

## #44: Ezekiel and the Temple

Monte F. Shelley, 5 Dec 2010

### Quotes

- If it was going to be easy to raise kids, it never would have started with something called labor.

### 1. Stick of Judah and stick of Joseph (Ezek 37:16)

"The discovery in 1953 of these writing boards from biblical Calah in Mesopotamia altered the thinking of scholars about how Middle Eastern cultures made records. Wooden tablets filled with wax represent the 'earliest known form of ancient book' and help us understand an important prophecy of Ezekiel foretelling the uniting of the Bible and Book of Mormon." (Keith Meservy, *Ensign*, Feb 1987, 4)



### 2. Ezekiel = God will strengthen (prophesied 592–570 BC)

Year	Event
991 BC	Temple of Solomon (1 <sup>st</sup> Temple)
721 BC	Many of the Ten Tribes taken captive
16 Mar 597 BC	Ezekiel and many taken captive; Zedekiah = king
31 Jul 593 BC 04/05	Ezekiel saw vision of God and his chariot-throne.
17 Sept 592 BC 06/05	Ezekiel's vision of corruption in Jerusalem and consequences.
Jul 586 BC	Jerusalem destroyed; most killed, few captives
28 Apr 573 BC 01/10	Ezekiel's vision of millennial temple and purified Israel (10 <sup>th</sup> day of 1 <sup>st</sup> month → before Passover)
538–537	Cyrus conquered Babylon & lets Jews return
516 BC	Temple of Zerubbabel (2 <sup>nd</sup> Temple)
c.17 BC–AD 64	Temple of Herod (renovated 2 <sup>nd</sup> ; enlarged site)
AD 70	Romans destroyed the Temple of Herod

### 3. Ezekiel's First Vision by the Chebar river (597 BC)

1:<sup>1</sup> In the [30<sup>th</sup>] year ... as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, ... the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. ...

Ezekiel's 30<sup>th</sup> year. At 30 a priest began temple duties (Num 4:3)

Ezekiel settled at Tel Abib on Chebar river

<sup>3</sup> The word of the LORD came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest. ...

<sup>4</sup> <I saw a windstorm coming out of the north—an immense cloud with flashing lightning and surrounded by brilliant light. The center of the fire looked like glowing metal.> Note: <> = NIV

The [whirlwind or windstorm] metaphor signifies the power of God. For instance, the power of God's presence was indicated to Job through allusion to a whirlwind [or NIV storm] (see Job 38:1). When the Lord poured out His Spirit with great power at the dedication of the Kirtland Temple in this dispensation, "a noise was heard like the sound of a rushing mighty wind, which filled the Temple" (HC, 2:428). (OT-I)

Joseph's first vision: pillar of light brighter than the sun

Verse 4 & 13: Cloud, Fire, Brightness, Color of Amber, Lamps, Lightning ... are used throughout the scriptures in association with the glory, power, and majesty of God's presence or that of His messengers. (See "cloud" and "fire" in Ex 13:21–22; 16:10; 19:9–16; 24:16; Lev 16:2; Matt 17:5; D&C 34:7. See "fire," "brightness," "colour of amber," "lamps," and "lightning" in Ex 3:2; Heb 12:29; 1 Ne 1:6; D&C 29:12; 110:2–3; 133:41; Hab 3:3–4; Acts 26:13; 2 Thess 2:8; JS—H 1:16–17, 30–32; Dan 10:6) (OT-I)

Ezekiel saw four living creatures or cherubim<sup>(10:9)</sup> with the face of a man, lion, ox, and eagle. They each had wings and were each by a wheel.<sup>(10:9)</sup> When they lifted up the wheels lifted up. Above their heads on what looked like a throne was a figure like that of a man surrounded by bright light. "This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD."

Wings → power to move and act (D&C 77:4)

Throne or chariot-throne

"Man is exalted among creatures; the eagle is exalted among birds; the ox is exalted among domestic animals; the lion is exalted among wild beasts; and all of them have received dominion, and greatness has been given them, yet they are stationed below the chariot of the Holy One" (*Midrash Shemoth Rabbah* 23; in *The New Bible Commentary: Revised*, 667). (OT-I)

**Ezekiel called to be a prophet (God's spokesman):**

2:<sup>1</sup> He said unto me ...<sup>3</sup> I send thee ... to a rebellious nation. ...<sup>6</sup> Be not afraid of them. ...<sup>7</sup> And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear. ...

3:<sup>17</sup> I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.<sup>18</sup> When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and ... thou speakest [not] to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; ... [he] shall die in his iniquity; but <I will hold you accountable. ...<sup>25</sup> They will tie [you] with ropes. ...<sup>26</sup> I will make your tongue stick to the roof of your mouth so that you will be silent.><sup>27</sup> But when I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth.

A watchman was a guard or sentry who was to call out the safety of the city from the wall or gate (1 Sam. 14:16; 2 Sam. 18:24; 2 Kings 9:17; Jer. 51:12). It was hoped that if Ezekiel warned "the wicked" of the impending consequences of their wickedness, they would "turn from [their] sin, and do that which is lawful and right" (Ezek. 33:14). (MM #44)

I, Jacob, gave unto them these words as I taught them in the temple, having first obtained mine errand from the Lord. ...<sup>19</sup> And we did magnify our office unto the Lord, taking upon us the responsibility, answering the sins of the people upon our own heads if we did not teach them the word of God with all diligence; wherefore, by laboring with our might their blood might not come upon our garments; otherwise their blood would come upon our garments, and we would not be found spotless at the last day. (Jacob 1:17–19)

**Elder Ezra Taft Benson:** "As watchmen on the tower of Zion, it is our obligation and right as leaders to speak out against current evils—evils that strike at the very foundation of all we hold dear as the true church of Christ. ...

"As one of these watchmen, with a love for humanity, I accept humbly this obligation and challenge and gratefully strive to do my duty without fear. In times as serious as these, we must not permit fear of criticism to keep us from doing our duty, even at the risk of our counsel being tabbed as political, as government becomes more and more entwined in our daily lives.

