

Ezek. 43:1 Afterward he brought me to the gate, *even* the gate that looketh toward the east:

Ezek. 43:2 And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice *was* like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory.

Ezek. 43:3 And *it was* according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, *even* according to 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.

Ezek. 43:4 And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect *is* toward the east.

At this point Ezekiel is given a vision of the Lord coming into the temple through the eastern gate to assume His throne. Ezekiel immediately identifies the Lord from His previous experience as related in chapters 10-11 when he saw the glory of the Lord leave the temple. At that time the Lord was leaving the city to execute judgment. Again, the voice of the Lord is equated to the sound of “many waters.” This same comparison is made by the psalmist and by the apostle John in Revelation.

Psa. 29:3 The voice of the LORD *is* upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the LORD *is* upon many waters.

Rev. 1:13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks *one* like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

Rev. 1:14 His head and *his* hairs *were* white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes *were* as a flame of fire;

Rev. 1:15 And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.

When the Lord enters the temple through the eastern gate, Ezekiel falls upon his face in worship and reverence.

When I looked at JFB, I was reminded that we are never told that the rebuilt temple after the Babylonian captivity was blessed with God’s presence (except when Jesus was present). This is the first time God’s presence will have returned to Jerusalem since leaving it before it was destroyed by Babylon.

Ezek. 43:5 So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house.

Ezek. 43:6 And I heard *him* speaking unto me out of the house; and the man stood by me.

Ezek. 43:7 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, *neither* they, nor their kings, by their whoredom, nor by the carcasses of their kings in their high places.

Ezekiel is transported by the Spirit into the inner court as the glory of the Lord fills the house. Ezekiel is standing outside the house in the company of “the man.” I would assume this to be the same man that has been with him since the beginning of chapter 40. From his position he hears the Lord speak to him.

God's message would be a wonderful message to the ears of the priest Ezekiel. The Lord tells Ezekiel that the place of His throne (the temple in Jerusalem), the place of the "soles of my feet" (denoting His physical presence), would forevermore be His place of dwelling among the children of Israel. Never again would the people of Israel defile His holy name. Never again would they fall into spiritual adultery through the leadership of their kings.

Ezek. 43:8 In their setting of their threshold by my thresholds, and their post by my posts, and the wall between me and them, they have even defiled my holy name by their abominations that they have committed: wherefore I have consumed them in mine anger.

Ezek. 43:9 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.

These verses are basically saying that the past is past. From now on the people of Israel will enjoy sweet fellowship in the presence of the Lord. They have been judged according to their sin, but that will never again be necessary.

Ezek. 43:10 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.

Ezek. 43:11 And if they be ashamed of all that they have done, shew them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the forms thereof, and 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.

God is giving this message to Ezekiel to share with the "house of Israel," the whole nation. It is intended to cause them to be ashamed of their sin. It is supposed to remind them of all that they had lost by rebelling against the Lord.

Instruction is given for them to "measure the pattern." This would seem to indicate to me that maybe Ezekiel was able to draw a pattern of what he had seen. He was also given "ordinances and laws" as to the proper administration of the temple activities.

Ezek. 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.

Point is made that the laws concerning the temple activities are to be strictly obeyed and that the whole temple mount is designated as holy. When the Lord comes to take His earthly throne, holiness and righteousness are going to dominate His reign. There will be no political correctness. He will be a loving, but firm ruler. Again, the psalmist and the Revelator declare this truth.

Psa. 2:6-9 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou *art* my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give *thee* the heathen *for* thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth *for* thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

Rev. 19:11-15 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes *were* as a flame of fire, and on his head *were* many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies *which were* in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron:

Ezek. 43:13 And these *are* the measures of the altar after the cubits: The cubit is a cubit and an hand breadth; even the bottom *shall be* a cubit, and the breadth a cubit, and the border thereof by the edge thereof round about *shall be* a span: and this *shall be* the higher place of the altar.

Ezek. 43:14 And from the bottom *upon* the ground *even* to the lower settle *shall be* two cubits, and the breadth one cubit; and from the lesser settle *even* to the greater settle *shall be* four cubits, and the breadth *one* cubit.

Ezek. 43:15 So the altar *shall be* four cubits; and from the altar and upward *shall be* four horns.

Ezek. 43:16 And the altar *shall be* twelve cubits long, twelve broad, square in the four squares thereof.

Ezek. 43:17 And the settle *shall be* fourteen cubits long and fourteen broad in the four squares thereof; and the border about it *shall be* half a cubit; and the bottom thereof *shall be* a cubit about; and his stairs shall look toward the east.

