



# Book of Ezekiel

## Chapter 45

*Theme: Millennial Temple*

**Michael Fronczak**  
**Bible Study Resource Center**  
**Beit-Lechem Ministries**  
**564 Schaeffer Dr.**  
**Coldwater, Michigan 49036**  
**[www.biblestudyresourcecenter.com](http://www.biblestudyresourcecenter.com)**

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### **Constable: The sacred district in the Promised Land 45:1-8**

The Lord next gave Ezekiel directions for the division of some of the Promised Land in the future. Revelation about apportioning the rest of the land follows later (47:13—48:35). These descriptions do not coincide with any division of the land in the past, and the amount of detail argues for a literal fulfillment in the future.

### **Ezekiel 45:1**

**Moreover, when ye shall divide by lot the land for inheritance, ye shall offer an oblation unto the LORD, an holy portion of the land: the length *shall be* the length of five and twenty thousand *reeds*, and the breadth *shall be* ten thousand. This *shall be* holy in all the borders thereof round about.**

**Missler:** What we are dealing with here is 25,000 by 10,000 cubits, or putting it another way, about 8 miles on a side. Length refers to East and West, and breadth is North and South. Cf. 48:8-22.

**Constable:** In the future the Israelites were to divide the land by lot, but the Lord, of course, would control the outcome (Prov. 16:33). This land belonged to the Lord—He was the Israelites' inheritance—but He would allow them to occupy it as He specified. They were to set aside one part of the land for the Lord's use for especially holy purposes. It was to be 25,000 cubits long and 10,000 cubits wide (about 8.3 miles by 3.3 miles). The Hebrew text has "rods" rather than "cubits," but long cubits must be the measurement in view to harmonize with the other measurements in these chapters. This land was to be considered holy within all its boundaries.

**McGee 1-6:** In the division of the land Israel is to present to the LORD a portion of the land as a sacred district, 25,000 cubits (about 8.3 miles) long and 20,000 cubits (about 6.6 miles) wide. Within this land area will be the temple complex Ezekiel had just described (chaps. 40-43). This rectangle of land will be divided into two equal portions, each about 8.3 miles long and about 3.3 miles wide. The first portion, in which will be located the sanctuary, will be allotted to the priests... for their houses as well as a holy place for the sanctuary. The second portion will be allotted to the Levites, who serve in the temple, as their possession for towns to live in. Instead of being scattered throughout Israel as they were earlier (Josh. 21:1-42) the priests and Levites will reside near their place of ministry.

The rectangle formed by the priests' and Levites' portions was converted into a square with the addition of land for the city of Jerusalem itself. The city is to cover an area 5,000 cubits (about 1.7 miles) wide and 25,000 cubits (about 8.3 miles) long, adjoining the sacred portion. This will then be subdivided into the city proper, grazing land, and farmland (cf. Ezek. 48:15-18).

**IVP: concept of sacred district.** The sacred district was land reserved for use by the God of the temple area. Ezekiel portrays the land as a gift that was returned to the divine benefactor. As early as the early fourth millennium B.C., the city of Uruk in southern Mesopotamia had sacred districts in the center of its town. In ancient Mesopotamia either the sacred districts were separated by retaining walls for the structure, or a large citadel wall surrounded the entire sacred precinct. Access to sacred precincts was limited, and strict standards were maintained regarding who could enter and on what occasions. This is a continuation of the sacred compass idea that was established in Israel when the tabernacle was set up in the wilderness period

**JFB: offer an oblation**--from a *Hebrew* root to "heave" or "raise"; when anything was offered to God, the offerer raised the hand. The special territorial division for the tribes is given in the forty-seventh and forty-eighth chapters. Only Jehovah's portion is here subdivided into its three parts: (1) that for the sanctuary ( Ezekiel 45:2 Ezekiel 45:3 ); (2) that for the priests ( Ezekiel 45:4 ); (3) that for the Levites ( Ezekiel 45:5 ). Compare Ezekiel 48:8-13 .

