

Ezekiel 41-42 “A New Temple: To Separate the Holy and the Common” February 27, 2011
Psalm 73
Hebrews 9

If you want to understand the significance of Ezekiel 41-42,
sing Psalm 73!

Ezekiel speaks from exile in Babylon.

He had trained for the priesthood in the temple,
but it has been 25 years since he been in Jerusalem.
The Spirit of Yahweh had taken him in a vision to the temple 20 years before,
and showed him the glory of the LORD departing
because of the idolatry and abominations of the people and the priests.
Now, for 25 years, he has seen the prosperity of the wicked.
For 25 years, the exiles have seen the Babylonians destroy everything they once loved.

Psalm 73 opens Book III of the Psalms – a book devoted to Psalms of exile.

And for the exiles in Babylon, Psalm 73 would take on new meaning.
The wicked nations are getting away with murder.
The temple of Yahweh lies in ruins – and the people of Yahweh are scattered.
“Have I kept my heart for nothing, washed my hands in innocence?”
What’s the point?
Why should I seek to remain clean and holy, when the unclean and the unholy
so obviously prosper!

Indeed, Psalm 73 would have been hard to sing in exile!

Because the turning point – when I come to my senses, as it were –
takes place in the temple!
But for the exiles, there is no temple.
The temple lies in ruins!

How can we sing the LORD’s songs in a foreign land?

The LORD’s songs are all about the triumph of the LORD over his enemies!
How can we sing the victory song when we are bound in captivity?

Ezekiel tells the captives, “here’s how to sing Psalm 73 in exile!”

I’ve seen the restored temple.
I’ve seen the eschatological house of God!
The place where God will dwell with us.
And it is a place where *only* the clean – *only* the holy will be permitted.

Ezekiel’s vision makes it possible for an exile to sing Psalm 73.

And because Jesus has been raised up to the right hand of God –
because he has become that heavenly temple where we abide in him –
we may sing Psalm 73 with confidence,
knowing that we, who hope in him, will come through suffering to glory.

Sing Psalm 73
Read Hebrews 9

In Ezekiel 41:4, the bronze man goes into the Most Holy Place and measures it –
but Ezekiel does not enter there.

Ezekiel sees a vision of the heavenly temple – the eschatological temple –
but he still cannot enter the Most Holy Place.

Hebrews 9:6-7 comments on this:

“the priests go regularly into the first section, performing their ritual duties,
but into the second only the high priest goes,
and he but once a year,
and not without taking blood,
which he offers for himself and for the unintentional sins of the people.”

And then Hebrews 9:8 explains the meaning of this:

“By this the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into the holy places is not yet opened
as long as the first section is still standing (which is symbolic for the present age)”

I want you to think about this.

The first section of the temple represents “the present age,”
by which Hebrews refers to the Mosaic age –
with its rituals “imposed until the time of reformation.”

And in Hebrews 9:11, we hear that

“when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come,
then through the greater and more perfect tent
(not made with hands, that is, not of this creation)
he entered once for all into the holy place,
not by means of the blood of goats and calves
but by means of his own blood,
thus securing an eternal redemption.”

According to Hebrews, the temple is a picture of redemptive history.

Even as the holy place was preparatory to the Most Holy Place,
so also the Mosaic age was preparatory to Christ.

Last time we saw lots of squares in Ezekiel’s vision.

The whole temple complex is a 500 cubit square.

There are various 100 cubit squares within this temple area.

The Most Holy Place is not only a square – but a cube –
since it’s height is equal to its length and breadth.

And so we saw that in John’s vision in Revelation,
all that is left is the cube – the Most Holy Place.

There is no temple in the heavenly city –
because the city is itself a temple –
and not just a temple, but one gigantic Holy of Holies.

The rest of the temple is only needed so long as access to the Most Holy Place is restricted.

And that is the theme that we see working out in Ezekiel's temple vision today.
The temple is there *to make a separation between the holy and the common.*

The temple is needed to divide the holy from the unclean.