Now the prophet gives a detailed description of the altar. The altar is square in shape and each section building from the base gets a bit smaller. The top of the altar has a horn in each corner. The wording from the NLT gives a much clearer picture.

“These are the measurements of the altar: There is a gutter all around the altar 21 inches wide and 21 inches deep, with a curb 9 inches wide around its edge. And this is the height of the altar: From the gutter the altar rises 3.5 feet to a ledge that surrounds the altar; this lower ledge is 21 inches wide. From the lower ledge the altar rises 7 feet to the upper ledge; this upper ledge is also 21 inches wide. The top of the altar, the hearth, rises still 7 feet higher, with a horn rising up from each of the four corners. The top of the altar is square, measuring 21 feet by 21 feet. The upper ledge also forms a square, measuring 24.5 feet on each side, with a 21-inch gutter and a 10.5-inch curb all around the edge. There are steps going up the east side of the altar.”

The NIV commentary notes that this altar is very large—“approximately thirty-one and one-half feet square at the base by approximately nineteen and one-quarter feet high!”

One of the commentaries made note that steps to the altar were forbidden to access the altar in the previous temples.

Ex. 20:26 Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon.

The question arises as to why the difference for the millennial temple. I found this explanation at <http://www.yashanet.com/library/temple/temples.htm>.

The Altars in the previous Tabernacle/Temples were equipped with a ramp facing south. However, most all bible translations state that in Ezekiel's temple the altar has stairs leading up to the altar and they face east (Ezekiel 43:17). But, I read one Jewish commentary which said that the Hebrew word actually means ramp. So I presented the following question to an Orthodox rabbi:

"... This presents some difficulties since the word for 'steps' (ma'alot) in Ezekiel is the same word used in Exodus 20:26 forbidding ascending the altar by steps. How can this word mean 'ramp' when all the previous temples had ramps?"

This was his response:

The Hebrew word in question is maalotehu, which is grammatically related to the Hebrew word ma'alot, meaning steps. However, the original meaning of both words means "something by which one rises from one level to another." In everyday language that means "steps." However, an equally acceptable translation of maalotehu could be "its riser," which would not contradict the ramp in Exodus 20:26.

It is interesting to note that in the Jewish Publication Society translation of 1917 the verse is rendered, ". . . and the steps thereof . . . ," following earlier translations (the King James version?). Not so their 1978 translation, "And the ramp shall face east." There is a footnote in the 1978 translation: "Leading up to the altar. Cf. Exod. 20:23."

I guess we will have to wait until the Millennium to find out if it is really a ramp or steps. It is interesting to note, however, that many pagans approached their altars via steps from the east to worship the sun. God did not want His Temple to be confused with that of a pagan temple. During the Millennium there will be no pagan temples to worry about. Also, in Ezekiel's Temple when the priests ascend the altar they will be facing the Holy of Holies.

Also, as noted in chapter 41, Lambert Dolphin pointed out that previous altars were accessed from the south, while this one is accessed from the east. Again, why? As I continued to think about this, I thought about the fact that the Lord entered the temple from the east. Our direct access to the throne of grace is possible only through one door, Jesus, the only acceptable sacrifice for our sins.

John 10:9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

As the people enter to sacrifice at the altar in remembrance of the Lord's sacrifice for their sin, it is only appropriate that they follow His footsteps in approaching the altar.

Ezek. 43:18 And he said unto me, Son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD; 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.

At this point Ezekiel is going to be given specifics in consecrating the altar, making it a holy place approved by God for its use.

Ezek. 43:19 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.

Ezek. 43:20 And thou shalt take of the blood thereof, and put *it* on the four horns of it, and on the four corners of the settle, and upon the border round about: thus shalt thou cleanse and purge it.

Ezek. 43:21 Thou shalt take the bullock also of the sin offering, and he shall burn it in the appointed place of the house, without the sanctuary.

As noted in chapter 40, the Levite descendants of Zadok are set apart to minister to the Lord at the altar in the millennium in memory of their ancestors who stood by the Lord when the rest of Israel rebelled. These priests are to be given a young bull for a sin offering and will anoint the four horns of the altar with its blood as well as the four corners and rim of the ledge or drain that surrounds it. This will symbolize the cleansing property of Christ's innocent blood that was shed as our sacrifice that atones for or cleanses us from sin. Since the altar is representing that sacrifice, it must be declared holy and acceptable for that purpose.

The rest of the bull is to be burned at a designated place outside the sanctuary.