"In the crisis through which we are now passing, we have been fully warned. This has brought forth some criticism. There are some of us who do not want to hear the message. It embarrasses us. The things which are threatening our lives, our welfare, our freedoms are the very things some of us have been condoning. Many do not want to be disturbed as they continue to enjoy their comfortable complacency.

"The Church is founded on eternal truth. We do not compromise principle. We do not surrender our standards

regardless of current trends or pressures. Our allegiance to truth as a church is unwavering. Speaking out against immoral or unjust actions has been the burden of prophets and disciples of God from time immemorial. It was for this very reason that many of them were persecuted. Nevertheless, it was their God-given task, as watchmen on the tower, to warn the people.” (Ensign, July 1973, p. 38.)

**4. Ezekiel says Jerusalem will be destroyed (Ezek 4–7)**

5 *The judgment of Jerusalem will include famine, pestilence, war, and the scattering of her inhabitants.*

6 *The people of Israel will be destroyed for their idolatry—A remnant only will be saved and scattered.*

<sup>3</sup> Thus saith the Lord GOD ... I will bring a sword upon you, and I will destroy your high places. <sup>4</sup> And your altars shall be desolate, and your images shall be broken: and I will cast down your slain men before your idols. ... <sup>8</sup> Yet will I leave a remnant, that ... shall be scattered through the countries ... <sup>9</sup> [because they] go a whoring after their idols.

7 *Desolation, war, pestilence, and destruction will sweep the land of Israel—The desolation of the people is foreseen.*

<sup>23</sup> The land is full of <bloodshed>, and the city is full of violence. <sup>24</sup> Wherefore I will bring the worst of the heathen, and they shall possess their houses: I will also make the <pride> of the strong to cease; and their holy places shall be defiled. <sup>25</sup> Destruction cometh; and they shall seek peace, and *there shall be none*. ... <sup>27</sup> The king shall mourn ... and ... the people ... shall <tremble. I will deal with them according to their conduct, and by their own standards I will judge them.>

God said unto Noah: The end of all flesh is come before me, for the earth is filled with violence, and behold I will destroy all flesh from off the earth. (Moses 8:30; Gen 6:13)

Fullness of wrath comes when people are ripened in iniquity. (1 Ne 17:35; 2 Ne 28:16; Ether 2:9; 9:20; D&C 18:6)

**5. Ezekiel’s vision of corruption in Jerusalem (592 BC)**

8:<sup>3</sup> The spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the <north gate of the inner court where the idol that provokes to jealousy stood.>

Asherah? Any idol provokes God to jealousy as a betrayed husband.

<sup>10</sup> I ... [saw] every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, pourtrayed upon the wall round about. <sup>11</sup> And there stood ... seventy <elders> ... of Israel, and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah ... with every man his censer in his hand; and a thick cloud of incense went up. <sup>12</sup> Then said he unto me, ... hast thou seen what the <elders> ... of Israel do in the dark, <each at the shrine of his own idol>? for they say, The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the <land>. ...

“It is very likely that these images pourtrayed on the wall were the objects of *Egyptian* adoration: the *ox*, the *ape*, the *dog*, the *crocodile*, the *ibis*, the *scaraboeus* or *beetle*, and various other things. It appears that these were privately worshipped by the Sanhedrin or great Jewish council, consisting of seventy or seventy-two persons, six chosen out of every tribe, as representatives of the people. The images were pourtrayed upon the wall, as we find those ancient idols are on the walls of the *tombs of the kings and nobles of Egypt*.” (Clarke, *Commentary*, 4:443.) (OT-I)

<sup>14</sup> [At the north] gate of the LORD’s house ... there sat women weeping for Tammuz [a Babylonian fertility god].

Tammuz was “a deity worshipped both in Babylonia and in Phoenicia—the same as the Greek Adonis. He appears to have been a god of the spring, and the myth regarding him told of his early death and of the descent of Istar his bride into the underworld in search of him. The death of Tammuz symbolized the destruction of the spring vegetation by the heat of summer, and it was celebrated annually by seven days of women’s mourning in the 4th month (June–July), which was called Tammuz. This superstition had been introduced into Jerusalem.” (A *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, 497–98.) (OT-I)

<sup>16</sup> At the door of the temple ... between the porch and the altar, were about [25] men, with their backs toward the temple ... and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east. ...

Worshipped = NIV <were bowing down to>

Later Rabbi’s considered the area between the altar and the porch of the temple one of the most sacred areas in the land. The Mishnah describes “ten degrees of holiness” beginning with the land of Israel and ending with the Holy of Holies, with each degree more holy than the next (see Kelim 1:6-9). In this list, only the holy place and the holy of holies within the temple itself were more holy than the space between the altar and the temple. According to the Mishnah, it was in this area that the priests blessed the people after performing the daily offering (see Tamid 7:2). This also was the place where the priests in the days of the Maccabees petitioned the Lord (1 Maccabees 7:36-38). (MM #44)

“Sun worship was practiced by the Canaanites, but lately had been reintroduced from Assyria (2 Ki. 23:5, 11; Je. 8:2). Between the porch and the altar was the place where the priests offered prayer (Joel 2:17), with their faces, of course, towards the Temple; in this spot, with their backs to the temple, the adoration of the sun took place, as complete a renunciation of Yahweh [Jehovah] as possible.” (Guthrie and Motyer, *New Bible Commentary*, p. 670; see also 2 Chr 29:6.) (OT-I)

<sup>17</sup> They have filled the land with violence [HEB *chamas*], and <continually> provoke me to anger. ... <sup>18</sup> Therefore will I also deal in fury: ... neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, *yet* will I not hear them.

BDB *chamas* = violence, wrong (injurious language, harsh treatment). Includes oppression, injustice, and false accusation. (TDOT 4:478–487);

Book of Mormon: evil speaking, despise, persecute.

