

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: The entire area on top of the mountain all around will be most holy. Indeed, this is the law of the temple.

Measurements of the Altar

13 “And these are the measurements of the altar: Its base is 1¾ feet high, and 1¾ feet wide, and its border nine inches on its edge. This is to be the height of the altar.

14 From the base of the ground to the lower edge is 3½ feet, and the width 1¾ feet; and from the smaller ledge to the larger edge, 7 feet, and the width 1¾ feet;

15 and the altar hearth, 7 feet, and from the altar hearth four horns projecting upward.

16 Now the altar hearth is a perfect square, 21 feet long and 21 feet wide.

17 The ledge is 24½ feet long and 24½ feet wide on four sides; the border around it is 10½ inches, and its surrounding base 1¾ feet. Its steps face east.”

Consecration of the Altar to the Lord

18 Then he said to me: “Son of man, this is what the sovereign LORD says: These are the statutes of the altar: On the day it is built to offer up burnt offerings on it and to sprinkle blood on it,

19 you will give a young bull for a sin offering to the Levitical priests who are descended from Zadok, who approach me to minister to me, declares the sovereign LORD.

20 You will take some of its blood, and place it on the four horns of the altar, on the four corners of the ledge, and on the border all around; you will cleanse it and make atonement for it.

21 You will also take the bull for the sin offering, and it will be burned in the appointed place in the temple, outside the sanctuary.

22 “On the second day, you will offer a male goat without blemish for a sin offering. They will purify the altar just as they purified it with the bull.

23 When you have finished purifying it, you will offer an unblemished young bull and an unblemished ram from the flock.

24 You will present them before the LORD, and the priests will scatter salt on them and offer them up as a burnt offering to the LORD.

25 “For seven days you will provide every day a goat for a sin offering; a young bull and a ram from the flock, both without blemish, will be provided.

26 For seven days they will make atonement for the altar and cleanse it, so they will consecrate it.

27 When the prescribed period is over, on the eighth day and thereafter the priests will offer up on the altar your burnt offerings and your peace offerings; I will accept you, declares the sovereign LORD.”

The Prince in the Gate

44:1 Then he brought me back by way of the outer gate of the sanctuary which faces east, but it was shut.

2 The LORD said to me: “This gate will be shut; it will not be opened, and no one will enter by it. For the LORD, the God of Israel, has entered by it; therefore it will remain shut.

3 Only the prince may sit in it to eat a sacrificial meal before the LORD; he will enter by way of the porch of the gate and will go out by the same way.”

The Sanctity of God's House

4 Then he brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the temple. As I watched, I noticed the glory of the LORD filling the LORD's temple, and I threw myself face down.

5 The LORD said to me: “Son of man, pay attention, watch closely and listen carefully to everything I tell you concerning all the statutes of the LORD's house and all its laws. Pay attention to the entrances to the temple with all the exits of the sanctuary.

6 Say to the rebellious, to the house of Israel, ‘This is what the sovereign LORD says: Enough of all your abominable practices, O house of Israel!

7 When you bring foreigners, those uncircumcised in heart and in flesh, into my sanctuary, you desecrate it—even my house—when you offer my food, the fat and the blood. You have broken my covenant by all your abominable practices.

8 You have not kept charge of my holy things, but you have assigned foreigners to keep charge of my sanctuary for you.

Ministry of the Levites

9 This is what the sovereign LORD says: No foreigner, who is uncircumcised in heart and flesh among all the foreigners who are among the people of Israel, will enter into my sanctuary.

10 “But the Levites who went far from me, straying off from me after their idols when Israel went astray, will be responsible for their sin.

11 Yet they will be ministers in my sanctuary, having oversight at the gates of the temple, and serving the temple. They will slaughter

the burnt offerings and the sacrifices for the people, and they will stand before them to minister to them.

12 Because they used to minister to them before their idols, and became a sinful obstacle to the house of Israel, consequently I have made a vow concerning them, declares the sovereign LORD, that they will be responsible for their sin.

13 They will not come near me to serve me as priest, nor will they come near any of my holy things, the things which are most sacred. They will bear the shame of the abominable deeds they have committed.

14 Yet I will appoint them to keep charge of the temple, all of its service and all that will be done in it.

Ministry of the Zadokite Priests

15 “But the Levitical priests, the descendants of Zadok who kept the charge of my sanctuary when the people of Israel went astray from me, will approach me to minister to me; they will stand before me to offer me the fat and the blood, declares the sovereign LORD.

