

Title: The Law of God's House
Text: Ezekiel 43: 12
Date: April 30, 2015
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

Ezekiel 43: 12: This is the law of the house; Upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about *shall be* most holy. Behold, this is the law of the house.

The house spoken of here is the house of holy God. It is not this building or any other building. Our God "dwelleth not in temples made with hands." (Acts 7: 48; 17: 24) "Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." (2Co 6:16) The house of God where God dwells is in his people in Christ.

The true house or temple of God is God our Savior and his Son, Jesus Christ. When John was shown heavenly Jerusalem, he said, "And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." (Rev 21: 22) Also, the true house of God is each redeemed child of God united in Christ, "In whom all the building is fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." (Eph 2: 21-22) Christ, our Holy Redeemer, is the Head of the house. Christ is "a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." (Heb 3: 6) The Lord Jesus Christ is the temple of his people and his people is the temple of the Lord Jesus Christ. So the house in our text is the house of God which consists of our glorified Head, our Holy Lord Jesus united with his holy people.

The Holy One declares that the law of his house is holiness: "Upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about *shall be* most holy." We see that "holiness" is of utmost importance in God's house. Twice, he says "This is the law of the house." He says it before and after the law itself, as if to say, holiness is the alpha and omega of his house. "This is the law of the house; Upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about *shall be* most holy. Behold, this is the law of the house." So our subject is "The Law of God's House."

HOLY BY THE GLORY OF GOD

God's house shall be most holy because our Holy Savior dwells in us and we in him, "And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east. So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house. And I heard *him* speaking unto me out of the house; and the man stood by me." (Eze 43:4-6)

The glory of God is his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The only way a child of God is sanctified—set apart and made holy—the only way God's house is made holy—is by the work of God in Christ Jesus—Christ must fill the house with the glory of God.

God is holy, "For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." (Heb 7: 26) Holiness is the purity of God's nature: God is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, made higher than the heavens—that is who and what Christ is! He is without spot or stain or anything like it in his nature. He is light and purity itself and in him is no darkness or impurity at all.

Also, "He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity." (Hab 1: 13) Therefore, his people—his house—must be holy. In the sacrifices offered to God under the old covenant, God said, "it shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein." (Lev 22: 21)

But each one of us who make up God's house were originally conceived with a corrupt, sinful nature. Our hearts are unholy by conception. Of ourselves, we not only cannot work the righteousness of the law, we cannot even think pure thoughts. All our motives are unholy therefore all our deeds are unrighteous.

Sinners have tried everything under the sun to make themselves holy to God! They fast, scourge themselves and do without all sorts of things. But Christ said the problem is not in things—not what goes in—the problem is the corrupt sewer-tank called our hearts and what comes out of it.

Notice, our text does not say, "They ought to be holy. You should do your best." No, it says "Upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about *shall be* most holy." There are no "maybe's" with God's promises—only "shalls."

So how is the house of God made holy?

God the Father sanctified each of his people when he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. Jude wrote "to them that are sanctified by God the Father." (Jude 1)

Therefore, all God's elect were in Christ when the GodMan obeyed God from his holy heart, satisfied justice, and established righteousness for his people, "For both he that sanctifeth and they who are sanctified *are* all of one for which he is not ashamed to call us brethren." "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." (Heb 10:14)

Then God the Holy Spirit creates a new, holy man, within us. "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thess 2: 13-14) Did you catch that he calls us "to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ?"

Now, look at our text and we see it illustrated. In the beginning of the book, Ezekiel saw the glory of God as the GodMan in his throne. From that throne in glory, Christ Jesus, the glory of God, comes into us—these earthen temples—through God the Holy Spirit, "the glory of the LORD came into the house..." (Eze 43: 4)

The Holy Spirit lifts our hearts to the most holy place to behold Christ seated at God's right hand, "So the Spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court." (Eze 43: 5)

Remember, sanctification of the old-covenant temple came when the Shekinah glory filled the house? So it is by the everlasting covenant of grace. Spiritual sanctification comes when Christ fills the inward man, "and, behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house." (Eze 43: 5) This is what happens when God shines the light into our hearts, "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (2Co 4:6) Then "we are changed into the same image from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor 3: 18)

Then we effectually hear the gospel of God preached through his house, his church, while Christ stands to intercede and make his word effectual in our hearts, "And I heard *him* speaking unto me out of the house; and the man stood by me." (Eze 43: 6) Christ speaks from the right hand of God from the holiest of holies through his house as the gospel is preached and at the same time Christ stands by to make his word effectual in our hearts. What a glorious Head is our GodMan, Mediator!