**6. Lord’s glory went from Holy of Holies to threshold**

9:<sup>3</sup> The glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub ... to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which *had* the writer’s inkhorn ... <sup>4</sup> And the LORD said ... set a mark [HEB *tav*] upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in <it>.

Blood on doorposts saved Israel from destruction at Passover.

Letter Name	Trans-literation	Early	Middle	Late	Modern
Aleph	A	𐤀	ⴐ	ⴑ	ⴒ
Tav	T	𐤀	ⴓ	ⴔ	ⴕ

[http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/6\\_chart.html](http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/6_chart.html)

Early Semitic= before 1500 BC; Middle= 1500–500 BC; Late= 500 BC–AD 100; Modern= after AD 100;

“This mark was to be put on these faithful ones for their protection when the faithless were to be destroyed. It showed that they belonged to God. The allusion is to a very ancient custom. In Egypt a runaway slave was freed from his master if he went to the temple and gave himself up to the god, receiving certain marks upon his person to denote his consecration to the deity there worshiped. Cain had a mark put on him for his protection, as an evidence of God’s promise to spare his life notwithstanding his wickedness. [Gen 4:15] To this day all Hindoos have some sort of mark upon their forehead signifying their consecration to their gods. Several passages in the book of Revelation represent the saints as having a mark [KJV seal or name] on their foreheads. [See Rev 7:3; 9:4; 14:1; 22:4] The followers of the ‘beast’ are also said to be marked in the forehead or in the hands. [See Rev 13:16–17; 14:9; 20:4] The Romans marked their soldiers in the hand and their slaves in the forehead. The woman in scarlet, whom John saw, had a name written on her forehead. [Rev 17:5.]” (Freeman, *Manners and Customs of the Bible*, pp. 301–2.) (OT-I)

**Orson Pratt:** “Where shall these great and severe judgments begin? Upon what people does the Lord intend to commence this great work of vengeance? Upon the people who profess to know his name and still blaspheme it in the midst of his house. They are the ones designated for some of the most terrible judgments of the latter days.” (In N. B. Lundwall, comp., *Inspired Prophetic Warnings to All Inhabitants of the Earth*, p. 139.) (OT-I)

<sup>5</sup> To the others he said ... Go ... through the city, and ... <sup>6</sup> Slay utterly old and young ... but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the <elders> which were before the house. ...

10:<sup>4</sup> Then the glory of the LORD ... stood over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the LORD’s glory.

The Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: (Ex 13:21)

Cloud and brightness → LORD’s glory and presence.

### 7. Lord’s glory went from threshold to the east gate

10:<sup>18</sup> Then the glory of the LORD departed from off the threshold. ... <sup>19</sup> And the cherubims lifted up their wings, and <rose> from the earth in my sight: ... and ... <they stopped> at the door of the east gate of the LORD’s house; and the glory of the God of Israel was <above> them. <sup>20</sup> <These are the living creatures> that I saw under the God of Israel by the river of Chebar; and I knew that they were the cherubims.

These visions are the same as those in Ezek 1:1–28

11:<sup>1</sup> The spirit ... brought me unto the east gate of the LORD’s house ... [There were 25] men; among whom I saw Jaazaniah ... and Pelatiah ... <leaders> of the people. <sup>2</sup> Then said he unto me, ... these are the men that <are plotting evil>, and give wicked counsel in this city: <sup>3</sup> Which say, ... let us build houses: this city is <a cooking pot>, and we <are the meat>.

Those who remained in Jerusalem felt secure and did not fear Babylon. They felt they were the choice meat and that those in exile were the discarded bones. (NIV study bible)

Shortly after [Ezekiel and many others were taken captive to Babylon and Zedekiah became king], the prophet Jeremiah was shown a vision of two baskets of figs, one full of good figs and the other full of poor figs (Jer. 24). He was told that the basket of poor figs represented Zedekiah and all the Jews who

remained in Jerusalem. Again, the Lord promised that because they continued in wickedness, “they [would] be consumed from off the land” (vs. 10). On the other hand, the basket of good figs represented those who had been exiled to Babylon. It seems that the Lord allowed these Jews to be exiled to protect them from the further wickedness that would bring about Jerusalem’s destruction. This he did in order to prepare a people to return to Jerusalem. Therefore, the Lord promised that he would give the exiled Jews “an heart to know me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart” (vs. 7). (MM #44)

They had come to believe that because they had not been exiled with those who were taken to Babylon in 597 BC, no further calamities would come upon them (Ezek. 11:2-3). Their being left behind however was not intended to justify their wicked actions. Rather their wickedness would justify their destruction. (MM #44)

<sup>4</sup> Therefore prophesy against them, ... <sup>9</sup> <I will drive you out of the city and hand you over to foreigners and inflict punishment on you.> <sup>10</sup> Ye shall fall by the sword; ... <sup>12</sup> for ye have not walked in my statutes, neither executed my judgments, but have done after the manners of the heathen that are round about you. ... <sup>16</sup> Although I have scattered them ..., yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come. ...

<sup>17</sup> I will even gather you ... out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel. ... <sup>19</sup> And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; ... <sup>20</sup> That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

### 8. Lord’s glory went from east gate to Mount of Olives

11:<sup>22</sup> Then did the cherubims lift up their wings, and the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above. <sup>23</sup> And the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain ... on the east side of the city.