### **Ezekiel 45:2**

**Of this there shall be for the sanctuary five hundred *in length*, with five hundred *in breadth*, square round about; and fifty cubits round about for the suburbs thereof.**

**Constable 2-4:** Within this area there was to be a space 500 cubits by 500 cubits (about 833 feet by 833 feet). This was the size of the temple complex (cf. 42:20). Surrounding this complex there would be an open space of an additional 50 cubits (83 feet), a kind of green belt. This sacred space would facilitate and illustrate the holiness of the sanctuary area. The temple sanctuary would stand within this 25,000 by 10,000 cubits (8.3 miles by 3.3 miles) area and constitute the most holy part of the land. The Zadokite priests would live in the land outside the open space around the temple complex within this larger area (cf. 48:10-12).

**IVP 2-6: dimensions of sacred district.** The larger consecrated area was about eight miles long and six and a half miles wide, an area of over 50 square miles. This could be compared to the approximately 620 square miles of the entire district of Yehud under Persian rule. One half of this area was reserved for the priests and sanctuary, which was in the center of this area. One other area, eight miles by more than three miles, was reserved for the city, which was most likely Jerusalem, although the name is not given. If this design were superimposed on the land of Israel, it would encompass a large central segment of the tribal allotment of Judah. The territorial scheme shows the relative importance of the officials of the state, depending upon their placement near the center where there was the closest access to God.

### **Ezekiel 45:3**

**And of this measure shalt thou measure the length of five and twenty thousand, and the breadth of ten thousand: and in it shall be the sanctuary *and* the most holy *place*.**

### **Ezekiel 45:4**

**The holy *portion* of the land shall be for the priests the ministers of the sanctuary, which shall come near to minister unto the LORD: and it shall be a place for their houses, and an holy place for the sanctuary.**

### **Ezekiel 45:5**

**And the five and twenty thousand of length, and the ten thousand of breadth, shall also the Levites, the ministers of the house, have for themselves, for a possession for twenty chambers.**

**Constable:** The other Levites would occupy another 25,000 by 10,000 cubits (8.3 miles by 3.3 miles) area beside the one just described (cf. 48:13). It would evidently be immediately to the north. Under the Mosaic system the priests and Levites lived scattered throughout Israel, not all in very close proximity to the temple, as here.

**JSB:** The Levites 'portion equals that of the priests, but the portion for the rest of Israel is half of that.

### **Ezekiel 45:6**

**And ye shall appoint the possession of the city five thousand broad, and five and twenty thousand long, over against the oblation of the holy *portion*: it shall be for the whole house of Israel.**

**Constable:** Another parcel of land 25,000 by 5,000 cubits (about 8.3 miles by 1.7 miles), apparently immediately to the south, would contain the city of Jerusalem, and all the Israelites would have access to it. Later Ezekiel clarified that the city itself would occupy the center of this portion of land, and suburbs, or city lands, would flank it on the east and west (cf. 48:15, 17-19).

### **Ezekiel 45:7**

**And a *portion shall be* for the prince on the one side and on the other side of the oblation of the holy *portion*, and of the possession of the city, before the oblation of the holy *portion*, and before the possession of the city, from the west side westward, and from the east side eastward: and the length *shall be* over against one of the portions, from the west border unto the east border.**

**Constable:** The prince (cf. 44:3) would also receive a special land allotment to the

west and to the east of the city portions and the holy areas occupied by the Zadokites and the Levites (cf. 48:21-22). There was no specially designated area in which the kings of Israel lived in former times except the royal palaces, which were much smaller.

**McGee 7-8:** This square of land, 8.3 miles in each of its four dimensions, will be located at the present site of Jerusalem. A band of land will extend from the city to the east and west. The prince (i.e., David; cf. comments on 34:24) will have the land bordering each side of the area formed by the sacred district and the property of the city. This strip of land will extend on the east to the Jordan River and on the west to the Mediterranean Sea.

**Clarke:** **A portion shall be for the prince** *nasi*, he who had the authority of chief magistrate; for there was neither king nor prince among the Jews after the Babylonish captivity.

