

Bible Study

A NOTE ON PROPHETIC DUALITY Is the Temple of Ezekiel 40-48 Millennial, Pre-Millennial or the New Jerusalem?

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Why the temple of Ezekiel cannot = the New Jerusalem.

First of all, Ezekiel is a book in sequence with inset chapters, somewhat like Revelation.
Eg:

- Chapter 33 – end-time warning
- Chapter 34 – scattering of Israel and the Church
- Chapter 35 – punishment upon Seir and Idumea
- Chapter 36 – return of Israel to the Holy Land
- Chapter 37 – Israel and Judah re-united
- Chapters 38 & 39 – invasion by the forces of Gog and Magog
- Chapters 40-48 – Millennial Temple

An example of this is Is 64:15-25 which is clearly millennial and probably includes the period after the millennium but parallels various statements at the end of Revelation:

"And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord GOD shall slay thee, and **call his servants by another name:**

That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because **the former troubles are forgotten**, and because they are hid from mine eyes.

For, behold, **I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.** {come...: Heb. come upon the heart}

But be ye glad and rejoice for ever *in that* which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the **voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her**, nor the voice of crying.

There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner *being* an hundred years old shall be accursed.

And they shall build houses, and inhabit *them*; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.

They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree *are* the days of my people, and **mine elect** shall long enjoy the work of their hands. {shall long...: Heb. shall make them continue long, or, shall wear out}

They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they *are* the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them.

And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD."

The following is helpful:

1. Note what Ralph states:

"In the light of the whole Scripture, it appears that **the Millennium is like a "firstfruits" of the eternal state.** The Millennium will be like a preview of the eternal messianic kingdom that will be revealed fully in the eternal state. Therefore, because the two are alike in nature, they share distinct similarities. Yet because they are both different revealed time periods, they would likewise reflect some dissimilarities..." (Ralph H. Alexander, *Ezekiel*, EBC, Vol.6, page 945).

2. Researcher Moore stated it thus:

"There are a number of statements by the sacred writers that are designed to apply to distinct facts, successively occurring in history. If the words are limited to anyone of these facts, they will seem exaggerated,

for no one fact can exhaust their significance. They must be spread out over all the facts before their plenary meaning is reached.

There is nothing in this principle that is at variance with the ordinary laws of language. The same general use of phrases occurs repeatedly. . . . Every language contains these formulas, which refer not to anyone event, but a series of events, all embodying the same principle, or resulting from the same cause.

[Thus] . . . the promise in regard to the "seed of the woman," (Gen. 3:15) refers to one event but runs along the whole stream of history, and includes every successive conquest of the religion of Christ. . . [This] class of predictions. . . is . . . what the old theologians called the *novissima*. . ." (T. V. Moore, *Zechariah, Malachi*, 396-99)

3. One of my all time favourite authors, Walter Kaiser wrote the following (inc quoting from Beecher):

"Thus, the "Day of Yahweh" is a generic or collective event which gathers together all the antecedent historical episodes of God's judgment and salvation along with the future grand finale and climactic event in the whole series. Every divine intervention into history before that final visitation in connection with the second advent of Christ constitutes only a preview, sample, downpayment or earnest on that climactic conclusion. The prophet did not think of the day of the Lord as an event that would occur once for all, but one that could "be repeated as the circumstances called for it". "(Willis J. Beecher, *The Prophets and the Promise*, p311)" (p. 229 of W Kaiser "The Promise of the Arrivals of Elijah in Malachi and the Gospels", *Grace Theological Journal*, vol 3.2 (1982) 221-33).

Thus the similarities in Ezek 40-48 and Is 65 to the New Jerusalem period. Or the description of OT events in Israel - the death & resurrection of Christ - Day of the Lord etc - similarities exist. Or the fires of gehenna - lake of fire at the beginning of the millennium (Rev 19:20) - at the end of it (2Pet 3:7; Rev 20:9-15) and possible recreation of the universe after it is uncreated by fire (2Pet 3:12).