### 9. Why was Jerusalem destroyed? (Ezek 16)

When ... Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also. (Jer 3:8)

<sup>32</sup> ‘You adulterous wife! You prefer strangers to your own husband! ... <sup>38</sup> I will sentence you to the punishment of women who commit adultery and who shed blood; I will bring upon you the blood vengeance of my wrath and jealous anger. (NIV Ezek 16)

“Wanton female sexuality serves as a vehicle for conveying the appalling nature of what the people—mostly men and male leaders!—have done. The people have betrayed God, looked to foreign nations, to idols, for salvation, thereby committing fornication and adultery. Bloodshed can be seen both literally in the sacrifice of children to idols, and also figuratively in the sacrifice of children in war and siege as a result of Israel’s wanton alliances with other nations. Elsewhere in the book, social injustice is conflated with abominations of worship committed in the temple, and the sins of the rulers represent a falling away from the compact with God, their one true husband. The male rulers who have misled the people have themselves been wanton and whoring. (Bennett Simon ,424)

Thus saith the LORD, Where is the bill of your mother’s divorcement, whom I have put away? or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away. (Isa 5:1)

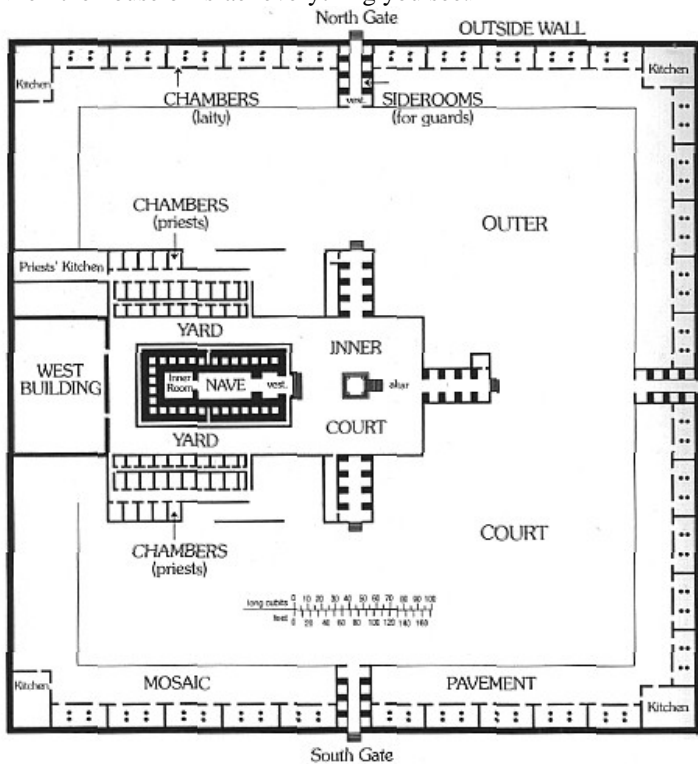
## 10. Ezekiel sees the battle of Armageddon (Ezek 38–39)

38 *The battle of Gog and Magog against Israel will usher in the Second Coming—The Lord will come amid war and pestilence, and all men will shake at his presence.*

39 *Gog and Magog will be destroyed—For seven years the people in the cities of Israel will burn the weapons of war—For seven months they will bury the dead—Then will come the supper of the great God and the continued gathering of Israel.*

## 11. Ezekiel sees the millennial temple (40–42; 573 BC)

40<sup>1</sup> In the [25<sup>th</sup>] year of our captivity, in the beginning of the year, in the tenth day of the month, in the [14<sup>th</sup>] year after that the city was smitten, ...<sup>2</sup> In the visions of God <he took me to> the land of Israel, and set me upon a very high mountain. ...<sup>3</sup> And ... there was a man ... with a <linen cord> in his hand, and a measuring <rod>; and he stood in the gate.<sup>4</sup> And the man said unto me ... <Tell the house of Israel everything you see.>



<http://www.templemount.org/ezektmp.html>

500 royal cubits (21") squared = about 300 yards squared

**Quote #6. Marion G. Romney:** There are 3 phases of the light of Christ. ... (1) the light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world; (2) the gift of the Holy Ghost; (3) the more sure word of prophecy or second comforter, [TPJS 150].

These 3 phases parallel the 3 temple areas (outer courtyard=Telestial, holy place=Terrestrial; holy of holies=Celestial) one goes through to enter God's presence in the Holy of Holies.



There will be beautiful vegetation surrounding the temple. Each of the empty rectangles around the outer edges will have a towering palm tree (Ezek. 40:16). (GDcom #44)

## 12. Lord's glory returns to the temple (Ezek 43)

<sup>2</sup> <I saw> the glory of the God ... came from ... the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory. ...<sup>3</sup> The vision which I saw <was like> the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city: and the visions *were* like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell upon my face.

God's visible glory is very bright (10:4; Lk 2:9; Rev 21:11, 23).

The glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle when completed (Ex 40:34) and Solomon's temple when dedicated (1 Kgs 8:10–11). A cloud often represented the glory of the Lord.

"East is the sacred direction. Holy temples are oriented eastward, and the east wind (the 'wind of God') originates from this direction. Jesus Christ enters his temples from the east (Ezek. 43:1-2; see also Ezek. 10:19) and at the time of the Second Coming, the Lord will come from the east (JS-M 1:26; Matt. 24:27; Joseph Smith, *TPJS*, 287)." (Joseph Fielding McConkie and Donald W. Parry, *A Guide to Scriptural Symbols*, 1990, "East")

"East is also the direction from which earth's inhabitants receive sunlight every morning, which serves as a constant reminder of Christ's glory and may be considered a type of his second coming; and at Christ's first coming in mortality, the wise men stated, 'We have seen his star in the east' (Matt. 2:2)." (Donald W. Parry and Jay A. Parry, *Understanding the Signs of the Times*, 1999, 377)

<sup>4</sup> And the glory of the LORD came into the house <through the gate facing east.> <sup>5</sup> So the spirit ... brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house.