[Last week]

Introduction: A New Exodus (40:1-4)

- a) **When: Halfway to the Jubilee Year, on the Day that the Passover Lamb Is Selected (v1)**
- b) **Where: A Very High Mountain and a Structure Like a City (v2)**
- c) **Who: The Bronze Man with a Linen Cord and Measuring Reed (v3-4)**
- 1. **The Outer Court (40:5-27)**
 - a. **The East Gate (v5-16)**
 - b. **Chambers and Pavement (v17-19)**
 - c. **The North Gate (v20-23)**
 - d. **The South Gate (v24-27)**
- 2. **The Inner Court (40:28-49)**
 - a. **The South Gate (v28-31)**
 - b. **The East Gate (v32-34)**
 - c. **The North Gate (v35-37)**
 - d. **Chambers and Tables for Offerings (v38-43)**
 - e. **Chambers for the Priests (v44-46)**
 - f. **The Measurements of the Inner Court (v47)**

Last week we joined Ezekiel on his tour of the outer court and the inner court.
And we saw the massive gates of both the outer and inner court.

3. The Temple (40:48-41:26)

I didn't comment much on the numbers last week.

The most important numbers around the gateways were 25, 50, and 100.
And as we'll see at the end of today's section, the whole area is 500 x 500.
(all multiples of 25).

In other words, 5s and 10s dominate the courtyards.

Fives and tens are important numbers in scripture –

think of the Five books of Moses – the Ten commandments – the ten plagues of Egypt –
the “ten times” that Israel rebelled in the wilderness.

But also think of the 50th year as the year of Jubilee –
or Pentecost, the 50th day after the Passover sabbath.

The tabernacle had been dominated by fives, tens, and fifties as well (Ex 26ff).

The numbers of steps are also interesting:

7 steps to get into the outer court –
but 8 steps to get into the inner court, where the sacrifice is made –
and 10 steps to ascend into the temple itself!

Seven – the number of creation (and of the Sabbath) –
eight – the number of redemption (the consecration of priests, and the cleansing of lepers)
and ten – bringing creation and redemption to completion in the holy place.

The total number of steps, then, is 25 – which is the key number for Ezekiel's temple.

a. The Vestibule (v48-49)

⁴⁸Then he brought me to the vestibule of the temple and measured the jambs of the vestibule, five cubits on either side. And the breadth of the gate was fourteen cubits, and the sidewalls of the gate were three cubits on either side. ⁴⁹The length of the vestibule was twenty cubits, and the breadth twelve cubits, and people would go up to it by ten steps. And there were pillars beside the jambs, one on either side.

We rejoin our temple-tour in the vestibule of the temple –
the entry way into the temple itself.

This gate is much smaller than the gates to the outer and inner court.
It is only 20 feet wide and about 30 feet long.

But, unlike the gates to the outer and inner court,
this gate would not get nearly as much traffic –
because this is the entrance into the temple itself.

The numbers here are interesting:
five, fourteen, three, twenty, twelve and ten.

Back in 1 Kings 6, these were the numbers of Solomon's temple.

There are three main spaces in the temple compound:
the outer court, the inner court, and the temple.

Even so, there are three main spaces in the temple proper:
the vestibule, the nave, and the Most Holy Place.

In the light of NT revelation, we should properly see a Trinitarian form to this.
As the temple is one – yet three – so also is God himself!

And as we approach the Most Holy Place, the openings get narrower and narrower:

the entry to the vestibule is 14 cubits –
the entry to the nave is 10 cubits –
and the entry to the Most Holy Place is six cubits.

There are also two pillars here at the entry to the vestibule.

Solomon had put two pillars (Jachin and Boaz) in the temple (1 Kings 7).

These pillars were important in Israelite thought.

They were not structural pillars.

They do not hold up the roof.

Indeed, we are told in 1 Kings 25 that Solomon's pillars had been hauled off to Babylon.

The word here for pillars is used to speak of the pillar by fire in the wilderness (Ex 13),
as well as the pillars of the tabernacle.

In fact, most of the uses of the word in the OT are used to refer to the pillars of the tabernacle
or of the temple.

But in Psalm 75:3 and Job 9:6 we hear of the pillars of the earth,
and in Job 26:11 we hear of the pillars of heaven.

When you walk into the inner court –

as you come into the place where earth and heaven meet –

and you look up at these two massive freestanding pillars –

you would immediately remember that Yahweh is the God who upholds the heavens.

The reason why Nebuchadnezzar would have been interested in hauling off these pillars –
besides the usefulness of the bronze –

was because Nebuchadnezzar wanted the world to believe that *he*
was the one who upheld the heavens!