16 They will enter my sanctuary, and approach my table to minister to me; they will keep my charge.

17 “When they enter the gates of the inner court, they must wear linen garments; they must not have any wool on them when they minister in the inner gates of the court and in the temple.

18 Linen turbans will be on their heads and linen undergarments will be around their waists; they must not bind themselves with anything that causes sweat.

19 When they go out to the outer court to the people, they must remove the garments they were ministering in, and place them in the holy chambers; they must put on other garments so that they will not transmit holiness to the people with their garments.

20 “They must not shave their heads nor let their hair grow long; they must only trim their heads.

21 No priest may drink wine when he enters the inner court.

22 They must not marry a widow or a divorcee, but they may marry a virgin from the house of Israel or a widow who is a priest’s widow.

23 Moreover, they will teach my people the difference between the holy and the common, and show them how to distinguish between the ceremonially unclean and the clean.

24 “In a controversy they will act as judges; they will judge according to my ordinances. They will keep my laws and my statutes regarding all my appointed festivals and will observe my Sabbaths.

25 “They must not come near a dead person or they will be defiled; however, for father, mother, son, daughter, brother or sister, they may defile themselves.

26 After a priest has become ceremonially clean, they must count off a period of seven days for him.

27 On the day he enters the sanctuary, into the inner court to serve in the sanctuary, he must offer his sin offering, declares the sovereign LORD.

Portion of the Priests

28 “This will be their inheritance: I am their inheritance, and you must give them no property in Israel; I am their property.

29 They may eat the grain offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering, and every devoted thing in Israel will be theirs.

30 The first of all the first fruits and all contributions of any kind will be for the priests; you will also give to the priest the first portion of your dough, so that a blessing may rest on your house.

31 The priests will not eat any bird or animal that has died a natural death or was torn to pieces by a wild animal.

The Holy Portion of the Land

45:1 “When you allot the land as an inheritance, you will offer an allotment to the LORD, a holy portion from the land; the length will be eight and a quarter miles and the width three and one-third miles. This entire area will be holy.

2 Of this area a square 875 feet by 875 feet will be designated for the sanctuary, with 87½ feet set aside for its open space round about.

3 From this measured area you will measure a length of eight and a quarter miles and a width of three and one-third miles; in it will be the sanctuary, the most holy place.

4 It will be a holy portion of the land; it will be for the priests, the ministers of the sanctuary who approach the LORD to minister to him. It will be a place for their houses and a holy place for the sanctuary.

5 An area eight and a quarter miles in length and three and one-third miles in width will be for the Levites, who minister at the temple, as the place for the cities in which they will live.

6 “Alongside the portion set apart as the holy allotment, you will allot for the city an area one and two-thirds miles wide and eight and a quarter miles long; it will be for the whole house of Israel.

7 “For the prince there will be land on both sides of the holy allotment and the allotted city, alongside the holy allotment and the allotted city, on the west side and on the east side; it will be comparable in length to one of the portions, from the west border to the east border

8 of the land. This will be his property in Israel. My princes will no longer oppress my people, but the land will be allotted to the house of Israel according to their tribes.

Charge to the Princes of Israel

9 “This is what the sovereign LORD says: Enough, you princes of Israel! Put away violence and destruction, and do what is just and right. Put an end to your evictions of my people, declares the sovereign LORD.

10 You must use just balances, a just dry measure (an ephah), and a just liquid measure (a bath).

11 The dry and liquid measures will be the same, the bath will contain a tenth of a homer, and the ephah a tenth of a homer; the homer will be the standard measure.

12 The shekel will be twenty gerahs. Sixty shekels will be a mina for you.

Offerings of Israel's Prince

13 “This is the offering you must offer: a sixth of an ephah from a homer of wheat; a sixth of an ephah from a homer of barley, 14 and as the prescribed portion of olive oil, one tenth of a bath from each kor (which is ten baths or a homer, for ten baths make a homer);

15 and one sheep from each flock of two hundred, from the watered places of Israel, for a grain offering, burnt offering, and peace offering, to make atonement for them, declares the sovereign LORD.

16 All the people of the land will contribute to this offering for the prince of Israel.

17 It will be the duty of the prince to provide the burnt offerings, the grain offering, and the drink offering at festivals, on the new moons and Sabbaths, at all the appointed feasts of the house of Israel; he will provide the sin offering, the grain offering, the burnt offering, and the peace offerings to make atonement for the house of Israel.

Purification of the Sanctuary

18 “This is what the sovereign LORD says: In the first month, on the first day of the month, you must take an unblemished young bull and purify the sanctuary.

