

Ezekiel's Vision of the Millennium Temple—Law of the Temple (November 2, 574 BC)

Ezekiel 43:12–27; 44–46

The Law of the Temple

43:12 This *is* the law of the temple: On the top of the mountain, all of its territory, all the way around it, will be most holy. Look, this *is* the law of the temple.

Measurements of the Altar

13 And these *are* the measurements of the altar in the cubits (a cubit *is* a cubit and a handbreadth): now its gutter is a cubit in depth by a cubit in width and its rim along its edge all around is one span, and this *is also* the height of the altar.

14 And from the gutter at the ground up to the lower ledge *is* two cubits, and *its* width *is* one cubit, and from the small ledge up to the large ledge *is* four cubits, and *its* width *is* one cubit.

15 And the altar hearth *was* four cubits, and from the altar hearth and upwards *were* the four horns *of the altar*.

16 And the altar hearth *was* twelve *cubits in* length and twelve *cubits in* width; *it was* squared on its four sides.

17 And the ledge *was* fourteen *cubits in* length with fourteen *cubits its* width to *all* four of its sides, and a rim *was* all around it of one-half cubit. And the gutter for it *was* a cubit all around, and its steps *were* facing east."

Consecration of the Altar to the Lord

18 And he said to me, "Son of man, thus says the Lord Yahweh: 'These *are* the statutes of the altar on the day when it is made, to sacrifice a burnt offering on it and to sprinkle blood on it.

19 And you must give to the Levitical priests who *are* from the offspring of Zadok, the *ones coming* near me," declares the Lord Yahweh, "to serve me, a bull, a calf as *a* sin offering.

20 You must take some of its blood and put *it* on the four horns of the altar, and the four corners of the ledge, and on the rim all around; thus you must purify it and make atonement for it.

21 And you must take the bull, the sin offering, and you must burn it in the designated place of the temple outside of the holy place.

22 And on the second day you must offer a he-goat without defect as *a* sin offering, and they must purify the altar like they purified with the bull.

23 When you are finished from purifying, you must offer a bull, a calf, without defect, and a ram from the flock without defect.

24 And you must bring them near before Yahweh, and the priests must throw salt on them, and they must offer them *as* a burnt offering to Yahweh.

25 *For* seven days you must provide a goat of sin offering for the day and a bull, a calf, and a ram from the flock without defect; you must provide *them*.

26 Seven days they must purify the altar and they must cleanse it and *so* they will consecrate it.

27 And they will finish the days, and then on the eighth day and beyond *that* the priests will offer on the altar your burnt offerings and your fellowship offerings, and *then* I will be pleased with you," declares the Lord Yahweh.

The Prince in the Gate

44:1 And he brought me back *by* the way of the outer gate of the sanctuary that *is* facing east, and it was shut.

2 And Yahweh said to me, "This gate will be shut. It shall not be opened, and no one will go through it, for Yahweh, the God of Israel, has entered it, and it will be shut.

3 The prince, he may sit in it to eat food before Yahweh; he will come from the way of the portico of the gate and by means of its way he will *also* go out."

The Sanctity of God's House

4 Then he brought me *by* the way of the gate of the north to the front of the temple, and I looked, and look! The glory of Yahweh filled the temple of Yahweh, and I fell on my face.

5 And Yahweh said, "Son of man, set your heart and look with your eyes and with your ears hear everything I *am* saying to you concerning all the statutes of the temple of Yahweh and concerning all its laws, and you must listen *with* your heart concerning the entrance of the temple with all of *the* exits of the sanctuary.

6 And you must say to *the* rebellious, to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord Yahweh: "Enough for you, house of Israel, of all of your detestable things!

7 At your bringing foreigners *who are* uncircumcised of heart and uncircumcised of flesh to be in my sanctuary to profane it, my temple, as you offered my food, fat, and blood, so you broke my covenant by all of your detestable things.

8 And you did not observe the responsibility of my sanctuary, but you appointed *them* as the keepers of my responsibility in my sanctuary for you."