**LIGHT:** "You who sit enthroned between the cherubim, shine forth. ... Restore us, O God; make your face shine upon us, that we may be saved." (NIV Ps 80:1, 3) At the time of Spring and Fall equinox (40:1), the sun's light shone through the eastern door of the temple and illuminated the sanctuary. This symbolized the LORD coming to his temple. Here the glory of the LORD came from the east, entered the temple by the east gate, and filled it (43:1–5). "The glory, here clearly associated with the sunrise, is described as the great fiery throne of God which he had seen in his earlier vision by the river Chebar (1:4–28). There had been a great fiery cloud in which could be seen the four living creatures and the wheels of the throne. Above them was a sapphire throne on which was seated a being in human form, fiery like molten bronze, and encircled with the brightness of a rainbow." (MB-On Earth 16)

<sup>6</sup> And I heard *him* speaking unto me out of the house. ...<sup>7</sup> And he said ... the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever, and my holy name, shall the house of Israel no more defile. ...<sup>9</sup> Let them put away their whoredom ...<sup>11</sup> If they be ashamed of all that they have done, [show] <them the design of the temple—its arrangement, its exits and entrances> ... and all the ordinances ... and all the laws thereof: and write *it* in their sight, that they may <be faithful to its design>, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them.<sup>12</sup> This is the law of the <temple: All the surrounding area on top of the mountain will be most holy.>

**Kirtland Temple dedication:** Out of our poverty we have given of our substance to build a house to thy name, that the Son of Man might have a place to manifest himself to his people. (D&C 109:5)

### 13. What is the purpose of the large altar (18' by 18')?

43:<sup>18</sup> He said unto me, ... These are the ordinances of the altar in the day when they shall make it, to offer burnt offerings thereon, and to sprinkle blood thereon.

**Q#1. Joseph:** The offering of sacrifice has ever been connected and forms a part of the duties of the Priesthood. ... [Servants of God offered sacrifice] prior to the law of Moses; which ordinances will be continued when the Priesthood is restored with all its authority, power and blessings. ... These sacrifices, as well as every ordinance belonging to the Priesthood, will, when the Temple of the Lord shall be built, and the sons of Levi be purified, be fully restored and attended to in all their powers, ramifications, and blessings. This ever did and ever will exist when the powers of the Melchizedek Priesthood are sufficiently manifest; else how can the restitution of all things spoken of by the Holy Prophets be brought to pass. It is not to be understood that the law of Moses will be established again with all its rites and variety of ceremonies; this has never been spoken of by the prophets; but those things which existed prior to Moses' day, namely, sacrifice, will be continued. (TPJS, 172–173; see also Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3:93–94)

**Altars:** Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Lehi used altars for pray, sacrifice, worship, and making covenants (Moses 5:5–8; Gen 8:20; 12:7; Ex 19:3–6; 24:4–8; 1 Ne 2:7). The temple had four altars: altar of sacrifice, altar of incense with smoke (prayers) ascending before the veil, table of shewbread, and the Ark of the Covenant in the holy of holies. The bread on the “table of shewbread” was ‘most holy’ (Lev 24:9) which meant that it imparted holiness (Ex 30:29) to the priests who ate it in the Holy Place of the Lord’s house every Sabbath (Lev 24:8). The sacrament table is an altar. The sacrament symbolizes all the sacrifices of the Mosaic law and Christ’s sacrifice. Temple altars are used to make covenants and communicate with God.

### 14. Why was the outer east gate to be kept shut?

44:<sup>2</sup> Then said the LORD unto me; This [outer east] gate shall be shut ... and no man shall enter in by it; because the LORD ... entered in by it. ... <sup>4</sup> and ... the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD; and I fell upon my face.

This prevented sun worship and annual New Year rituals when Marduk, a Babylonian god, exited and returned through east gate.

### 15. What are the two levels of priesthood?

44:<sup>9</sup> Thus saith the Lord GOD; No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary. ... <sup>10</sup> And the Levites ... <sup>11</sup> shall be ministers in my sanctuary, having charge at the gates ... and ministering to the house: they shall slay the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister unto them. ... <sup>13</sup> And they shall not ... do the office of a priest unto me, nor to come near to any of my holy things, in the most holy place. ...

<sup>15</sup> But the priests the Levites, the sons of Zadok, ... shall come near to me to minister unto me, and they shall stand before me to offer unto me the fat and the blood: ... <sup>16</sup> They shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to my table, to minister unto me, and they shall keep my charge. ...

BDB Zadok= *just, righteous*; 1<sup>st</sup> high priest of Solomon’s temple “sons of Zadok” = “sons of righteousness.” Melchizedek = King of righteousness. Ezekiel was a descendent of Zadok (BD)

The heavenly messenger explained to Ezekiel that the Levites who would keep charge of the holy house would be the sons of Zadok. Zadok was a righteous high priest in the days of King

Solomon. Zadok replaced Abiathar (see 1 Kgs 2:26–27, 35) because of his loyalty to David and Solomon. Zadok was the first high priest to officiate in Solomon’s temple. Apparently the Lord desired the descendants of the righteous Zadok to officiate in the latter-day temple in Jerusalem (see Ezek 44:15; 48:11). (OT-I)

The literal translation of the term, “sons of Zadok,” is actually “sons of righteousness.” Therefore, if we accept the assumption that the term “sons of Zadok” really refers to holders of the Melchizedek Priesthood, then the rest of chapter 44 makes perfect sense. With that understanding, we realize that Ezekiel is describing a separation between the duties of two sets of priesthood holders: the first are Levites, and the second are a special group with special privileges, i.e. Melchizedek priesthood holders. We understand that only the Melchizedek priesthood holds the keys to dwell in the presence of God (D&C 107:19-20). The “sons of Zadok” are required to minister to the Lord himself, to minister at his table, and to keep his charge—in essence, they dwell directly with the Lord in his House—a privilege belonging to the higher priesthood (D&C 107:19). (GDcom)

<sup>17</sup> When they enter in at the gates of the inner court, they shall be clothed with linen garments ... <sup>18</sup> linen bonnets upon their heads, and ... linen <undergarments around their waists. They must not wear anything that makes them perspire.> <sup>19</sup> And when they go forth into the <outer> court ... they shall put off their garments ... , and lay them in the <sacred rooms>, and they shall put on other garments. ...

Priest clothing discussed in my notes or handouts for lesson 26.