But here, in Ezekiel's vision,

all the pretensions of the rulers of the nations are revealed as shams.

The LORD God – *he* upholds the heavens

b. The Nave and Most Holy Place (v1-4)

¹Then he brought me to the nave and measured the jambs. On each side six cubits was the breadth of the jambs. ²And the breadth of the entrance was ten cubits, and the sidewalls of the entrance were five cubits on either side. And he measured the length of the nave, forty cubits, and its breadth, twenty cubits. ³Then he went into the inner room and measured the jambs of the entrance, two cubits; and the entrance, six cubits; and the sidewalls on either side of the entrance, seven cubits. ⁴And he measured the length of the room, twenty cubits, and its breadth, twenty cubits, across the nave. And he said to me, "This is the Most Holy Place."

In verses 1-2 we see the nave – a rectangular room 20 cubits by 40 cubits
(around 34 feet by 68 feet).

Ezekiel had been taken captive at age 25 –

so he had not begun his priestly service.

Almost certainly he had never entered the temple before.

But now in a vision he comes to the place where he would have done his life's work!

Then in verse 3, the bronze man leaves Ezekiel and goes into the Most Holy Place.

Ezekiel is not the high priest –
even in a vision he cannot enter the Most Holy Place –
but he does report the measurements –
20 cubits by 20 cubits.

This is exactly the same size as Solomon's temple.

But note – the glory of the LORD is not here!
For now the temple is only a empty shell devoid of life and glory.

We live in a world where God is absent.

Or perhaps better – in a world where people *experience* God as absent.

Maybe they once believed in God,
but when they prayed – and God didn't do what they asked –
they began to doubt.

If God is there, then why do all these horrible things keep happening.
If God is there, then why do we not experience his presence?

Why does God *feel* absent?

The exiles knew this well.

“Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off.” (37:11)

And it is common enough today to hear people make similar statements.
People crave some sort of experience that will fill them with meaning.

Why?

Because we were created to be the temple of God.
We were created to be filled with him.

God feels absent because we keep trying to fill ourselves with something other than him!

Believe it or not – the side chambers are all about this!

c. The Side Chambers (v5-11)

⁵Then he measured the wall of the temple, six cubits thick, and the breadth of the side chambers, four cubits, all around the temple. ⁶And the side chambers were in three stories, one over another, thirty in each story. There were offsets all around the wall of the temple to serve as supports for the side chambers, so that they should not be supported by the wall of the temple. ⁷And it became broader as it wound upward to the side chambers, because the temple was enclosed upward all around the temple. Thus the temple had a broad area upward, and so one went up from the lowest story to the top story through the middle story. ⁸I saw also that the

temple had a raised platform all around; the foundations of the side chambers measured a full reed of six long cubits.⁹ The thickness of the outer wall of the side chambers was five cubits. The free space between the side chambers of the temple and the¹⁰ other chambers was a breadth of twenty cubits all around the temple on every side.¹¹ And the doors of the side chambers opened on the free space, one door toward the north, and another door toward the south. And the breadth of the free space was five cubits all around.

We might have thought that our tour should have ended at the Holy of Holies –
but Ezekiel now takes us back outside the temple.

Ezekiel's temple vision has a chiastic structure, with the Holy of Holies in the exact middle,
Outer court,
 Inner court
 Temple
 Inner Chambers
Outer chambers

This has the effect of putting the Holy of Holies in the exact center of the text –
even as it is in the exact center of the temple complex.

But now we turn to the “side chambers” of the temple.
Solomon's temple had similar side chambers around the outside of the temple.
This is an architectural term used also in Genesis 2 to refer to Adam's rib –
from which Eve was created.

When we went through Genesis, I suggested that the creation of Eve is designed to show us
that the temple is (in a sense) the “new Eve.”

And you can see how this comes together in how our Lord Jesus, the second Adam,
the one who is the new temple,
 has a bride who is his own body!
The church is a temple-bride, just like Eve.

These 90 side chambers rooms are probably designed for storage
(for the grain, wine, and oil that would come into the temple).

But Ezekiel is not especially interested in “practical” usage.
He wants you to understand dimensions and structures.