Ministry of the Levites

9 Thus says the Lord Yahweh: "Every foreigner uncircumcised of heart and uncircumcised of flesh shall not come into my sanctuary—*not* any of *the* foreigners who *are* in the midst of the Israelites.

10 But the Levites who removed themselves from me at the going astray of Israel, who went astray from me *and went* after their idols, as a result they will bear their guilt.

11 Then they will be in my sanctuary, *those serving in* my sanctuary, *as* sentries at the gates of the temple and *as those* serving the temple; they will slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they will stand before them to serve them, 12 because they used to serve them before their idols and they were for the house of Israel *like* a stumbling block of iniquity. Therefore I swore concerning them,” declares the Lord Yahweh, “*that* they will bear their iniquity.

13 And they shall not approach me to serve as *a* priest for me and to come near to all of my holy objects, to the most holy objects, and they will bear their disgrace and *the results of* their detestable things they have done.

14 And I will appoint them *as* the keepers of the responsibility of the temple, for all of its work and everything which will be done in it.

Ministry of the Zadokite Priests

15 But the Levitical priests, the descendants of Zadok, who cared for the responsibility of my sanctuary when the Israelites went astray from me, they will approach me to serve me, and they will stand before me to offer to me fat and blood,” declares the Lord Yahweh.

16 “They shall come to my sanctuary, and they shall approach my table to serve me, and they will observe my requirement.

17 And then when they come to the gates of the inner courtyards, they shall put on their inner linen garments and not wear wool *garments* when they serve in the gates of the inner courtyard and inside the temple.

18 Linen turbans shall be on their head and linen undergarments shall be on their waists; they shall not gird themselves with *material causing* perspiration.

19 When they go out to the outer courtyard to the people, they must take off their garment in which they *were* serving, and they must place them in the holy chambers, and they must put on other *garments*, so that they will not make the people holy with their garments.

20 And their head they shall not shave, or long hair they shall not let grow; short they shall clip their heads.

21 And no priest shall drink wine when they come into the inner courtyard.

22 And a widow or divorced *woman* they shall not take for themselves as wives, but only a virgin from the offspring of the house of Israel, or the widow who is a widow for a priest they may take.

23 And they will teach my people *the difference* between what is holy and what is unholy, and *the difference* between unclean and clean they must show them.

24 And at a legal dispute they themselves shall stand to judge; employing my judgments they shall judge it, and *with respect to* my laws and my statutes. All my festivals they shall keep and my Sabbaths they shall consecrate.

25 And near a dead person he shall not come to be defiled, but only for a father and for a mother and for a son and for a daughter, for a brother and for a sister who was not married may they defile themselves.

26 And, after his cleansing, they shall count for him seven days,

27 and *then* on the day of his coming into the sanctuary to the inner courtyard to serve in the sanctuary, he shall offer his sin offering,” declares the Lord Yahweh.

Portion of the Priests

28 And *thus* it will be to them as *regards* inheritance, *that I am* their inheritance, and so you shall not give to them property in Israel; *I am* their property.

29 The grain offering and the sin offering and the guilt offering, they themselves may eat them, and *also* all *the* consecrated possessions in Israel will be theirs.

30 And *also* what is first of all of *the* firstfruits of everything, and of all of *the* contribution of everything from all of your contributions, to the priest it belongs, and what is first of your dough you shall give to the priest, so that a blessing may rest on your house.

31 Any dead body or mangled carcass from the birds or from the animals, the priests shall not eat.”

The Holy Portion of the Land

45:1 And when you allocate the land as an inheritance, you shall provide a contribution for Yahweh *as* a holy portion from the land, *its length being* twenty-five thousand *cubits* and *its width* ten thousand *cubits*; *it is* holy in all its territory, all around.

2 And *there* shall be from this *area* five hundred *cubits* by five hundred *cubits*, squared all around, for the sanctuary; and fifty cubits *of open space shall be* for it all around *it*.

3 And from this measured area you shall measure a length of twenty-five thousand *cubits* and a width of ten thousand *cubits*, and in it will be the sanctuary, the most holy place.