Through the gospel, he turns us from our vain efforts to sanctify ourselves by teaching us that we are holy and sanctified in Christ, seated at God's right hand in the top of God's holy mountain. He declares in our hearts, "This *is* the law of the house; Upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about *shall be* most holy. Behold, this *is* the law of the house." (Eze 43:12) Oh, indeed, this is the law of the house—the

gospel of the house! True sanctification, true holiness, is to have Christ dwelling in us in the new man so that through faith we behold that we dwell in holiness in Christ our Sanctification in the top of the mountain at God's right hand. There the whole church round about—to the furthest border—is most holy in Christ. Behold, this is the law—the gospel—of the house. (1 Corinthians 1: 29-31)

So first, God's house shall be most holy because our Holy Savior dwells in his house making us behold that we dwell in Christ at God's right hand—in him the whole house is most holy.

HOLY MOTIVE

God's house shall be most holy because the motive of the sanctified heart is the honor of Christ, "And he said unto me, Son of man, 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,..." (Eze 43: 7)

When the Spirit of Christ enters within us—within his true spiritual Israel—Christ our King begins to reign in our new man. "The place of my throne and the place of the soles of my feet" is his people, his church." (Eze 43: 7) Through regeneration, Christ sets his throne in our new hearts and brings us to his feet, to his church, his footstool.

Psalm 110: 1: The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. 2: The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.

He finds us "enemies in our minds by wicked works." But by showing us what he has suffered to make us holy and righteous, Christ makes us willingly bow down at his feet in saving faith.

Psalm 110: 3: Thy people *shall be* willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. (Ps 110:2-3)

Christ becomes, not only our Savior, but our Lord. Our old motive was law, torment, reward and legal fear. Our new motive is the constraint of his love for us. We serve him in the beauties of holiness because we want to honor him. We do so "from the womb" or from the moment we are born-again. From "the morning" of his grace, like the dew, Christ and his gospel becomes altogether beautiful to us. As he walks in us and dwells in us, Christ effectually commands his child, "My holy name, shall the house of Israel no more defile!"

Brethren, like a man's name is on the members of his house, Christ has given us his own name—the LORD our Righteousness. "Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." (Eph 3:15) This is the greatest honor that we could ever receive, we are members of the household of God. God is our Father, Christ is our Elder Brother, his brethren are our brethren, we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ.

Beloved, our new motive for loving one another, for being faithful husbands and wives; father and mothers; employers and employees is "that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed." (1Ti 6:1) The law of the house—the gospel of holiness—is so much stronger than the letter of the law could have ever been. The law of holiness is the law of faith and love. If we dishonor his name we dishonor our own name!

NO MORE DEFILEMENT

The chief way we no longer defile his name is by renouncing all false gods and false ways and sins.

Israel called their false gods “kings.” “Baal” means “lord.” Their dumb statues of gold and silver, he calls “carcasses.” So Christ says when he sets up his throne in his people, his true Israel shall no more defile his name, “neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom, not by the carcasses of their kings in their high places.” (Eze 43: 7) So Christ says of a certainty that his sanctified people shall not defile his name with their false gods in their false churches. He calls us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Those in Israel defiled his name “by their setting of their threshold by my thresholds.” (Eze 43: 8) The threshold is the way of entrance into the house. When men invent other ways to enter God’s house—such as free will, carnal relationship, or the will of the flesh—they set up their threshold by God’s. The Gospel way of entrance into the church of Christ is Christ himself, being born of God, by faith in him. Then we publicly profess Christ in believer’s baptism. Christ says that his sanctified people shall not defile his name by setting up false ways to enter his household but shall worship Christ the Way and him only.

