

Choices Have Lasting Consequences
International Bible Lesson
Ezekiel 43:13-21
Sunday, November 9, 2014
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“And thou shalt give to the priests the Levites that be of the seed of Zadok, which approach unto me, to minister unto me, saith the Lord GOD, a young bullock for a sin offering” (Ezekiel 43:19—KJV).

“You shall give to the levitical priests of the family of Zadok, who draw near to me to minister to me, says the Lord GOD, a bull for a sin offering” (Ezekiel 43:19—NRSV).

When God gave the rules for the new temple priests, God distinguished between the Levites (those who made the house of Israel stumble into idolatry as they worshiped idols) and the family of Zadok (the Levites who did right when others led the people astray). God judged that in the new temple only the family of Zadok could draw near to Him, and the other Levites would bear their shame and from that time on not be allowed to draw near Him as priests or come near the things that are most holy. The Levites who had misled the masses of the people and their families could only do basic temple tasks (Ezekiel 44:10-14). Prior to their exile, every Levite had the opportunity to

choose between worshiping idols and misleading the people or remaining true to God and calling people to serve the LORD only. The choices they made not only had a lasting effect upon the history of their nation but also upon the history of their children. Only the children of Zadok would have been prepared to draw near the LORD, because they had been raised according to the law of God. The hearts of the family of Zadok had remained true to the LORD, when all the other Levites had turned from the true God; however, they had not perfectly obeyed God; therefore, the LORD commanded that a bull for a sin offering be sacrificed in their behalf as they were ordained to serve Him as priests at the altar and in the temple's holy places.

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Thinking Further

1. Why do you think God gave such detailed directions for building the new temple and altar and for performing proper sacrifices?

2. Think of one practical reason why the steps to the altar were to face east?

3. How did what the Levites did before their exile in Babylon have an effect on their children?

4. Why did God want a bull for a sin offering?

5. Where was the bull of the sin offering burnt? Why do you think this place was chosen?

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