**JFB:** The prince's possession is to consist of two halves, one on the west, the other on the east, of the sacred territory. The prince, as head of the holy community, stands in closest connection with the sanctuary; his possession, therefore, on both sides must adjoin that which was peculiarly the Lord's [FAIRBAIRN].

**JSB:** The portion of the 'prince' is not included in the 'sacred reserve' or 'city;' he may not evict Israel.

### **Ezekiel 45:8**

**In the land shall be his possession in Israel: and my princes shall no more oppress my people; and *the rest of the land shall they give to the house of Israel according to their tribes.***

Kings confiscate property: 1 Kings 21 (Naboth). Also: Numbers 36:7-9; Isaiah 5:8; Hosea 5:10; Micah 2:1-2.

**Constable:** The rest of the Promised Land would be the portion of the other Israelites (cf. ch. 48). The whole arrangement would contribute to the equitable governing of the Israelites and would discourage rulers from oppressing the people (cf. 11:1-13; 14:1-11; 20:1—23:49; 34:1-10).

**Clarke:** **My princes shall no more oppress my people**—By exorbitant taxes to maintain profligate courts, or subsidize other powers to help to keep up a system of tyranny in the earth. The former princes even robbed the temple of God to give subsidies to other states.

### **Regulations for offerings and feast days 45:9—46:24**

This section contains seven subsections all of which deal with the same basic subject.

#### **An exhortation to Israel's leaders 45:9-12**

Mention of the proper leadership of the Israelites in the Millennium led to an exhortation to Israel's leaders to practice justice and righteousness in the present and in the future.

## **Ezekiel 45:9**

**Thus saith the Lord GOD; Let it suffice you, O princes of Israel: remove violence and spoil, and execute judgment and justice, take away your exactions from my people, saith the Lord GOD.**

**Missler:** Most commentators intend to view the princes as in an administrative role here during the Millennium, for the House of Israel. So they are literally princes as such, perhaps in the way we read about in Numbers 1.

**Constable:** The Lord next commanded the leaders of the Israelites to stop destroying the people, treating them violently, and appropriating their possessions for themselves. This is a common cry in the Bible (cf. Lev. 19; 25; Num. 35; Deut. 25:13-16; Prov. 11:1; Amos 8:5; Mic. 6:10-12; Matt. 5:23-24). Rather they should treat them fairly and do what was right.

**McGee 9-12:** Ezekiel used the reality of God's promised future blessings as a springboard to exhort the princes in his day to repentance. You have gone far enough, O princes of Israel! (cf. 44:6) Give up your violence and oppression and do what is just and right. Israel's civil leaders had callously disregarded the rights of those they were to protect (cf. 19:1-9; 22:25; 34:1-10). Their basic problem was greed. So Ezekiel exhorted them to use accurate scales, an accurate ephah, and an accurate bath. An ephah was a measure of dry capacity and a bath was a measure of liquid capacity. They were each equivalent to approximately five gallons (see "Biblical Weights and Measures" before the commentary on Gen.). Each of these was a 10th of a homer. A homer was approximately 50 gallons or about 6 bushels. The Hebrew word *hōmer*, possibly related to *hāmôr* ("donkey"), suggests that this was a "donkey load."

Ezekiel also defined the measure of weight (in addition to the measures of capacity): the shekel is to consist of 20 gerahs. A "shekel" weighed just under 11½ grams or about 2/5 of an ounce. The "gerah" was Israel's smallest unit of weight; it took 20 gerahs to make one shekel (cf. Ex. 30:13; Lev. 27:25; Num. 3:47). Ezekiel stated that 60 shekels (20 + 25 + 15) equal one mina. Some have felt that this was a deviation from the usual standard of 50 shekels to a mina, as in Ugaritic texts. However, there is evidence that the standard, at least in Babylon, was 60 shekels to a mina. This would make the mina about 24 ounces or 1½ pounds.

Weights found from Old Testament times vary to some extent. Apparently people used weights of differing sizes to cheat others. Ezekiel was exhorting Israel's leaders to establish honest standards for all Israelites.

