

The Return of YHWH to His Temple

Ezekiel 43:1–9

Veritas Adult Community

The Commons, College Church

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The Scripture

^{43:1}Then he [the man whose form had the luster of copper] led me to the gate, the gate that faces toward the east.

²Look! The glory of the God of Israel was approaching from the east. The noise it made sounded like the rumble of mighty waters, and the landscape lit up with his glory. ³The vision I saw was like the vision I had seen when YHWH came to destroy the city, and like the vision that I saw by the Chebar River, and I fell on my face. ⁴As the glory of YHWH entered the House by way of the gate facing the east, ⁵the Spirit picked me up and brought me into the inner court, and look! The glory of YHWH had filled the House!

⁶I heard someone speaking to me from the House, even as the man was standing next to me. ⁷He said to me, “Human, as for the place of my throne, and the place for the soles of my feet, where I shall dwell in the midst of the sons of Israel forever—never again will they defile my holy name—neither they nor their kings—with their harlotry and the funerary offerings of their kings at their deaths. ⁸Whenever they placed their threshold next to my threshold, and their doorposts next to my doorposts, with only a wall between me and them, they would defile my holy name with the abominable practices that they committed. Therefore I consumed them in my fury. ⁹Now let them remove their harlotry and the funerary offerings of their kings far from me, and I will dwell among them forever.”

Exposition

Introduction:

The importance of the motif of a deity's return to his temple after his exile in ancient Near Eastern literature.

A. The Prophet's Visual Experience (vv. 2–5)

1. What is “the Glory of the God of Israel”?

John 1:14

Philippians 2:5–11

1 Corinthians 15:40–42

Romans 6:9

2. Note the of progress of the divine procession.

B. The Prophet's Aural Experience (vv. 6–9)

1. Who is this man standing next to Ezekiel?
2. What is the significance of the temple in YHWH's mind?
3. What preconditions does YHWH set for his dwelling among the Israelites “forever”? (vv. 7, 9). No more defiling of YHWH's name with:
 - a. No spiritual harlotry.
 - b. Kings venerating the dead (*pigrê malkêhem bêmôtām*).
 - c. Royal thresholds and doors butting up to YHWH's threshold and door.
 - d. Abominable practices.

C. Theological and Practical Lessons from the Vision of the Return of the Glorious Presence of YHWH

1. This vision declares the ineffable holiness of God.
2. This vision holds leaders of God's people responsible for instructing them in the boundaries of holiness and modeling respect for those boundaries themselves.
3. This vision proclaims the glory of God.
4. The vision exposes the sinfulness of human beings, even those who pride themselves in being the people of God.