You may have noticed that the interior dimensions of the temple were 20 cubits by 60 cubits.
But if you add all these side chambers together into the dimensions of the temple,
(including all these 5 cubit thick walls)
you wind up with a structure that is exactly 50 cubits by 100 cubits!

d. The Building on the West (v12-15a)

¹²The building that was facing the separate yard on the west side was seventy cubits broad, and the wall of the building was five cubits thick all around, and its length ninety cubits.

¹³Then he measured the temple, a hundred cubits long; and the yard and the building with its walls, a hundred cubits long; ¹⁴also the breadth of the east front of the temple and the yard, a hundred cubits.

¹⁵Then he measured the length of the building facing the yard that was at the back and its galleries on either side, a hundred cubits.

Finally, we are taken around back to the “building on the west” (the Hebrew word is “binyan”)
This is a large building 70 by 90 cubits (around 120 by 150 feet) –
which means that its external dimensions were 80x100.

The phrase “separate yard” could also be translated “restricted space.”

But restricted from what? or who?

The use of the binyan – the building on the west – is never explained.

Verses 13-14 then summarize various measurements that we should already understand:

It is 100 cubits from the west wall to the temple.

The temple is 100 cubits long (west to east).

The east front and yard of the temple is 100 cubits.

In case you haven't figured it out yet,

100 cubits is a very important measurement!

e. The Interior of the Temple (v15b-20)

The inside of the nave and the vestibules of the court, ¹⁶ the thresholds and the narrow windows and the galleries all around the three of them, opposite the threshold, were paneled with wood all around, from the floor up to the windows (now the windows were covered), ¹⁷ to the space above the door, even to the inner room, and on the outside. And on all the walls all around, inside and outside, was a measured pattern. ¹⁸ It was carved of cherubim and palm trees, a palm tree between cherub and cherub. Every cherub had two faces: ¹⁹ a human face toward the palm tree on the one side, and the face of a young lion toward the palm tree on the other side. They were carved on the whole temple all around. ²⁰ From the floor to above the door, cherubim and palm trees were carved; similarly the wall of the nave.

Having given us the overall structural picture,

Ezekiel now turns to the details of the interior of the temple.

Again there is much that is obscured

by our lack of knowledge of Hebrew architectural terms.

The interior of the temple is covered with carved cherubim and palm trees.

These cherubim have two faces (human and lion),

lacking the ox and eagle faces that he saw in chapters 1 and 10.

This may be due to the fact that as carvings,

you cannot see the other two faces from this side.

But the cherubim were the guardians of God's holy place from the beginning –
when the LORD set a cherub with a flaming sword
to guard the way back into the garden of Eden.
You find them in Moses' tabernacle and Solomon's temple.

Palm trees signify the fruitfulness and prosperity of Eden restored.
Palm branches were to be used in the celebration of the Feast of Booths,
when Israel was to dwell in tents (or leafy huts).
In this respect palm trees would also remind the Israelites of the tabernacle,
when God himself dwelt in a tent with his people.

So when the children of Israel spread palm branches before the feet of Jesus
as he came to Jerusalem for the Passover,
they understood that they were saying that the new Exodus had come!

f. The Temple Furniture (v21-26)

²¹The doorposts of the nave were squared, and in front of the Holy Place was something resembling ²² an altar of wood, three cubits high, two cubits long, and two cubits broad. Its corners, its base, and its walls were of wood. He said to me, "This is the table that is before the LORD." ²³The nave and the Holy Place had each a double door. ²⁴The double doors had two leaves apiece, two swinging leaves for each door. ²⁵And on the doors of the nave were carved cherubim and palm trees, such as were carved on the walls. And there was a canopy of wood in front of the vestibule outside. ²⁶And there were narrow windows and palm trees on either side, on the sidewalls of the vestibule, the side chambers of the temple, and the canopies.

Unlike Solomon's temple, there is no description of the furniture here –
the only piece of furniture is "something resembling an altar" –
which looks a lot like the altar for incense (though twice the size of Moses' altar).
Only one problem – it is made of wood (and not covered by gold) –
which means that if you burn incense on it, you will burn the altar down!

Ezekiel seems to be puzzled by this,
and so the bronze man says,
"this is the table that is before the LORD."
It could refer to the table of showbread,
but Ezekiel makes no reference to bread.

Neither does he make any reference to incense.

The only thing that is clear from this
is that Ezekiel's temple is *like* Solomon's temple,
but also *unlike*.