**Clarke:** **Take away your exactions from my people**—This is the voice of God to all the rulers of the earth. Take away your exactions; do not oppress the people; they are mine. Abolish all oppressive taxes.

## **Ezekiel 45:10**

**Ye shall have just balances, and a just ephah, and a just bath.**

**Missler:** Bath is a liquid measure of about 8-9 gallons. Ephah was a dry measure of approximately a bushel. Honest measures are called for here.

**Constable:** They should also be fair in their commercial dealings. Their basic dry and liquid measures, an ephah (about one-half bushel) and a bath (about six gallons), were to be standard and equal. An ephah should always be a tenth of an homer (five to six bushels), and a bath should always be a tenth of an homer (five to six bushels). Likewise weights should be the same. One shekel (about two-fifths of an ounce) should equal 20 gerahs (about one-fiftieth of an ounce). Twenty shekels plus 25 shekels plus 15 shekels (60 shekels) should equal one mina (about one and one-quarter pounds). Different commentators and Bible dictionaries vary somewhat in explaining the modern equivalents of these amounts.

". . . linear measurements of the ancient Near East were not as accurate as those of today. This is also true of volume measurements. Ezekiel delineated the proper standard of volume measure in the terms of his day.

**Clarke: Ye shall have just balances**—This appreciation of weights, measures, and money was intended to show them that they must not introduce those to which they had been accustomed in the captivity, but those which God had prescribed to their forefathers.

**IVP: accurate scales.** In an economy that did not have standardized weights and measures, traders were often tempted to cheat by falsifying the balances and measurements, often by using improper weights and false bottoms and other ways to alter the sizes of vessels.

**JSB:** Holiness in the Temple requires just, standardized measures (Lev. 19. 35- 36; Deut. 25. 13- 16; cf. Amos 8. 5; Mic. 6. 10- 11; Prov. 11. 1; 20. 10). The 'homer' equals 229. 7 liters (6. 524 bushels); the 'ephah' is a dry measure that equals 22. 9 liters (20. 878 quarts); the 'bath' is a liquid measure that equals 23 liters (6. 073 gallons); the 'shekel' is a measure of weight equivalent to 11. 42 gm (176. 29 grains); 50 'shekels' constitute a 'mina' equivalent to 571. 2 gm (20. 148 ounces); if this passage refers to the Mesopotamian mina (see translators 'note' h- h ), it is then equivalent to 685. 44 gm (24. 178 ounces).

## **Ezekiel 45:11**

**The ephah and the bath shall be of one measure, that the bath may contain the tenth part of an homer, and the ephah the tenth part of an homer: the measure thereof shall be after the homer.**

**IVP 10-12: measures.** The two-armed balance scales were used to weigh out goods in Israel. The ephah was a dry standard used in measuring grain and equaled about half a

bushel. The bath was a liquid measure of about six gallons. It was used for the measure of oil, wine and water. Both an ephah and a bath are one-tenth of a homer.

### **Ezekiel 45:12**

**And the shekel shall be twenty gerahs: twenty shekels, five and twenty shekels, fifteen shekels, shall be your maneh.**

**JFB:** The standard weights were lost when the Chaldeans destroyed the temple. The threefold enumeration of shekels (twenty, twenty-five, fifteen) probably refers to coins of different value, representing respectively so many shekels, the three collectively making up a *maneh*. By weighing these together against the *maneh*, a test was afforded whether they severally had their proper weight: sixty shekels in all, containing one coin a fourth of the whole (fifteen shekels), another a third (twenty shekels), another a third and a twelfth (twenty-five shekels) [MENOCHIUS]. The *Septuagint* reads, "fifty shekels shall be your *maneh*."

### **Offerings for the prince 45:13-17**

Unlike the unfair leaders in Israel's past, the prince of the future would be faithful to the Lord and upright in his dealings with the Israelites. Messiah will be the chief ruler during the Millennium, but this prince will serve under Him and will oversee temple offerings (and probably other things).