19 The priest will take some of the blood of the sin offering and place it on the doorpost of the temple, on the four corners of the ledge of the altar, and on the doorpost of the gate of the inner court.

20 This is what you must do on the seventh day of the month for anyone who sins inadvertently or through ignorance; so you will make atonement for the temple.

The New Passover

21 “In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, you will celebrate the Passover, and for seven days bread made without yeast will be eaten.

22 On that day the prince will provide for himself and for all the people of the land a bull for a sin offering.

23 And during the seven days of the feast he will provide as a burnt offering to the LORD seven bulls and seven rams, all without blemish, on each of the seven days, and a male goat daily for a sin offering.

24 He will provide as a grain offering an ephah for each bull, an ephah for each ram, and a gallon of olive oil for each ephah of grain.

25 In the seventh month, on the fifteenth day of the month, at the feast, he will make the same provisions for the sin offering, burnt offering, and grain offering, and for the olive oil, for the seven days.

Offerings for the Sabbath

46:1 “This is what the sovereign LORD says: The gate of the inner court that faces east will be closed six working days, but on the Sabbath day it will be opened and on the day of the new moon it will be opened.

2 The prince will enter by way of the porch of the gate from the outside, and will stand by the doorpost of the gate. The priests will provide his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and he will bow down at the threshold of the gate and then go out. But the gate will not be closed until evening.

3 The people of the land will bow down at the entrance of that gate before the LORD on the Sabbaths and on the new moons.

4 The burnt offering which the prince will offer to the LORD on the Sabbath day will be six unblemished lambs and one unblemished ram.

5 The grain offering will be an ephah with the ram, and the grain offering with the lambs will be as much as he is able to give, and a gallon of olive oil with an ephah.

Offerings for the New Moon

6 On the day of the new moon he will offer an unblemished young bull, and six lambs and a ram, all without blemish.

7 He will provide a grain offering: an ephah with the bull and an ephah with the ram, and with the lambs as much as he wishes, and a gallon of olive oil with each ephah of grain.

8 When the prince enters, he will come by way of the porch of the gate and will go out the same way.

Conduct During the Appointed Feasts

9 “When the people of the land come before the LORD at the appointed feasts, whoever enters by way of the north gate to worship will go out by way of the south gate; whoever enters by way of the south gate will go out by way of the north gate. No one will

return by way of the gate they entered but will go out straight ahead.

10 When they come in, the prince will come in with them, and when they go out, he will go out.

11 “At the festivals and at the appointed feasts the grain offering will be an ephah with the bull and an ephah with the ram, and with the lambs as much as one is able, and a gallon of olive oil with each ephah of grain.

12 When the prince provides a freewill offering, a burnt offering, or peace offerings as a voluntary offering to the LORD, the gate facing east will be opened for him, and he will provide his burnt offering and his peace offerings just as he did on the Sabbath. Then he will go out, and the gate will be closed after he goes out.

Daily Sacrifices

13 “You will provide a lamb a year old without blemish for a burnt offering daily to the LORD; morning by morning he will provide it.

14 And you will provide a grain offering with it morning by morning, a sixth of an ephah, and a third of a gallon of olive oil to moisten the choice flour, as a grain offering to the LORD; this is a perpetual statute.

15 Thus they will provide the lamb, the grain offering, and the olive oil morning by morning, as a perpetual burnt offering.

Regulations Concerning the Prince

16 “This is what the sovereign LORD says: If the prince should give a gift to one of his sons as his inheritance, it will belong to his sons, it is their property by inheritance.

17 But if he gives a gift from his inheritance to one of his servants, it will be his until the year of liberty; then it will revert to the prince. His inheritance will only remain with his sons.

18 The prince will not take away any of the people’s inheritance by oppressively removing them from their property. He will give his sons an inheritance from his own possessions so that my people will not be scattered, each from his own property.”

The Sacrificial Places for the Offerings

19 Then he brought me through the entrance, which was at the side of the gate, into the holy chambers for the priests which faced north. There I saw a place at the extreme western end.

20 He said to me, “This is the place where the priests will boil the guilt offering and the sin offering, and where they will bake the grain offering, so that they do not bring them out to the outer court to transmit holiness to the people.”

21 Then he brought me out to the outer court and led me past the four corners of the court, and I noticed that in every corner of the court there was a court.

22 In the four corners of the court were small courts, 70 feet in length and 52½ feet in width; the four were all the same size.

23 There was a row of masonry around each of the four courts, and places for boiling offerings were made under the rows all around.

24 Then he said to me, “These are the houses for boiling, where the ministers of the temple boil the sacrifices of the people.”

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