward UNTIL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET.

**Heb. 10:14** For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

- Basic New Testament theology holds that the substitutionary atonement of Jesus on the cross satisfies the wrath of God
  - And not just for one person or for one time, but for all who place their trust in Jesus and for all time

- Therefore, why should God re-institute a temple and sacrificial system in the Kingdom?
- To answer why there is a temple in the Kingdom, we must first understand why there has ever been a temple with sacrifices
  - And the story begins with what sin did to the human condition

**Gen. 3:7** Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.

- Adam and Woman were alone on earth, enjoying the Garden, without sin and without need for clothing
- Then they disobeyed the Word and sin entered their hearts
- At that point, though they were married and were completely at peace with one another even without clothes, suddenly that changed
  - As soon as they sinned, they sought to cover themselves physically
  - Who were they hiding from? Who else could see them? Only each other and that never bothered them before
- The point is that the arrival of sin resulted in an immediate impediment in the fellowship between these two people
  - Sin fundamentally changed the couple's relationship with one another
  - Where before they were in perfect fellowship with one another, now they felt uncomfortable and self-protective
- When sin corrupted their nature, the couple instantly became adversaries in the sense that they now had reasons to hide from one another
  - No longer could they be fully known, nor could they fully know another person as they once did
    - Sin had darkened their innocent transparent nature, so now they harbored secret thoughts, had sinful desires and secret sins
    - Shameful things entered their minds, and they were weighed down by guilt and the worry over their sin and that of their spouse
    - So they instinctively sought a way to feel comfortable in each others' company again, but the best they could do was a fig leaf
  - But as serious as the physical effects of sin, the spiritual effects were even more serious

**Gen. 3:8** They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

- Spiritually, the couple suddenly realized they were accountable before God so they instinctively hid from His presence

- Mankind no longer felt comfortable approaching God, because sin demanded God's wrath
- Their spirits within them sensed their vulnerability so they also lost the opportunity for fellowship with God
- Where once they knew God intimately, now they could not even be in His presence
- For the same reason, God could no longer dwell among men without shielding men from His glory
- So sin had two fundamental effects on the human condition reflected in the behaviors of Adam and Woman in the Garden
  - Sin ruined our relationship with other human beings by corrupting our nature and making us enemies of one another
  - And sin ruined our relationship with God by incurring His judgment and making us deserving of His wrath
  - Physically, sin separates us from other human beings
  - Spiritually, sin separates us from God
- And in response, God offered us a provision to correct for both of these problems, beginning with Adam and Woman in the Garden
  - First, the Lord corrected for our spiritual separation from Him with a spiritual covering which we receive by faith
    - He gave Adam and Woman the first Gospel preaching

**Gen. 3:15 And I will put enmity  
Between you and the woman,  
And between your seed and her seed;  
He shall bruise you on the head,  
And you shall bruise him on the heel.”**

- The Lord promised to send Adam and Woman a “Seed” Who would defeat the enemy and reconcile mankind
- That “seed” would be Christ in the day He came
- This provision was spiritual in nature because it depended upon our faith in that promise
  - Jesus' sacrifice wasn't made in Adam's day, but it was promised to happen one day
  - Adam received the promise, and by his faith in that promise, Adam was credited with Christ's righteousness
  - So that through faith Adam was restored in His relationship with God
  - All saints, whether OT or NT, gain the same spiritual covering in the same way: through faith in the promised Messiah
- Next, the Lord made a provision to correct for the physical separation that robbed Adam and Woman of their personal trust and intimacy

**Gen. 3:21 The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.**

- In v.21 the Lord killed an animal (probably a lamb) and used the skin to clothe the man and woman
  - That sacrifice was physical, not spiritual, and it came in addition to the spiritual provision
  - Without this physical sacrifice, Adam and Woman would have continued to feel shame in their nakedness
  - Their physical discomfort reflecting an inward mistrust toward one another
  - But once covered, they experienced a degree of restoration and comfort again
- Moreover, the practice of making a physical sacrifice offered an object lesson to humanity about the greater spiritual sacrifice of Christ
  - That earlier spiritual covering was not witnessed...it came by faith alone, so it was difficult to appreciate in abstraction
  - But seeing a physical sacrifice in which an animal loses its life makes clear the price of sin and the need for blood atonement
  - So physical sacrifice also becomes a picture of the sacrifice of Christ for our sake
  - So the physical covering is both a means of restoring human fellowship and a way to teach us about Christ's sacrifice
- Importantly, notice God officiated over their physical sacrifice
  - The Lord was present as the animal was sacrificed in the Garden, and He presided over the ritual
  - Had Adam or Woman killed and skinned an animal without God's involvement, it wouldn't have qualified as a physical sacrifice
  - Our sacrifice must be to the Lord by His measure in order to satisfy Him
  - And it must be acceptable to Him if it is to be useful to us in cleansing our conscience
- Finally, it's critical to note the order of these events: first came the spiritual covering of faith to restore fellowship with God (v.20)
  - Then came the physical covering of an animal sacrifice in the presence of God to restore and maintain human fellowship (v.21)
  - We first reconcile with God by faith in the provision of His Son
  - Then He may accept our physical sacrifices made in His presence to grant us reconciliation with each other
- This pattern is evident throughout the Bible...for example Noah believed in God and his faith found favor with God according to Genesis 6
  - Yet Noah also practiced animal sacrifice at altars before the Lord to maintain fellowship among God's people
    - Likewise, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were righteous by faith yet they also sacrificed animals on altars from time to time