### **Ezekiel 45:13**

**This is the oblation that ye shall offer; the sixth part of an ephah of an homer of wheat, and ye shall give the sixth part of an ephah of an homer of barley:**

**Constable 13-15** The Israelites in the future would bring offerings to the temple periodically, but how often is not clear. The amounts that follow probably represent what they would bring for the service of the temple (cf. Exod. 30:11-16). As the following verses show, the prince would take the lead in presenting these offerings to the Lord with the assistance of the Zadokite and other Levitical priests at various times during the year.

The Lord specified that the people should bring a sixth of an ephah (onethwelfth of a bushel) of wheat or barley taken out of each homer (five to six bushels) they possessed. If their offering was oil, it should be a tenth of a bath (about 6 gallons) taken from each of their cors (about 60 gallons). Ten baths (about 60 gallons liquid measure) were about the same quantity as an homer (about 6 bushels dry measure). They were also to offer one sheep fed on Israel's well-watered pastures out of every 200 they owned. These were the quantities they were to offer in their grain, burnt, and peace offerings to make atonement for themselves on the occasions that follow (cf. Lev. 9:7; 10:17). Making atonement signifies maintaining proper relationship with God or getting oneself back into proper relationship with God. "The required offering for grain will be one-sixth of all produce (v. 13). One percent of the oil will be given for use in the temple (v. 14) and one of every two hundred animals (v. 15)."

**McGee 13-17:** Ezekiel listed specific amounts of produce the people will give the prince (David; see comments on 34:24). The prescribed portion is to be proportionate to each individual's wealth or lack of it. They are each to give a 60th of their wheat and... barley (45:13), one percent of their olive oil (v. 14), and 1 sheep... from every... 200 of their flocks (v. 15). This tithe or tax will be required of all the people for use by the prince in Israel. As the people's representative, he will collect their gifts and use them to maintain the temple sacrifices, including burnt offerings, grain offerings, and drink offerings at the festivals, the New Moons, and the Sabbaths. (For a discussion on the use of sacrifices during the Millennium see the comments on 40:38-43.)

**JSB:** The people pay percentages of wheat (1. 5 percent), barley (1. 5 percent), oil (1 percent), sheep (. 5 percent) as a tax for the 'meal offerings' (Lev. ch 2), the 'burnt offerings' (Lev. ch 1), and the 'offerings of well- being' (Lev. ch 3).

### **Ezekiel 45:14**

**Concerning the ordinance of oil, the bath of oil, *ye shall offer the tenth part of a bath out of the cor, which is an homer of ten baths; for ten baths are an homer:***

**JFB 13-15:** In these oblations there is a progression as to the relation between the kind and the quantity: of the corn, the sixth of a tenth, that is, a sixtieth part of the quantity specified; of the oil, the tenth of a tenth, that is, an hundredth part; and of the flock, one from every two hundred.

### **Ezekiel 45:15**

**And one lamb out of the flock, out of two hundred, out of the fat pastures of Israel; for a meat offering, and for a burnt offering, and for peace offerings, to make reconciliation for them, saith the Lord GOD.**

### **Ezekiel 45:16**

**All the people of the land shall give this oblation for the prince in Israel.**

**Constable 16-17:** The people should bring these offerings to the prince for him to offer on their behalf on special occasions: feasts, new month celebrations, and Sabbaths. He would make these offerings for the people as a whole to secure their corporate atonement. As mentioned previously, these sacrifices would be memorials of Christ's death and or the means whereby the uncleanness of their sins as believers would be removed so they could continue to enjoy intimate fellowship with God. These sacrifices will not result in the peoples' salvation any more than the sacrifices of the Mosaic system provided salvation (cf. Heb. 10:10).

**Clarke: All—this oblation for the prince—**A present or offering to the prince.

**JSB:** The people pay their tax to the prince. The prince in turn is obligated to provide the "sin offerings" (Lev. 4. 1- 5. 13), the "meal offerings" (Lev. ch 2), the "burnt offerings" (Lev. ch 1), and the "offerings of well-being" (Lev. ch 3) on behalf of the people at all "festivals, new moons, sabbaths," and "fixed occasions" (appointed festivals). Ezek. 45. 16- 46. 18 (Sephardi lectionary 45. 18- 46. 15) serves as the haftarah for Shabbat Ha-Hodesh (the Shabbat prior to 1 Nisan or 1 Nisan if it is Shabbat).