4 *It is* a holy portion from the land; it will be for the priests, the servants of the sanctuary who approach to serve Yahweh, and it will be for them a place for houses and a holy place for the sanctuary.

5 And *an area* twenty-five thousand *cubits* in length and ten thousand *cubits* in width will be for the Levites, the servants of the temple. *It will serve as* property for them as cities to dwell in.

6 And *as* property of the city, you must set apart alongside the contribution of the sanctuary *a portion* five thousand *cubits* in width and twenty-five thousand *cubits* in length, *and* it shall be for the entire house of Israel.

7 And *a portion will be* for the prince on both sides of the holy district, and *both sides* of the property of the city, *and* alongside the property of the city on the west, and *alongside the property* on the east. And *also its* length corresponds to one of the tribal portions to the west *running* to the eastern border.

8 *This* shall be to him with respect to the land as property in Israel; *and so* my princes shall not again oppress my people, but they shall give the land to the house of Israel according to their tribes.”

Charge to the Princes of Israel

9 Thus says the Lord Yahweh, “Enough *of this* for you, the princes of Israel; put away violence and destruction and do justice and righteousness; revoke your *acts of* dispossession from upon my people!” declares the Lord Yahweh.

10 *There* shall be for you an honest set of scales and an honest ephah and an honest bath.

11 The ephah and the bath shall be one unit of measurement; the tenth part of the homer *is* the bath, and the tenth of the homer *is* the ephah; *so* the homer shall be its unit of measurement.

12 And the shekel *shall weigh* twenty gerahs, twenty shekels and five and twenty shekels *and* ten and five shekels, *that* shall make the mina for you.

Offerings of Israel’s Prince

13 *This is* the contribution *offering* which you shall present: a sixth of the ephah from a homer of wheat, and a sixth of the ephah from a homer of barley.

14 And the quota of the olive oil, the bath *of* the olive oil, *is* the tenth part of a bath from a kor, *which is* ten baths, *or* a homer—for ten baths *are equal* to a homer.

15 And one sheep from the flock from *among* two hundred from the pastures of Israel *will be taken* as a grain offering and as a burnt offering *and as* a fellowship offering to make atonement for them,” declares the Lord Yahweh.

16 “All of the people of the land shall join *in* to this contribution with the prince in Israel.

17 “But on the prince shall be *the responsibility for* the burnt offerings, and the grain offering, and the libation at the feasts, and at the New Moon festivals, and at the Sabbaths at all of the assemblies of the house of Israel; he shall provide the sin offering, and the grain offering, and the burnt offering, and the fellowship offering to make atonement for the house of Israel.

Purification of the Sanctuary

18 Thus says the Lord Yahweh: ‘On the first *month* on the first *day* of the month, you shall take a bull, a calf without defect, and you shall purify the sanctuary.

19 And the priest shall take from the blood of the sin offering, and he shall put *it* on the doorframe of the temple and on the four corners of the ledge of the altar and on the doorframe of the gate of the inner courtyard.

20 And so you shall do on the seventh *day* in the month for anyone doing wrong inadvertently or due to ignorance, and *so* you must make atonement for the temple.

The New Passover

21 In the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month, you shall have the Passover, *a feast lasting for seven days, when* you shall eat unleavened breads.

22 And the prince shall provide on that day for himself and for all of the people of the land a bull *as* a sin offering.

23 And *during* the seven days of the religious feast he shall provide *as* a burnt offering to Yahweh seven bulls and seven rams without defect for each of the seven days, and *as* a sin offering a he-goat for each day.

24 And *as* a grain offering, an ephah for the bull and an ephah for the ram he must provide, and a hin of olive oil for each ephah.

25 In the seventh *month*, on the fifteenth day of the month, during the feast, he shall provide just as *he has for* these seven days, as *he did for* the sin offering, as *he did for* the burnt offering, and as *he did for* the grain offering, and as *he did for* the olive oil.”