The only furniture that Ezekiel speaks of in the entire temple complex
are the altar and the tables and other equipment for offering sacrifices.
There is no mention of the showbread, the altar of incense, the lampstand,

or even the ark of the covenant.

And what is more significant – there is no reference to *gold* anywhere in the temple – only carved wood.

The glory of Ezekiel’s temple will not be found in the shining of the gold – but in the radiance of the glory of the LORD himself!

4. The Outer Chambers (42:1-20)

Our tour of the inner court is complete,
and now the guide leads us into the outer court through the north gate.

And turning left and looking toward the west he sees yet another building that is 50 x 100 cubits!

a. The North Chambers (v1-9)

¹Then he led me out into the outer court, toward the north, and he brought me to the chambers that were opposite the separate yard and opposite the building on the north. ²The length of the building whose door faced north was a hundred cubits, and the breadth fifty cubits. ³Facing the twenty cubits that belonged to the inner court, and facing the pavement that belonged to the outer court, was gallery against gallery in three stories. ⁴And before the chambers was a passage inward, ten cubits wide and a hundred cubits long, and their doors were on the north. ⁵Now the upper chambers were narrower, for the galleries took more away from them than from the lower and middle chambers of the building. ⁶For they were in three stories, and they had no pillars like the pillars of the courts. Thus the upper chambers were set back from the ground more than the lower and the middle ones. ⁷And there was a wall outside parallel to the chambers, toward the outer court, opposite the chambers, fifty cubits long. ⁸For the chambers on the outer court were fifty cubits long, while those opposite the nave were a hundred cubits long. ⁹Below these chambers was an entrance on the east side, as one enters them from the outer court.

Verses 1-9 describe a building just north of the “building on the west” (the “binyan”)

It is also 50x100 cubits, but appears to have three levels
ascending as you move toward the temple.

There is a walkway 10 cubits wide to reach the door of these chambers.

b. The South Chambers (v10-12)

¹⁰In the thickness of the wall of the court, on the south also, opposite the yard and opposite the building, there were chambers ¹¹with a passage in front of them. They were similar to the chambers on the north, of the same length and breadth, with the same exits and arrangements and doors, ¹²as were the entrances of the chambers on the south. There was an entrance at the beginning of the passage, the passage before the corresponding wall on the east as one enters them.

Verses 10-12 then describe identical chambers on the south side of the “binyan.”

**c. The Outer Chambers Are for the Priests to Eat the Most Holy Offerings
(v13-14)**

¹³Then he said to me, "The north chambers and the south chambers opposite the yard are the holy chambers, where the priests who approach the LORD shall eat the most holy offerings. There they shall put the most holy offerings—the grain offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering—for the place is holy. ¹⁴When the priests enter the Holy Place, they shall not go out of it into the outer court without laying there the garments in which they minister, for these are holy. They shall put on other garments before they go near to that which is for the people."

And verses 13-14 (for once) actually explain what the chambers are for!

Verse 13 says that they are where

“the priests who approach the LORD shall eat the most holy offerings.”

Verse 14 adds that they are also “changing rooms”

where the priests change their clothes before going out into the outer court.

Here we have regulations virtually identical to Moses.

The priests were to eat the holy offerings in a holy place,

and were not to wear their holy garments outside of the temple.

So here are the rooms for those purposes.

The point of this was to protect the people from the holiness of God.

In the same way that Moses veiled his face so that the people would not see it shining,
so also the priests of the OT could not wear holy clothing in public.

It does not appear that there was any concern that the holy clothes might become unclean;
rather, the concern appears to be that the holy clothing might destroy the people!

If you just have “clean” things and “unclean” things,
then the unclean contaminates the clean.

But *holy* things can destroy the unclean!

(think of the ark of the covenant, as David was bringing it to Jerusalem:

Uzzah stuck out his hand to steady it, to keep it from falling into the dirt;

And Uzzah died on the spot –

struck down by the holiness of God.)

Even so, the priests must take off their holy garments before they go near the people!

This is where Paul says that because of Christ,

we now, with unveiled face, behold the glory of the Lord.

Because Jesus *is* the temple – and because he has made us partakers of his divine life –
therefore we may behold his glory with unveiled face

[with Paul’s point being that we may see him in the OT scriptures!]