### **Ezekiel 45:17**

**And it shall be the prince's part to give burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and drink offerings, in the feasts, and in the new moons, and in the sabbaths, in all solemnities of the house of Israel: he shall prepare the sin offering, and the meat offering, and the burnt offering, and the peace offerings, to make reconciliation for the house of Israel.**

**IVP: prince's contributions.** Here the prince is seen in a royal role. Typically in the ancient Near East the king was the one who provided the sacrifices for the festival rituals. This can be observed in biblical texts as well as in the nations surrounding Israel. At the large public festivals the general population often played the role of audience, while the leaders of the people (court and temple) took center stage. The pageantry could be grandiose, and the largesse of the king was made evident.

### **Ezekiel 45:18**

**Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the first month, in the first day of the month, thou shalt take a young bullock without blemish, and cleanse the sanctuary:**

**Constable 18-20:** On the first new year's day of each year the people should offer a young bull without blemish to cleanse the accumulated sinful defilement of the sanctuary. The priest in charge was to apply some of the blood of a sin offering to the door frames of the temple proper, the four corners of the altar of sacrifice, and the door frames of the inner court of the temple. Another offering was to occur on the seventh day of the new year, and it would cover the guilt of sins committed ignorantly. It too would result in the cleansing of the temple for another year.

**McGee 18-25:** The festivals where the offerings will be given will include the New Year feast (vv. 18-20), the Passover/Unleavened Bread feast (vv. 21-24), and the seven-day Feast of Tabernacles (v. 25). The New Year's day celebration, on Nisan 1 (mid-April), will be to purify the sanctuary (v. 18). If someone sins unintentionally, a second purification will be offered on the seventh day of the month (v. 20). This offering and ceremonial cleansing possibly will replace the Day of Atonement (in the seventh month, Lev. 23:26-32).

This time of cleansing will be followed by the celebration of the Passover (Ezek. 45:21-24)/Unleavened Bread festival. The Passover will last seven days, during which the people will eat bread made without yeast. The prince will provide the sacrifices for

that period (vv. 22-24). The fact that the prince is to make a sin offering for himself shows that he is not Christ.

The third feast will begin in the seventh month on the 15th day. This is the Festival of Tabernacles, also a seven-day celebration (Lev. 23:33-44), the last feast in Israel's yearly calendar.

Why did Ezekiel omit Israel's other national feasts, the Feast of Pentecost, the Feast of Trumpets, and the Day of Atonement? Two explanations may be given. First, he may have been signaling a change in God's program for Israel. The inauguration of the New Covenant and the fulfillment of Israel's kingdom promises may render those three feasts unnecessary. Thus only three of the six annual feasts under the Levitical system (cf. Lev. 23:4-44) will be followed: two feasts celebrating national cleansing (Passover and Unleavened Bread combined as one feast; see the chart "Calendrical Offerings," near Num. 28:1-8), which will point back to Christ's death, and the Feast of Tabernacles that will symbolize Israel's new position in God's millennial kingdom. Second, perhaps Ezekiel employed a figure of speech known as a merism to include all the feasts. By naming the first two feasts in Israel's festal calendar (Passover and Unleavened Bread) and the last one (Tabernacles), maybe he implied that all Israel's feasts would be reinstated.

**Clarke:** **Thou shalt take a young bullock—and cleanse the sanctuary**—There is nothing of this in the Mosaic law; it seems to have been a new ceremony. An annual purification of the sanctuary may be intended.

**IVP 18-20: inaugural festival.** The ritual described here has all the earmarks of a purification ceremony to dedicate the new sanctuary. These were typically seven-day affairs that ensured that the holy place and holy objects were ready for use. It marked the beginning of the operation of the sanctuary.