Christ says his people shall not defile his name by setting “their posts by my posts” (Eze 43: 8) Instead of the ground and pillar being the truth of the gospel, the natural sons of Israel defiled his name by preaching the doctrines and commandments of men, as if they are equal to the doctrine of God’s grace. Christ says his sanctified people shall not do so, anymore. We preach and hear and support the doctrine of God’s sovereign electing grace, eternal redeeming grace, irresistible regenerating grace, preserving grace, resurrecting grace and glorifying grace. In other words, we preach, “Salvation is of the Lord!”

Christ says, “they have even defiled my holy name by their abominations that they have committed: wherefore I have consumed them in mine anger.” (Eze 43: 8) This word “abominations” includes all other sin, as well as religious sins. But Christ says his people shall not defile his name by walking in their abominations anymore.

Brethren, a sinner has not been truly sanctified until he has been made to renounce all his former religion and works as dung like Paul did in Philippians 3. Nor is a man sanctified until he abhors his sin and turns from it with a heart to honor Christ. Christ speaks effectually in our hearts saying, “Now let them put away their whoredom, and the carcasses of their kings, far from me, and I will dwell in the midst of them for ever.” (Eze 43: 9) It is like the apostle Paul declared when he said,

2 Corinthians 6: 16: And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you, 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

Brethren, in our text, God says that his holy people shall no longer defile his name by these things. Can God bring to pass his word or can he not? Yes, he can! That means those who are yet calling their false gods the true God, who are yet worshipping their free will, their false ways and their divers doctrines have not been sanctified by the true and living God. God either does what he says he will do in our text or God is lying to us. I believe God that it shall be even as it was told to us!

HOLY BY BEHOLDING CHRIST

God’s house is kept in holiness, and grown in this state of holiness, through the constant preaching of Christ and him crucified. Christ said to Ezekiel, “Thou son of man, shew the House to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities: and let them measure the pattern.” (Eze 43: 10)

Christ is the House that is shown to the house of Israel as the gospel is preached. We come to hear of Christ and his works. The truth of what Christ has done for his people and the obedience Christ works within the hearts of his people is “the House” that his preachers are to show to the house of Israel.

When we behold the beauty of Christ’s Holiness and Christ’s Righteousness in Christ himself, he makes us ashamed of our iniquities. As we behold how the GodMan sanctified his Father in his heart above all else when he walked this earth it makes us ashamed of our lukewarmness and he creates in us a more fervent desire to sanctify God in our hearts more and more—to honor him and reverence him as our Holy God.

When we behold how Christ obeyed him perfectly, how every action, every word, every movement showed that he was another person altogether from the sinners he blessed, for the honor of Christ’s name, Christ makes us want to be the lily among thorns even as our Redeemer was.

The more we behold how Christ suffered and bled on the cross to redeem us and make us holy before God, the more the Spirit makes us to see that any service that Christ calls us unto is reasonable service.

He says show them Christ that they may be ashamed of their iniquities. God said that when he pours out his Spirit on his people, “they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for *his* only *son*, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for *his* firstborn.” (Zech 12: 10) Christ makes his house sanctify him in his house and in our lives, in every way. It is by beholding Christ, through faith, through his gospel, that he does this. Christ is our Sanctifier as well as our Sanctification.

Believer, Christ’s house is not a common place like other places. For one, Christ our Prophet, Priest and King is present when he gathers us to worship him! Christ drove men out of his temple one day because they were treating it like a common market-place. Much more, he says, “This is the law of the house; Upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy. Behold, this is the law of the house.”

God has showed us the great lengths he has gone to in order to make his people accepted, even giving his dear, only begotten Son. Therefore, when we come together to worship God, we must sanctify God in our hearts. We must reverence God at all times, especially, at this time of worship. If God goes to such lengths to make us accepted in Christ, we can be sure this time of worship is not common like other times—“the whole house shall be most holy; this is the law of the house.”

