

Ezek. 46:1 Thus saith the Lord GOD; The gate of the inner court that looketh toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the sabbath it shall be opened, and in the day of the new moon it shall be opened.

This chapter begins with the Lord continuing to give Ezekiel instructions regarding the administration of the temple during the millennium. The eastern gate through which the Lord reentered the temple, and which can be used by no man, is to remain shut. The eastern gate to the inner court, however, is to remain shut for the six working days of every week. On the Sabbath day it is to be opened, as well as on the days of the new moon.

I think this combination of the ancient Jewish practices (though somewhat revised) with new instructions is another emphasis regarding Israel fulfilling their ordained purpose before the nations. Though Jesus has come in fulfillment of all about which these practices teach, they are still significant to emphasize the truths that they represent. These truths have not changed through the ages. They have just come full circle so to speak. The plan of God has been unchanged since before the foundation of the earth. The tabernacle/temple system was established to teach men about God's holiness and man's sinfulness. It was established to teach the truths associated with our redemption. It was fulfilled in the ministry of Jesus Christ and His willing death on the cross. In the millennial kingdom it will be a most effective visual tool for ensuring that these truths are clearly understood in the kingdom age.

Ezek. 46:2 And the prince shall enter by the way of the porch of *that* gate without, and shall stand by the post of the gate, and the priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate: then he shall go forth; but the gate shall not be shut until the evening.

As stated previously, the prince will be allowed to enter through a porch that is connected to the eastern gate. He will have a designated "post" at the gate to the inner court where the priests will prepare his burnt and peace offerings. He never directly enters the inner court area designated for the priests. He will offer his worship at the "threshold of the gate"; this would indicate that he approaches the holy place of entrance, but does not go through it. The gate to the inner court will remain open until the evening.

Again, these restrictions upon the prince add to my belief that this prince is not Jesus.

Ezek. 46:3 Likewise the people of the land shall worship at the door of this gate before the LORD in the sabbaths and in the new moons.

It would seem that the people will gather for worship in the outer court area of the eastern entrance to the inner court on the Sabbaths and the new moons, times when the prince will be offering sacrifices on their behalf.

Ezek. 46:4 And the burnt offering that the prince shall offer unto the LORD in the sabbath day *shall be* six lambs without blemish, and a ram without blemish.

Ezek. 46:5 And the meat offering shall be an ephah for a ram, and the meat offering for the lambs as he shall be able to give, and an hin of oil to an ephah. These verses designate the sacrifices to be made by the prince on the Sabbaths—6 lambs without blemish and a ram without blemish. This is to be accompanied by a specified meal/grain and oil offering.

Ezek. 46:6 And in the day of the new moon it shall be a young bullock without blemish, and six lambs, and a ram: they shall be without blemish.

Ezek. 46:7 And he shall prepare a meat offering, an ephah for a bullock, and an ephah for a ram, and for the lambs according as his hand shall attain unto, and an hin of oil to an ephah.

On the new moons the prince is to offer a young bull, 6 lambs and a ram—all without blemish. This is also to be accompanied by a specified grain and oil offering.

One thing that stands out to me is that the Lord is establishing the rules for what is acceptable and what is not. Man is the one in position of need, and God is the One Who can meet that need. All the blood that is used in the sacrifices is to come from animals without blemish. Only the blood of the perfect Son of God in flesh was acceptable to redeem man from sin. The meal offering is a picture of God's provision for man in that it represents food. (7/07) Jesus called Himself the bread of life.

John 6:35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. The grain is mixed with oil and baked in the fire. Jesus was filled with the Spirit (as represented by the oil) and put through the fire of judgment on our behalf.

Ezek. 46:8 And when the prince shall enter, he shall go in by the way of the porch of that gate, and he shall go forth by the way thereof.

Note is made that the prince will enter and exit the temple complex through the same porch. He is the Lord's designated representative to the people as well as a representative of the people to the Lord. As the Lord's representative, He will enter and exit the temple from the same place. This is a picture of the Lord's unchanging character.

Ezek. 46:9 But when the people of the land shall come before the LORD in the solemn feasts, he that entereth in by the way of the north gate to worship shall go out by the way of the south gate; and he that entereth by the way of the south gate shall go forth by the way of the north gate: he shall not return by the way of the gate whereby he came in, but shall go forth over against it.

The people, however, are to enter through either the north or south gate and exit from the opposite gate. More than one commentator made the point that our worship experience with the Lord is meant to change us. We should not be the same person when we leave as when we entered. Ideally, we are to be growing in Christ through every encounter we have with Him.

Ezek. 46:10 And the prince in the midst of them, when they go in, shall go in; and when they go forth, shall go forth.

This verse emphasizes the prince's identification with the people. His actions are representative of the people of the nation.

I am again reminded that God is speaking of His relationship with Israel. These practices will be predominantly directed toward the people of Israel, those who live in the land. They will be enjoying their privileged inheritance as the first-born of the Lord among the nations. Those today who say that Israel has no special place in God's purpose for the future I believe are teaching a lie. The "church" (true body of believers) has been privileged to assume Israel's intended position in the family for a time, but Paul makes it clear in Romans that the intended purpose is to provoke the Jewish nation to a position of repentance and faith and restoration to their God-ordained purpose from the beginning.