**JSB:** Observance of Passover and Sukkot (Tabernacles). R. Joshua (and Radak) maintain that Israel's redemption from exile will begin in Nisan ('b. Rosh Hash.' 11a).

### **Ezekiel 45:19**

**And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering, and put *it* upon the posts of the house, and upon the four corners of the settle of the altar, and upon the posts of the gate of the inner court.**

**Missler:** Something else that is kind of strange is that that they do not wait for the 7th month to cleanse the sanctuary, which is the Mosaic procedure in Leviticus 16. But they do the cleansing the first month instead of the 7th, which is a change that might be significant.

**JSB:** The blood of a 'sin offering' purifies the Temple, altar, and inner court on the first day of the first month. The animal blood atones for an individual who has sinned inadvertently. Note the smearing of blood on the doorposts at the exodus (Exod. 12. 21-28).

### **Ezekiel 45:20**

**And so thou shalt do the seventh *day* of the month for every one that erreth, and for *him that is simple*: so shall ye reconcile the house.**

Numbers 15:22.

**Clarke: For him that is simple**—That wants understanding to conduct himself properly.

**JFB: for him that is simple**--for sins of ignorance ( Leviticus 4:2 Leviticus 4:13 Leviticus 4:27 ).

### **Ezekiel 45:21**

**In the first *month*, in the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall have the passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten.**

**Missler:** Here the first two Feasts are combined as one Feast, Passover and Unleavened Bread. It is a practice we see in the New Testament, and certainly in the current rabbinical literature; but here in Scripture we have in effect, a basis for that.

Mosaic: 2 bullocks

1 ram

7 lambs

1 oblation of fine flour and oil

Ezekiel: 7 bullocks

7 rams

No lambs

No lamb which is not surprising. The offerings are not only observed, they are expanded in number for whatever that might signify. In Chapter 46 you are going to find more of the same of these observances, but you are going to find a major emphasis on the Sabbath, New Moon and you are going to discover there is a very, very Jewish setting.

**Constable 21-24:** On the fourteenth day of the first month of the year the Israelites were to celebrate the Passover and then a seven-day feast using unleavened bread (cf. Exod. 12:1-14; Lev. 23:5-8; Num. 28:16-25). The same relationship between the Passover and the feast of Unleavened Bread that existed under the Old Covenant appears to exist here. The Jews celebrated the Passover after sundown on the fourteenth of Nisan. For the next seven days they celebrated the feast of Unleavened Bread. The Jews counted the beginning and ending of their days at sundown. So the whole combined festival really lasted seven days, and they often referred to it simply as Passover.

On the day of the Passover the prince would offer a bull as a sin offering for himself and the people. During the seven days of this Passover festival the prince would also offer each day seven bulls and seven rams without blemish as a burnt offering of worship and one ram for a sin offering. He would offer with each bull and each ram one ephah (about one-half bushel) of grain as a grain offering plus a hin (about one gallon) of oil

with the grain. This celebration will doubtless commemorate Jesus Christ's sacrificial death as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world and the importance of living sin-free in view of that sacrifice.

**IVP 212-25: new Passover.** In Ezekiel's formulation, Passover takes on a different look than the traditional observance established in Exodus 11–12. Originally it had been established as a family-oriented festival in which the head of the household served a priestly role and the home was the location of the festivities. The related Feast of Unleavened Bread had gradually merged with Passover, as is indicated here as well. In the Passover celebrations carried out by Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 30) and Josiah (2 Chronicles 35), there was a more national and centralized aspect to the observance, but that is even more the case here in Ezekiel.

**JFB:** As a new solemnity, the feast of consecration is to prepare for the passover; so the passover itself is to have different sacrifices from those of the Mosaic law. Instead of one ram and seven lambs for the daily burnt offering, there are to be seven bullocks and seven rams. So also whereas the feast of tabernacles had its own offerings, which diminished as the days of the feast advanced, here the same are appointed as on the passover. Thus it is implied that the letter of the law is to give place to its spirit, those outward rites of Judaism having no intrinsic efficacy, but symbolizing the spiritual truths of Messiah's kingdom, as for instance the perfect holiness which is to characterize it. Compare 1 Corinthians 5:7 1 Corinthians 5:8 , as to our spiritual "passover," wherein, at the Lord's supper, we feed on Christ by faith, accompanied with "the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." Literal ordinances, though not slavishly bound to the letter of the law, will set forth the catholic and eternal verities of Messiah's kingdom.