Priests were ‘arrayed in white linen’ (2 Chr 5:12). The fine linen worn by heavenly beings is ‘clean and white’ or ‘pure and white’ which is symbolic of worthiness (Rev 3:4–5; 15:6; 19:8). Since linen is not the product of an animal that is subject to death or ‘corruption’ it is a symbol of immortality or ‘incorruption’ (1 Cor 15:52–54).

Robes were part of their temple garments. (42:14; 44:17, 19)

“When a priest puts off his ordinary garments and puts on linen garments to perform his religious functions, the action signifies consecration of the priest for spiritual duties (Ex 29:1–9; 40:12–15; Lev 6:11; 16:1–4). To remove the priestly garment means a cessation of sacred duties and a return to the ordinary routine (Lev 16:23–24; Ezek 44:19). ... The redeemed saints in heaven are garbed in resplendent white robes (Rev 3:4–5; 4:4; 7:9, 13; 15:6; 19:14)” (DBI 319, 320)

Christ appeared to Nephites “clothed in a white robe” (3 Ne 11:8). Moroni appeared to Joseph radiating light and wearing a “robe of exquisite whiteness” (JS—H 1:30–32).

“The Lord ... hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness” (Isa 61:10). The “robe of righteousness” is a “gift of power and enduring priesthood promised to all who enter and keep sacred covenants in the house of the Lord.” (LLS, 73)

“As a part of ancient royal vesting rites, a king who was being crowned and enthroned would receive upon his shoulders the ‘robe of regal authority’ as an indication of his right to rule and reign.” (LLS, 55)

Put off natural man and become a saint

<sup>20</sup> Neither shall they shave their heads, nor <let their hair> grow long; they shall <keep the hair of their heads trimmed>. <sup>21</sup> Neither

shall any priest drink wine, when they enter into the inner court. ...<sup>23</sup> And they shall teach my people *the difference* between the holy and profane <sup><common></sup>, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean.<sup>24</sup> And in controversy ... they shall judge it according to my judgments. ...

45:<sup>9</sup> Thus saith the Lord GOD; <You have gone far enough, O princes of Israel! Give up your violence and oppression and do what is just and right. Stop dispossessing my people. You are to use accurate scales, an accurate ephah and an accurate bath.>

Oppression → act like tyrant, cruel treatment;

Dispossessing → evictions

## 16. Living and healing waters from the temple (Ezek 47)

<sup>1</sup><The man brought me back to the entrance of the temple, and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east.>

At 1000 cubit intervals the water reached the ankles, knees, waist, and then over Ezekiel's head.

**Q2. S. Michael Wilcox:** The more we go to temple, the more we will experience the "the life-giving, healing 'waters to swim in' that have "the power ... to heal the disharmony of our lives, our families, and eventually the world."

<sup>7</sup> At the bank of the river *were* very many trees. ...<sup>8</sup> Then said he unto me, These waters ... go down into the desert, and go into the [dead or salt] sea ... [and] the waters shall be healed.<sup>9</sup> <Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live.><sup>10</sup> <Fishermen will stand along the shore; from En Gedi to En Eglaim there will be places for spreading nets. The fish will be of many kinds—like the fish of the Great Sea.<sup>11</sup> But the swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they will be left for salt.<sup>12</sup> Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing.>

According to Leviticus, "atone means to cover or recover, repair a hole, cure a sickness, mend a rift, make good a torn or broken covering. ... Atonement does not mean covering a sin so as to hide it from the sight of God; it means making good an outer layer which has rotted or been pierced." (TT, 69)

**Joseph:** "Judah must return, Jerusalem must be rebuilt, and the temple, and water come out from under the temple, and the waters of the Dead Sea be healed. It will take some time to rebuild the walls of the city and the temple, &c; and all this must be done before the Son of Man will make His appearance." (TPJS 286) (OT-I)

## 17. Land shall be divided according to the tribes

47:<sup>21</sup> So shall ye divide this land unto you according to the tribes of Israel.<sup>22</sup> <You are to allot it as an inheritance for yourselves and for the aliens who have settled among you and who have children. You are to consider them as native-born Israelites; along with you they are to be allotted an inheritance among the tribes of Israel.><sup>23</sup> And ... in what tribe the <alien settles>, there shall ye give him his inheritance, saith the Lord GOD.

BDB *ger* = sojourner; KJV alien, sojourner, stranger

A purpose of the scattering was to give gentiles an opportunity to be gathered and receive the blessings of the gospel.

The Lord told Abraham, "as many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name, and shall be ... thy seed" (Abr 2:10).

Nephi said, "as many of the Gentiles as will repent are the covenant people of the Lord" (2 Ne. 30:2).

## 18. Second Temple or Temple of Zurrubabel (516 BC)

Same size as 1<sup>st</sup> temple with table of shewbread and incense altar but only 1 menorah. **Missing:** (a) Ark + stone tablets, manna, and Aaron's rod, (b) Urim and Thummim, (c) holy anointing oil, (d) sacred fire on altar, (e) spirit of prophecy, and (f) Shekinah or God's glory or presence. ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second\\_Temple](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Temple); BD Temple of Zerubbabel; [www.jewishencyclopedia.com](http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com) Second Temple)

**Holy of Holies empty, no Urim & Thummim for High Priest**

Shekinah (HEB כּוֹשׁ settle down, abide, dwell BDB 1014d) → the LORD's presence/face → His glory. Other forms of it meant dwelling-place or tabernacle; inhabitant or neighbor.

Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. (Matt 18:20; D&C 6:32). We pray for his Spirit to be with us.

**When the Second Temple was erected, its builders incorporated a number of components that were based on Ezekiel's prophecy.** Everything that they were able to understand from Ezekiel's words, they included in the structure of the Second Temple. These details include, for example, the permanent closure of the southern gate (44:2); the chambers of the Women's Court ("the courts of the incense" - 46:21); and the width of the altar (3:1).