Ezek. 46:11 And in the feasts and in the solemnities the meat offering shall be an ephah to a bullock, and an ephah to a ram, and to the lambs as he is able to give, and an hin of oil to an ephah.

Again, specification is given regarding the makeup of the meal offering.

Ezek. 46:12 Now when the prince shall prepare a voluntary burnt offering or peace offerings voluntarily unto the LORD, *one* shall then open him the gate that looketh toward the east, and he shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings, as he did on the sabbath day: then he shall go forth; and after his going forth *one* shall shut the gate.

The prince is not limited to bringing offerings at only specific times; He can bring them any time he chooses. When he so chooses, the eastern gate to the inner court is to be opened for him just as it is on the Sabbaths and new moons. Instead of remaining open until evening, the gate is to be closed when he leaves.

The spontaneous voluntary offerings of the prince are an example to the people of the type of relationship we are to enjoy with the Lord. He takes great joy in our expressions of love and gratitude.

Ezek. 46:13 Thou shalt daily prepare a burnt offering unto the LORD *of* a lamb of the first year without blemish: thou shalt prepare it every morning.

Ezek. 46:14 And thou shalt prepare a meat offering for it every morning, the sixth part of an ephah, and the third part of an hin of oil, to temper with the fine flour; a meat offering continually by a perpetual ordinance unto the LORD.

Ezek. 46:15 Thus shall they prepare the lamb, and the meat offering, and the oil, every morning *for* a continual burnt offering.

These verses give instructions for the daily morning sacrifices; notice there is no mention of the evening sacrifice. This is a reminder that maintaining our relationship with the Lord is a daily process. Our praise, worship and thanksgiving should be the foundation upon which we base our daily activities. That serves to help us keep in mind that our every action should reflect our love for and gratitude to Him.

Ezek. 46:16 Thus saith the Lord GOD; If the prince give a gift unto any of his sons, the inheritance thereof shall be his sons'; it shall be their possession by inheritance.

Ezek. 46:17 But if he give a gift of his inheritance to one of his servants, then it shall be his to the year of liberty; after it shall return to the prince: but his inheritance shall be his sons' for them.

This verse gives us some added information about the prince—he has sons. The Hebrew for *son* states “a son (as a builder of the family name).” This is a person who has physical descendants. In my mind this precludes Jesus, but does not preclude David. If the Lord can identify the 144,000 by the 12 tribes and make allotment in the kingdom according to the 12 tribes, He can surely identify David's specific descendants.

The prince is allowed to pass along gifts to his sons for inheritance that will remain theirs as part of the family. If, however, the prince chooses to give a gift of inheritance to one of his servants, the servant will have to relinquish control in the year of “liberty.” This seems to be a direct reference to the year of Jubilee that occurred every 50 years, the essence of which would seem to be in force during the millennial kingdom.

Lev. 25:10 And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout *all* the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.

This also would indicate that the gift being referenced pertains to property that would normally be inherited by family. In fact, the CJB translates these verses as follows:

“*Adonai ELOHIM* says this: ‘If the prince turns over part of his hereditary property to one of his sons, it is his inheritance; it will belong to his sons; it is their possession by inheritance. But if he gives part of his hereditary property to one of his slaves, it will be his until the year of freedom, at which time it will revert to the prince, so that the prince's heritage will go to his sons.’”

Ezek. 46:18 Moreover the prince shall not take of the people's inheritance by oppression, to thrust them out of their possession; *but* he shall give his sons inheritance out of his own possession: that my people be not scattered every man from his possession.

This verse specifies that the prince is forbidden to take property away from the people as was done by evil rulers of the past, including those of Ezekiel's time. God has provided for each person sufficiently. There is no need to take more than He gives you.

Ezek. 46:19 After he brought me through the entry, which *was* at the side of the gate, into the holy chambers of the priests, which looked toward the north: and, behold, there *was* a place on the two sides westward.

Ezek. 46:20 Then said he unto me, *This is* the place where the priests shall boil the trespass offering and the sin offering, where they shall bake the meat offering; that they bear *them* not out into the utter court, to sanctify the people.

Ezekiel was next taken to the part of the temple where the priests cooked the meat offered as trespass and sin offerings—which was their designated portion. The design of the complex ensured that the priests would not have to come into contact with the people when partaking of that which had been set apart by God as holy.

Ezek. 46:21 Then he brought me forth into the utter court, and caused me to pass by the four corners of the court; and, behold, in every corner of the court *there was a court.*

Ezek. 46:22 In the four corners of the court *there were courts joined of forty cubits long and thirty broad: these four corners were of one measure.*

Ezek. 46:23 And *there was a row of building round about in them, round about them four, and it was made with boiling places under the rows round about.*

Ezek. 46:24 Then said he unto me, *These are the places of them that boil, where the ministers of the house shall boil the sacrifice of the people.*

Ezekiel is then taken into the outer court and shown designated areas that were in each of its four corners. These were designated as specific cooking areas for boiling the sacrifices that the people were to partake of in fellowship with the Lord.