- Yet when sin required, they also participated in God-ordained physical sacrifices as the Angel of Lord attended in the moment
- And of course, the Lord codified this practice in the Law of Moses
- Throughout, faith was always the spiritual covering required for salvation, but God also commanded regular physical sacrifices
- Jumping to the Church, what do we find? The same two sacrifices!
  - We too are reconciled to God spiritually by faith in Christ, Who is our spiritual covering, but we also need a physical covering
  - We too have sin and therefore like Adam and Woman, we too suffer from the physical separation that sin produces
  - So therefore, we also need a physical system of sacrifice to reconcile with one another
- And our system of physical sacrifice follows the same pattern as before
  - It serves to reconciles us to others by cleansing our conscience and healing the wounds caused by sin
  - It also teaches us about Christ and His eternal sacrifice made on our behalf
  - And our physical sacrifice is also performed in the presence of God
- That last detail is key to our understanding of when and how we offer physical sacrifices today and why a temple exists in the Kingdom
  - In Genesis 3, God dwelled directly with Man and Woman in the Garden, so the physical sacrifice happened in the Garden
    - During the period of the patriarchs, the Lord visited His people as the Angel of the Lord (pre-incarnate Christ)
    - So sacrifices happened at altars set up wherever the Angel of the Lord appeared or directed
    - And in Moses' time the Lord dwelled in a physical building, so Israel gathered there to make physical sacrifices
    - A physical sacrifice is only edifying to the worshipper's conscience if it's approved by God in His presence
  - Today, the presence of the Lord is not located in a certain building because the Bible says that the Spirit of God is inside every believer

**1Cor. 6:19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?**

- If our body is the temple and the Spirit resides within us, then our physical sacrifices are made in our body
- Paul describes how we perform the physical sacrifices of this age in Romans

**Rom. 12:1 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.**

**Rom. 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.**

- We are to present our bodies as living sacrifices to God, in His presence, as our service of worship
  - Just as the Israelites worshipped by making sacrifices in the temple, we worship by making sacrifices in our body
  - The Law of Moses demanded animals dying in a building, but the Law of Christ demands we die to self
- And when time came for God to set Israel aside for a time and make Himself known to Gentiles, He had to change the place of His dwelling
  - He couldn't build a new temple in a Gentile country, because He only gave His Law and the temple service to Israel
  - Moreover, if He had placed His temple in one Gentile nation, it would have signaled that He preferred one Gentile nation over others
  - Therefore, He chose to indwell the Church directly so that He could be equally present in every Gentile nation during this age
- For that reason, we make our physical sacrifice by making sacrifices in our body, denying our flesh its desires, serving Christ's desires instead
  - This is our physical covering, and it follows all the same patterns as before
    - Our personal sacrifices are an act of worship before God that restores fellowship with others
    - It is a form of worship, it is done in God's presence, it cleanses our guilty conscience and it is modeled after Christ's sacrifices
    - So as we sacrifice our pride and self-interest to show love for others, we restore fellowship within the body
  - This is why we are all called priests in the New Testament
    - We all have the Spirit God dwelling inside us, therefore we are all qualified to make sacrifices before the altar of our heart
    - Those physical sacrifices are how we worship God, and they are not contradictory to our spiritual dependence upon Christ
    - On the contrary, they are modeled on Christ's own ministry, and in that way our sacrifices are also picturing Christ
    - As Paul explains

**Phil. 2:5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, Phil. 2:6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,**

**Phil. 2:7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.**

**Phil. 2:8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming**

## **obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.**

- Though He had no sin of His own, Christ made Himself a physical sacrifice to serve the interests of the body of Christ
  - Likewise, we have no sin debt before God because of faith, yet we still make physical sacrifices to serve the needs of fellowship
  - Our dependence on Christ's sacrifice does not invalidate the need for making physical sacrifices
  - Though the form of our physical sacrifices are quite different than the form they had under the Law of Moses
  - And the change in the form of our physical sacrifices was made necessary because God changed the place of His dwelling
- So now, consider how the dwelling place of God changes again in the Kingdom...He returns to dwelling in a building rather than in human bodies
  - In the Kingdom age, Israel is restored as the chief nation on earth under God's protection, so the temple is placed again in Israel
    - And as we read, Jesus returns to dwell there as before
    - And since the Lord's presence dwells in a building again, then all physical sacrifices must happen at that one place again
  - Once again, people will stream to the temple regularly to sacrifice animals as the Lord directs
    - These sacrifices accomplish exactly the same things the earlier physical sacrifices covered
    - They serve to restore fellowship among God's people and teach about the meaning of Christ's sacrifice
    - If the people do not participate in these sacrifices, they are cut off from fellowship with God's people
    - As we read last week about God bringing drought to nations that fail to worship at the feasts in Jerusalem
- Summary...
- One final note...sacrifices are covering for sin, so this system is only used by those who have sin
  - Those of us who are glorified will have no sin, and therefore we will not make sacrifices
    - Our role will be limited to governing it seems, though perhaps some of us may be priests
    - But we will not participate in the sacrificial system ourselves
  - So at that time, we will have no need of it except to oversee it in some way
    - But those who have sin, whether believing or unbelieving, will be required to make physical sacrifices
    - And those who are believing will also have the benefit of a spiritual covering provided by Christ



- Without that faith, it is impossible to please God, and the worshipper who seeks to please God will also perform physical sacrifices
- Next time we conclude our study of the Kingdom looking at the culminating events of the 1,000-year period, including the Final War