**JSB:** Many regard this as a festival calendar, but it merely specifies the obligation of the prince to provide offerings for Passover (Exod. 23. 15; Lev. 23. 4- 8; Deut. 16. 1- 8) and Sukkot (Exod. 23. 16; Lev. 23. 33- 36; Deut. 16. 13- 15).

### **Ezekiel 45:22**

**And upon that day shall the prince prepare for himself and for all the people of the land a bullock *for* a sin offering.**

**JSB:** There is no precedent for the offering of a 'bull' on 14 Nisan.

### **Ezekiel 45:23**

**And seven days of the feast he shall prepare a burnt offering to the LORD, seven bullocks and seven rams without blemish daily the seven days; and a kid of the goats daily *for* a sin offering.**

**Missler:** If you compare the cleansing sacrifices of the Mosaic Laws (Numbers 28:19-21) with this you have:

**JSB:** The offering of 'seven bulls and seven rams' daily conflicts with Num. 28. 19 (cf. 'b. Menah.' 45a).

### **Ezekiel 45:24**

**And he shall prepare a meat offering of an ephah for a bullock, and an ephah for a ram, and an hin of oil for an ephah.**

### **Ezekiel 45:25**

**In the seventh *month*, in the fifteenth day of the month, shall he do the like in the feast of the seven days, according to the sin offering, according to the burnt offering, and according to the meat offering, and according to the oil.**

There are some Feasts to be celebrated; Zechariah 14 also highlights some of this. Firstfruits, Pentecost, Trumpets, and the Day of Atonement are Feasts that are conspicuous by their omission. Cf. Numbers 28:15; 29:2-6.

There is a major emphasis on the Sabbath, and the New Moon. It is a very, very Jewish setting. One thing to point out is that this passage must have been very encouraging to Ezekiel's readers, because they were slaves in Babylon. So all of this detail made the future seem more real to those captives. It would be a passage of encouragement to them. From our point of view, the details are provocative because it is a prophetic passage.

**Constable:** On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, at the feast on that day, the prince would repeat the cycle of offerings he made during the Passover. This feast corresponds to the seven-day feast of Tabernacles under the Mosaic system (cf. Lev. 23:39-43; Num. 29:12-38). In the Millennium it will undoubtedly be a celebration of God's faithfulness in bringing the Israelites securely and permanently into the Promised Land, which the feast of Tabernacles anticipated.

Other feasts of Israel in the past receive no mention in Ezekiel's revelation concerning future worship: Firstfruits, Pentecost (Harvest, Weeks), Trumpets, and day of Atonement. Probably they will be absent in the future millennial system of worship. Some scholars believe that by describing only two of the feasts (Passover/Unleavened Bread and Tabernacles) Ezekiel was using a figure of speech (merism) and meant the reader to understand all the others. It is, of course, a dangerous interpretive practice to assume that the writer intended something that he did not state, especially when so much detail characterizes this portion of Ezekiel. However, this interpretation is possible.

**Clarke: In the seventh month**—He shall do at the feast of tabernacles the same things that he was desired to do on the passover. The prince should offer the same number of victims, of the same quality, and with the same ceremonies, as during the above seven days. The offerings were, sin-offerings, burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings.

**Missler:** Dr. Chuck Missler, www.KHouse .org, Commentary notes on the Book of Ezekiel.

**Constable:** Dr. Thomas L. Comstable, Notes on Ezekiel, 2010 Edition, Professor, Dallas Theological Seminary,

**Dake:** Notes from Dake's Study Bible, Finis Jennings Dake.

**IVP,** IVP Bible Background Commentary, Old Testament

**JSB;** Jewish Study Bible Footnotes