Ezek. 43:22 And on the second day thou shalt offer a kid of the goats without blemish for a sin offering; and they shall cleanse the altar, as they did cleanse *it* with the bullock.

Ezek. 43:23 When thou hast made an end of cleansing *it*, thou shalt offer a young bullock without blemish, and a ram out of the flock without blemish.

Ezek. 43:24 And thou shalt offer them before the LORD, and the priests shall cast salt upon them, and they shall offer them up *for* a burnt offering unto the LORD.

The next day the priests are to offer a "kid of the goats" that has no blemish as an actual sin offering and follow the same process as they did with the bull. I would assume this means that they will anoint the altar in the same way and dispose of the rest of the goat in the same way.

They are then to sacrifice a young bull without blemish and a ram without blemish. During the sacrifice the priests are to throw salt on the meat. This was a directive from God from the establishment of the sacrificial system.

Lev. 2:13 And every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering: with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt.

Why the salt? I know salt makes food taste better and is a preservative. Is this a picture to help us understand that Jesus' sacrifice was most acceptable to the Lord and preserves our righteous standing before Him? The salt is described in Leviticus as representing God's covenant, which is righteous and enduring. God's word is sure and unchanging.

Psa. 119:89. For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.

Psa. 119:160 Thy word *is true from* the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments *endureth* for ever.

Ezek. 43:25 Seven days shalt thou prepare every day a goat for a sin offering: they shall also prepare a young bullock, and a ram out of the flock, without blemish.

Ezek. 43:26 Seven days shall they purge the altar and purify it; and they shall consecrate themselves.

These verses indicate that the sacrifices of purification for the altar were to continue for seven days. The obedience of the priests in this process also served to consecrate them as they were consecrating the altar.

Ezek. 43:27 And when these days are expired, it shall be, *that upon the eighth day, and so forward, the priests shall make your burnt offerings upon the altar, and your peace offerings; and I will accept you, saith the Lord GOD.*

On the eighth day the altar would be acceptable for use by the people. They were to bring their burnt offerings to the priests, who would then offer their burnt offerings and peace offerings to the Lord. God states that all those who come with an offering would be accepted. No one would be turned away.

That is the beautiful truth associated with Jesus' sacrifice. He is not willing that any should perish. He wants everyone to come to repentance and be saved. No one that comes to Him in faith will be turned away.

I remember reading through many types of offerings when reading through scripture. It would seem that only the burnt offering and peace offering will be offered at the millennial temple. The burnt offering must be without blemish and is burned completely upon the altar. The peace offering does not have to be perfect and is basically an offering of thanksgiving. Again, I turned to the internet for help and found some good input at

<http://chezkneel.blogspot.com/2006/06/burnt-peace.html>.

"The Burnt Offering was principally for the benefit of God.... None of it was saved for eating by men. Every single bit of it was for God and for him alone. This is significant. The offerings that come later are directed toward the needs of man, but this one is God's, because only God can fully comprehend what it meant for Christ to offer himself.

The Burnt Offering represents the perfect offering to God; it represents Messiah offering himself without spot or blemish to God. Jesus the Christ is the only one who's ever existed that was capable of being a perfect, just-right offering to God, because he is the only one who has never sinned. Jesus is the only one that ever kept the whole Law. Jesus is the only one that has ever been without blemish."

In Leviticus 1, we joined the ancient Israelites in receiving the privilege of marveling at the sublime perfection of the Messiah's offering of himself to God, as represented by the Burnt Offering. The flaying (removal of the outer skin), the cutting into small pieces (and the inspection enabled thereof), and the washing of the legs and innards, all painted a picture of a pure, clean, and yes, **perfect** sacrifice, one that passed and excelled each

and every criterion of a holy God.

The Peace Offering is not about the ultimate perfect offering; that is not the requirement. Rather, the Peace Offering described in **Leviticus 3** celebrates the end of war. It celebrates the advent of peace, reconciliation and fellowship between the former bitter enemies: God and man. Another name for the Peace Offering is the Thanksgiving Offering, thanksgiving for the costly initiative taken by God to effect restoration.

The Peace Offering does not have to be perfect, so it does not need to be inspected for perfection to the same minute degree as the Burnt Offering. No flaying, no cutting into pieces, and no washing of the innards and legs. And the animal to be sacrificed does not need to be a male; either male or female will do.

The offering is meant to be the basis of fellowship, and it is not solely for God. The celebration of the coming of peace is for both God and humanity. Thus, not all of the offering is burned for a soothing aroma for God. Some of it is allocated for the men and women of redeemed humanity to enjoy, as represented by the ancient priests.