God says, “I will be sanctified in them that come near unto me, and before all the people I will be glorified.” (Lev 10: 3) We are commanded, “Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts”; “Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and let him be your fear and your dread.” (1 Pet 3: 15; Is 8: 13) It made David say, “I will not offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which costs me nothing.” (2 Sam 24: 24)

My children find it much less sacrifice, less trouble, to come to the church services wearing whatever clothes they had on that day, especially during the summer vacation. They may not understand this in the heart, but it is my responsibility to teach them, as well as set an example for them. So when I insist my child put on their best clothes which I have provided for them, I am remind them that God provided the very best garment for his children in his Son and no sinner can come to God in less than the righteousness of Christ. When I tell them they can wear shorts at the beach or other common places but not in God’s house, I teach them God will be sanctified in them that approach him. When I teach my daughter the importance of a young lady wearing chaste clothing, I remind her that in the house of the Lord we want all eyes on our Redeemer, not on us. The priests garments, the sacrifices, the washings, the furniture was all to give us the very same illustrations of the necessity of holiness and righteousness in Christ when we approach God. May God teach

us the importance of teaching our children that the whole gospel is concerned with the garments of salvation found only in Christ.

Many things in life are common, but the preaching of the gospel is NOT. It is set apart by God, for God to be honored in his Son. Therefore, some things are not acceptable in God's house, because they either show a heart of reproach for God or will cause the name of God and his doctrine to be reproached by others because of us. There are many vain things people insist upon which is little more than "regional sanctification." But heart-reverence for God in the Lord's house is not regional. I have preached the gospel in the last sixteen years from Mexico to Jamaica to backwood hollers to churches on city streets. God's people reverence God with their best no matter what part of the world they live in.

MORE LIGHT FOR THOSE WHO WALK IN LIGHT

God says show them Christ and the holy reverence he creates in his house, "and let them measure the pattern." Christ is our Pattern. As everything in the old tabernacle was made after the pattern of Christ, so the true spiritual house of God is patterned after Christ. So measure the pattern!

Consider the height and breadth and length and depth of his love, his suffering, his reproach, his pain, his sacrifice, his trouble that he bore on behalf of his people.

Do you see Christ's consecration like those holy vessels in the temple which were not used for anything else but for God? Are we consecrated to God by his grace? "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." (1Co 6:19-20) Holiness is to be consecrated to God. It is not only to be cleansed but to be hallowed. The sanctified believer lives for God and his kingdom. That was Christ's only reason for being on this earth and it is ours, too, believer!

Do you see Christ's conformity to God's will? Holiness is to be set apart, cleansed, consecrated and conformed to his image. He said, "Not my will but thine be done!" Is that our heart?

Do you see Christ's constant communion with the Father? Do we live in communion with Christ striving to let nothing come between us and our Substitute?

Why are we to behold Christ the Pattern? God says, "And if they are ashamed of all that they have done..." (Eze 43: 11) If they have a humbled heart, humbled by grace, so that they mourn their sins, so that they are ashamed of their former false gods, former vain works, of not reverencing God more; if their heart is truly sanctified and broken and contrite, God says, "Then show them everything about Christ." He says, "shew them the form of the house, the fashion thereof, the goings out thereof, the comings in thereof, and all the forms thereof, all the ordinances thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the laws thereof: and write it in their sight, that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them." (Eze 43: 11)

What a lesson we should grasp from this! It declares that if we are truly sanctified so that from our inward most hearts we truly want to be conformed to Christ, God will show us more of the Light of Christ. And the more we see of Christ then the more he will conform us to his image.

But what if they are not ashamed? What if they get angry at the rebuke that comes with the gospel? Then they prove their hearts are not sanctified by God. They have a head full of doctrine but a heart full of enmity! They will find that judgment begins at the house of God. God killed Nadab and Abihu because they approached God treating his name as if it were common as a pair of dirty blue jeans. He destroyed political Israel because they refused to hear his prophets and walk in his light.

May God give us grace to get the message! Our “God is a consuming fire.” He said, “If any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy.” (1 Cor 3: 17) Christ told his disciples, “And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.” (Mt 10:14)

Holiness is of utmost importance in God’s house! It is the supreme rule! Without Christ our Holiness sanctifying and governing our hearts, no man shall see the Lord. God says, “This *is* the law of the house; Upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about *shall be* most holy. Behold, this *is* the law of the house.” (Eze 43:12)

Amen!