[www.templeinstitute.org/future\\_temple.htm](http://www.templeinstitute.org/future_temple.htm)

## Conclusion

According to Leviticus, "atone means to cover or recover, repair a hole, cure a sickness, mend a rift, make good a torn or broken covering. ... Atonement does not mean covering a sin so as to hide it from the sight of God; it means making good an outer layer which has rotted or been pierced." (TT, 69)

Christ and his disciples seek to heal body and spirit.

## Read Quote 3 (Condie)

## Read Quote 4 (S. Michael Wilcox)

Christ and his servants invite each of us to come unto Christ, to put off the natural man and become saints by yielding to the Holy Spirit, to go to his temple that we may now how to enter his presence, and to drink the living water flowing from the temple that we may be healed.

## Quotes

**1. Joseph:** It is generally supposed that sacrifice was entirely done away when ... the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus was offered up, and that there will be no necessity for the ordinance of sacrifice in future; but those who assert this are certainly not acquainted with the duties, privileges and authority of the Priesthood, or with the Prophets. The offering of sacrifice has ever been connected and forms a part of the duties of the Priesthood. It began with the Priesthood, and will be continued until after the coming of Christ, from generation to generation. We frequently have mention made of the offering of sacrifice by the servants of the Most High in ancient days, prior to the law of Moses; which ordinances will be continued when the Priesthood is restored with all its authority, power and blessings. ... These sacrifices, as well as every ordinance belonging to the Priesthood, will, when the Temple of the Lord shall be built, and the sons of Levi be purified, be fully restored and attended to in all their powers, ramifications, and blessings. This ever did and ever will exist when the powers of the Melchizedek Priesthood are sufficiently manifest; else how can the restitution of all things spoken of by the Holy Prophets be brought to pass. It is not to be understood that the law of Moses will be established again with all its rites and variety of ceremonies; this has never been spoken of by the prophets; but those things which existed prior to Moses' day, namely, sacrifice, will be continued. It may be asked by some, what necessity for sacrifice, since the Great Sacrifice was offered? In answer to which, if repentance, baptism, and faith existed prior to the days of Christ, what necessity for them since that time?" (TPJS, 172-3; see also Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3:93-94)

**2. S. Michael Wilcox:** Ezekiel's last description of the river's depth contains a beautifully symbolic truth of what the temple can become for all of us if we wade into its waters again and again. 'It was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, *waters to swim in*, a river that could not be passed over.' (Ezek 47:3-5.) The water is now over his head, and he can immerse himself in its cool freshness.

The first time we enter a temple, we barely get our feet wet. We are barely introduced to the Lord's light and love. What a tragedy it is when members of the Church judge the temple to be shallow or not deeply refreshing based on that first experience. Yet all of us know that on a hot summer day, wading even ankle deep in a cool stream brings instant refreshment and a hesitancy to leave the flowing water to return to our shoes. In light of this, it is not difficult to feel Moses' sense of wonder when he was told to 'put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.' (Ex 3:5.) **Elder Widtsoe** cautioned that it is not fair 'to pass opinion on temple worship after one day's participation followed by an absence of many years. The work should be repeated several times in quick succession, so that the lessons of the temple may be fastened upon the mind.' ("Temple Worship," 64.) Little do the casual waders know that down the river, if they will patiently persist, are life-giving, healing 'waters to swim in.' For the water rises each time we wade. Little do they realize the power of those waters to heal the disharmony of our lives, our families, and eventually the world.

If we understand little or feel little the first time we enter the temple, at all cost let us not abandon the river. We must continue down the bank and wade in again and again. If we do that, we will feel the waters rise until they are over our heads, and we can plunge deeply into the refreshing, life-giving, healing waters of God's love and light. As we continue to wade in again and again, our understanding of the Lord's great plan of mercy and

happiness as taught through the temple symbols will rise also. If you feel you are understanding the temple ceremonies at an ankle-deep level, do not despair. Wade in again and again and again. In time you will feel the water rise and your understanding deepen. When talking with children about the temple, I often tell them about Ezekiel's river. Their eyes are full of wonder, delight and anticipation at the thought that one day they too will be able to swim in Heavenly Father's river. We, who are older, can learn a great deal from their eagerness. (*House of Glory: Finding Personal Meaning in the Temple*, 1995, 41-43)

**3. Spencer J. Condie:** Of all the places on earth, the Dead Sea is one of the most inhospitable to life. Even burning deserts of sand provide a home for hardy insects and reptiles and for certain plants with extremely deep roots. Concrete sidewalks and asphalt tennis courts sometimes crack, allowing a brave weed or two to survive above the surface. But the Dead Sea, because of its extreme salinity, harbors no life of any kind. Thus, using the example of the Dead Sea, the Lord's prophets have chosen the worst possible case to illustrate the power of the living waters to heal that which is dead. The living waters of the gospel of Jesus Christ and His atonement can heal dead marriages, dead relationships between parents and children, dead friendships between business partners and neighbors, and spiritual death from years of alienation from the Church. His promise is sure: "Learn of me, and listen to my words; walk in the meekness of my Spirit, and you shall have peace in me" (D&C 19:23). (Spencer J Condie, *Your Agency: Handle with Care*, 1996, chapter 5)

**4. S. Michael Wilcox:** My favorite scripture on the temple is in Ezek. 47. ... A spring of water bubbles up right at the east doors of the temple. We have water in front of many of our temples—reflecting pools. Every time you see that water, please think of Ezek. 47. The water in Ezekiel's vision ... goes into the Judean wilderness and then empties into the Dead Sea. ... Everywhere water flows, life springs up. ... When I read those words, the Spirit whispers this thought: 'That which will one day be temporally true of my house in Jerusalem, is spiritually true now of all my temples.' Out from the east doors of the Jordan River Temple, where I go most frequently, is a river of water. It is not a river you see with the eyes, but it is there nonetheless. It will do two things: give life and heal everything it touches—our families, our friendships, our bruised and broken hearts battered by the trials of life. Nephi tells us that the fountain of living water is the love of God (see 1 Ne. 11:25). The river that flows from the temple is a river of light, truth, and power, but primarily it is a river of love: it will heal and give life to everything. (*Every Good Thing: Talks from the 1997 BYU Women's Conference*, 1998, 296-297)