Offerings for the Sabbath

46:1 Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “The gate of the inner courtyard facing east must be shut *on* the six of the days for work, but on the day of the Sabbath it must be opened and on the day of the new moon it must be opened.

2 And the prince shall come *by way of* the portico of the gate from *the* outside, and he shall stand at the doorframe of the gate and the priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his fellowship offerings, and he shall bow down at the threshold of the gate. Then he shall go out, but the gate shall not be closed until the evening.

3 And the people of the land will bow down *at* the doorway of that gate on the Sabbaths and on the new moons before Yahweh.

4 And the burnt offering which the prince will offer to Yahweh on the Sabbath day *must be* six male lambs without defect and a ram without defect.

5 And *the* grain offering *he will give shall be* an ephah for each ram, and for the male lambs *the* grain offering *shall be* as much as he wants to give and a hin of olive oil for each ephah.

Offerings for the New Moon

6 And on the day of the new moon *he will offer* a bull, a calf without defect and six male lambs and a ram; they must be without defect.

7 And an ephah for each bull and an ephah for the ram he must provide *as* a grain offering, and *also* for the male lambs as much as he can afford and a hin *of* olive oil for each ephah.

8 And when the prince comes, on the way of the portico of the gate he shall come and by this way he shall go out.

Conduct During the Appointed Feasts

9 And when the people of the land come before Yahweh at the festivals, *the one coming by way of the gate of the north* to bow down must go out *by the way of the gate of the south*, and the *one coming by way of the gate of the south* must go out *by the way of the gate of the north*, so he must not return *by the way of the gate by which he came*, but before it he shall go out opposite it.

10 And the prince *will be* in the midst of them; he will come in when they come in, and when they go out he will go out.

11 And at the festivals and at the appointed times, the grain offering will be an ephah with a bull and an ephah with the ram and with the male lambs, as much as he wants to give, and a hin of olive oil for each ephah.

12 And when the prince makes a freewill offering, a burnt offering, or a fellowship offering *as* a freewill offering to Yahweh, the gate facing east will be open for him. And he must offer his burnt offering and his fellowship offering just as he does on the day of the Sabbath, and *then* he must go out and the gate will shut after he goes out.

Daily Sacrifices

13 And a male lamb, a yearling without defect, he must provide as a burnt offering daily for Yahweh; every morning he must provide it.

14 And *a* grain offering he must provide in addition to it every morning, a sixth of an ephah and a third of a hin of olive oil to moisten the finely milled flour *as* a grain offering to Yahweh as a perpetual statute.

15 So they must provide the male lamb and the grain offering and the olive oil every morning as a regular burnt offering.”

Regulations Concerning the Prince

16 Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “If the prince gives a gift to any *one* from *among* his sons, it *is* his inheritance *and* it will belong to his sons; it is their possession as an inheritance.

17 And if he give a gift from his inheritance to one from *among* his servants, then it will belong to him until the year of release, and *then* it will return to the prince. His inheritance *with respect to* his sons will be only for them.

18 But the prince shall not take from the inheritance of the people to rob them, *separating them* from their property; from his *own* property he shall bestow an inheritance on his sons, so that my people will not be driven away, any one, from his property.”

The Sacrificial Places for the Offerings

19 Then he brought me through the entrance which *was* on the side of the gate to the holy chambers to the priests; *the chambers* were facing northwards and, look, there *was* a place at the extreme end westwards.

20 And he said to me, “This *is* the place where the priests will boil the guilt offering and the sin offering, *and* where they shall bake the grain offering *in order* not to bring *them* out to the outer courtyard to make the people holy.

21 And he brought me to the outer courtyard and led me past the four corners of the courtyard; and look, there was a courtyard in each corner of the courtyard.

22 In the four corners of the courtyard *were* small courtyards forty *cubits* in length and thirty *cubits* in width, *each with* the same measurements for the four of them with corners.

23 And a row *was* all around inside them, and cooking-places *were* made under the rows of stones all around.

24 And he said to me, “These *are* the houses for cooking, where *the ones* serving the temple shall cook the sacrifices of the people.”

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