As Ed Clowney put it,

“It is not so much that Christ fulfills what the temple means;

rather, Christ is the meaning for which the temple existed.” (quoted in Duguid, 483)

Conclusion: The Measurements of the Temple Area: to Separate the Holy and the Common (v15-20)

¹⁵Now when he had finished measuring the interior of the temple area, he led me out by the gate that faced east, and measured the temple area all around. ¹⁶He measured the east side with the measuring reed, 500 cubits by the measuring reed all around. ¹⁷He measured the north side, 500 cubits by the measuring reed all around. ¹⁸He measured the south side, 500 cubits by the measuring reed. ¹⁹Then he turned to the west side and measured, 500 cubits by the measuring reed. ²⁰He measured it on the four sides. It had a wall around it, 500 cubits long and 500 cubits broad, to make a separation between the holy and the common.

Now the guide brings Ezekiel out of the temple precincts by the east gate
and measures the outside of the temple area.
He measured it on the “four sides” – literally “the four winds” (the four ruachs).

It measures 500 cubits on each side –
approximately 850 feet.

When the Israelites first rebuilt the temple in 515 BC,
the temple did not reach this size.
But when Herod the Great expanded the temple,
he built massive earthworks to expand the temple platform to 861 feet square.
It seems clear that Herod and the Jews of his day
wanted to model their temple largely after Ezekiel’s vision.

But Ezekiel tells us that this temple was designed
to “make a separation between the holy and the common.”

You can see this in terms of spheres of holiness –
as the closer you get to the center of the temple,
the more restricted access becomes.
And this theme is highlighted by the vertical dimension of this temple.
You have to go up stairs to get to the next level of holiness.

But as we will see in coming weeks,
you can also see a narrative pattern to the structure of the temple
(which connects back to the reading from Hebrews):
Because the glory of the LORD will come from the east.
And as we’ll hear later, only the prince may enter through the east gate.

The people may enter from the north or the south.
So the north courtyard and the south courtyard, with their chambers, are for the people.

The inner court is for the priests and Levites, with their chambers,
but all of the Holy activities take place in a direct line from east to west.
From the prince entering the temple from the east,
to the sacrifices offered on the altar in the very center,

to the priests entering the vestibule from the east,
to the high priest entering the Most Holy Place with the blood of the sacrifice.

All this happens in a direct line from east to west,
suggesting a narrative structure to these events.
And truly, our Lord Jesus Christ is the one who came riding on a donkey into Jerusalem,
after coming up from Jericho (from the east),
and after dying on the cross – he rose from the dead
and offered his own blood in the heavenly Holy of Holies,
thereby cleansing us from our sins.

Incidentally,
this is why early church buildings were all oriented toward the east.

Jewish synagogues were all oriented toward the temple,
so that when Jews prayed, they would be facing the temple
(Solomon had asked that God would hear, “when they pray toward this place”).

But now that Jesus has come,
we are not oriented toward an earthly place, but toward the heavenly Holy of Holies.
And so unlike the temple, where the nave is oriented toward a sanctuary in the west,
the church faces east.

In Solomon’s temple, there was only one gate – in the east.
In Ezekiel’s temple, there are gates north, south *and* east.
But the west is still closed.
In Ezekiel’s temple, the building in the west – the “binyan” –
has no explanation.
In John’s temple vision in Revelation 21
there are gates on all four sides – north, south, east, and west.

The temple is designed to wait for the coming of the LORD from the east.
The church is designed to proclaim that the LORD has come from the east,
and therefore he has cleansed us and made us new.

Therefore, the church is now the place that divides the holy from the unclean.
Paul says in 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1
“Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers.
For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness?
Or what fellowship has light with darkness?
What accord has Christ with Belial?
Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever?
What agreement has the temple of God with idols
For we are the temple of the living God; as God said,
I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them,
and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them,
says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing;
then I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you,
and you shall be sons and daughters to me,
says the Lord Almighty.”

We are the temple of the living God.
We are the place where God dwells and walks.

Therefore, we must be separate – we must be distinct – from the nations.

And Paul does not leave us wondering how to do this.

He adds:

“Since we have these promises, beloved,
let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit,
bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.”

We are called to be that holy priesthood –
distinct from the corruption and rebellion of the nations –
bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.