**5. Howard W. Hunter:** All of our efforts in proclaiming the gospel, perfecting the Saints, and redeeming the dead lead to the holy temple. This is because the temple ordinances are absolutely crucial; we cannot return to God's presence without them. I encourage everyone to worthily attend the temple or to work toward the day when you can enter that holy house to receive your ordinances and covenants. As the prophets have said, the temple is a place of beauty; it is a place of revelation; it is a place of peace. It is the house of the Lord. It is holy unto the Lord. It must be holy and important to us. (*Ensign*, Feb. 1995, 5)

**6. Marion G. Romney:** There are three phases of the light of Christ. ... The first one is the light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world; The second phase is the gift of the Holy Ghost; And the third is the more sure word of prophecy [or second comforter, TPJS 150]. ("The Light of Christ," *Ensign*, May 1977, 43)

## Sources:

- *Gate* = Matthew B. Brown, *The Gate of Heaven*.
- OT-I = Old Testament Institute manual
- KJV King James Version of the Bible.
- NJPS = New Jewish Publication Society translation of the Bible
- NIV = New International Version of the Bible
- *TPIS* = *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*
- *SOED* = Shorter Oxford English Dictionary
- *OED* = Oxford English Dictionary
- *EJ* = *Encyclopedia Judaica*
- *SOSL* = Trumbull, *Studies in Oriental Social Life*.
- *DBI* = *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*
- *LLS* = Alonzo L. Gaskill, *The Lost Language of Symbolism*.
- *BDB* = Brown, Driver, Briggs *Hebrew and English Lexicon*
- *JWOT* = Holzapfel, *Jehovah and the World of the Old Testament*
- *Rona* = Daniel Rona, [www.israelrevealed.com/comp-sup-r.htm](http://www.israelrevealed.com/comp-sup-r.htm).
- *DBlog* = Donna Nielsen Blog, [donna-connections.blogspot.com/](http://donna-connections.blogspot.com/)
- *KD* = Keil-Delitzsch *Commentary on the Old Testament*
- [beardall2000.com/gospdoct.shtml](http://beardall2000.com/gospdoct.shtml); [www.gospeldoctrine.com/](http://www.gospeldoctrine.com/)
- *GD.com* = [www.gospeldoctrine.com](http://www.gospeldoctrine.com)
- *TDOT* = *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, 15 vols.
- *TT* = Margaret Barker, *Temple Theology*
- Bennett Simon, "Ezekiel's Geometric Vision of the Restored Temple: From the Rod of His Wrath to the Reed of His Measuring," *Harvard Theological Review*, 102:4 (2009) 411–38
- *MB-On Earth* = Margaret Barker, *On Earth as it is in Heaven*
- *MM* = Meridian Magazine gospel doctrine lessons, [www.ldsmag.com](http://www.ldsmag.com)

## 19. When

The

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Monday, January 18, 2010

[The Clothing of the Righteous](#) from Donna Nielsen's Blog

One fabric stands out in the Bible—**linen**. In fact, it is mentioned 105 times. It is first mentioned at the end of Genesis when Pharaoh dressed his new second-in-command, Joseph, in fine **linen** (Gen. 41:42). It must have been the fabric of the wealthy. The next time we see it is in Exodus, in the description of the tabernacle (chapters 25–27). The courtyard hangings, the “*gate*” to the courtyard, the “*door*” to the tabernacle, the curtains for walls inside the tabernacle, and the veil between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies were all made of “*fine woven linen*.” God chooses only the best for His house, so linen must have been the best. Most of the garments for the priests were made of **linen** (Exod. 28). The one exception was the blue robe for the high priest, which was made of wool.

The child Samuel, who ministered in the tabernacle, and King David wore linen. After being promoted by the Persian king, Mordechai was dressed in **linen**, as well as the virtuous woman of Proverbs 31. Ezekiel and Daniel both had visions of a “*man clothed in linen*” (possibly the pre-mortal Jesus, representing His role as priest).

In Ezekiel 16, the prophet describes Israel as a baby left in a field and how God took her and raised her to be a beautiful woman.

“*Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your clothing was of fine linen, silk, and embroidered cloth...*” (v.13a). Yeshua was wrapped in linen at His burial. In the book of Revelation, we learn that angels (15:6), the bride of Messiah (19:8), and the armies of heaven (19:14) are all dressed in **linen**, which, for believers, represents “*the righteous acts of the saints*.”

Some characteristics of linen might give us a hint of why God may have chosen it as His apparel for His holy ones and the cloth to adorn some of His holiest earthly items:

- It originated in Egypt and was used to wrap Egyptian mummies in because it symbolized light and purity and displayed wealth. It was expensive because of the labor intensive method of producing it. The Israelites took a supply of it with them from Egypt, which was used for the tabernacle (Exod. 25:4), and some of them may have learned how to make it from the Egyptians (Exod. 35:35).
- It has the ability to absorb and lose water rapidly. Thus, it is popular in warm climates, as it allows the body to breathe and is exceptionally cool, making it superior to cotton in this regard. Priests must have found it most comfortable while working around the heat of the sacrificial altar and especially in the desert during Israel's 40 years of wandering.
- It is less likely to cling to the body when wet than other fabrics.
- It is made of flax, the strongest of vegetable fibers and two to three times stronger than cotton. Fishing nets, twine, and rope are also made from flax fibers.
- It is resistant to moths and carpet beetles, and thus lasts a long time. When the tomb of the Pharaoh Ramesses II, who died 1213 BC, was discovered in 1881, the linen wrappings were perfectly preserved!

Israel Teaching Letter April 2009

[www.bridgesforpeace.com/h2n.php?fn=teachingletters.htm](http://www.bridgesforpeace.com/h2n.php?fn=teachingletters.htm)