



Book of Ezekiel

Chapter 46

Theme: Millennial Temple

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Ezekiel 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 was the inner court, to be opened only on Sabbath and New Moon.
Jewish setting after Daniel 9, and Isaiah 66:23.

Constable: The Lord specified that the gate in the inner east gate complex should be open only on Sabbath days and on the new moon days (i.e., the first of each month). All other days it was to remain closed. An exception to this rule follows in verse 12. Observance of the Sabbath day in the future, as was true in Israel's past, will remind the Israelites of God's creation of the cosmos, His creation of their nation, and His provision of rest (in the Messiah). The new moon (new month) celebrations may be periodic reminders of God's providential control of nature and His faithful provision of His people's needs, as they were in the past.

Dake: The east gate is to be shut at all times to the public except on sabbath days and the day of the new moon. Then the people will be permitted to worship here (Ezekiel 46:1-3). It will be opened for the prince whenever he offers a voluntary burnt or peace offering (Ezekiel 46:12).

JSB: Regulations concerning offerings and property for the prince and the people. The eastern gate is opened on Sabbaths and new moons so that the prince may enter to present his offerings.

Ezekiel 46:2

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. 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.

Constable: On these special days, the prince would lead the people in worship. He would enter the inner east gate complex and stand in its vestibule. Evidently he will not be able to enter the inner court because he will not be a priest (cf. Num. 28:3-8), but he will be able to view the inner court and the altar from the doorway at the western end of the gate complex. The vestibule would be the site of his worship as he presented his burnt and peace offerings (symbolizing his personal dedication and his gratitude for God's fellowship respectively). After he finished worshipping, he would depart from that gate into the outer court, but the gate would remain open until the evening.

BKC: The east gate from the outer court to the inner court will be closed six days of the week, but on the Sabbath Day and on the day of the New Moon it is to be opened. The prince, David, will be allowed to stand at the gatepost of the east gate during these days as the sacrifice he brought on behalf of the people will be offered (cf. 44:3). He will also provide the sacrifices for the people on the Sabbaths and New Moons as well as on the major feast days.

JSB: The prince 'shall attend at the gatepost' (see 2 Kings 11. 14) and bow down at the 'threshold of the gate.'

Ezekiel 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.

Constable: The other worshippers would also worship at the same gate during those special days, but they too would not enter the inner court. Only priests could enter that court.

JSB: The people bow down at the same gate entrance.

ESV: The whole community— prince, priests (v. 2), and people (v. 3) —are involved in the weekly and monthly observances, but the prince plays the pivotal role. The east gate of the inner court is the fulcrum for these exchanges between the most sacred and the outer court. The prince takes his place in the gateway but does not enter the inner court, which is exclusive to the priests. It remains open (v. 2), so that the people in the outer court have some visual contact with the inner sanctum (v. 3).

Ezekiel 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.

Offerings enlarged (verses Numbers 28:9).

Constable 4-5: On the Sabbath days, the prince's burnt offering would consist of six lambs and a ram without blemish. Grain offerings were to accompany them: an ephah with the ram, and as much as he was able to provide with the lambs. He was also to offer a hin of oil with each ephah of grain. This is a variation of what the Mosaic Law prescribed (cf. Num. 28:9-10). These grain and oil offerings evidently symbolize the Lord's rich provisions for His people.

Dake: The estimated cost of flour, oil, and wine as used with each sacrifice (Ezekiel 46:4-5). The same would be the cost for the sacrifices in the day of the new moon, with the additional cost of a bullock (\$800), and the flour, oil, and wine thereof (Ezekiel 46:6-7). The estimated cost of the lambs and rams for the 52 regular sabbaths of a year would be \$31,460.

JSB: The sacrifice of 'six lambs' and 'one ram' conflicts with Num. 28. 9. See Num. 28. 9- 15 for Sabbath and new moon sacrifices.

Ezekiel 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.

Ezekiel 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.

Constable 6-7: On the new moon days, the prince was to offer the same offerings as he did on the Sabbath days plus a young bull and an ephah of flour and a hin of oil with it. This too is somewhat different from the Mosaic requirement (cf. Num. 28:11-15).

Ezekiel 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.

Offering reduced for New Moon.

Ezekiel 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.

Constable: The prince would enter the inner gate complex and leave it using the vestibule, which faced the outer court (cf. 40:31). Undoubtedly the priests will use the tables in the vestibule of this gate complex and the tables in the outer court near it to prepare these offerings (cf. 40:39-43).

ESV 8-10: The movements of prince and people are coordinated for festival gatherings. The prince's use of the east gate is limited to his station there; v. 8 prohibits its use as a thoroughfare. The regulation of crowd movement in v. 9 is clear, although no explanation is offered. It could simply be for practical crowd control. Little in Ezekiel's vision lacks deeper significance, however, and it is possible that this regulation also intends

something more. One effect of the regulation is to ensure that the whole community makes use of the whole of the outer court, and thereby must pass the east gate to the inner court, which stands open to the presence of God's glory. By integration of the prince's movements with the rest of the people (v. 10), his special status is given its proper context: although he is the prince of the people, he belongs with them (cf. Deut. 17:14–20).

Ezekiel 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.

Constable: When the people living in the Promised Land came to worship on the appointed feasts (Passover and Tabernacles, cf. 45:21-25), they were to enter the outer court by either the north or south outer gate complexes. There was no gate on the west side, and the outer east gate would be sealed (cf. 44:1-2). When they finished worshipping, they should depart from the opposite gate from which they entered, not the same one. This would result in an orderly traffic pattern during these crowded times (cf. 1 Cor. 14:33).

Dake: On the sabbaths the people will worship at the east gate (Ezekiel 46:1-3); but in the solemn feasts during the year they will enter through the north gate, worship, and then go out through the south gate. Or, if any enter through the south gate, they will depart through the north gate. No exception will be made regarding this law. People will not be permitted to go in and out through the same gate (Ezekiel 46:9-10). Just why such a law will be enforced is not clear. Perhaps it will be to encourage reverence and discourage constant running in and out of the gates during the solemn feast days. At the least, it indicates order of traffic on such great festival days, all of which had typical meaning in their divine worship and service.

BKC: The worshipers at the temple are given regulations to aid in their orderly assembly before the LORD. There is no entrance to the temple on the west, and the east gate will be permanently shut (cf. 44:1-2). Thus access into the temple will be from the north and the south. To avoid confusion the worshipers will be directed through the temple according to predesignated routes so that whoever enters by the north gate to worship is to go out the south gate; and whoever enters by the south gate is to go out the north gate. God is a God of order, and He wants orderliness to prevail in worship.

JSB: The people enter by the north and south gates, but exit by the opposite gates for efficient crowd management.

Ezekiel 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.

Constable: The prince should accompany the people on those occasions entering and exiting the court with them. He would worship God as one of the people then, not as someone special.

prince in the midst of them—The people and the prince can enter the north or south gate to the outer court, but must exit at the opposite side. The reasons for this are unclear. It may be to facilitate the movement of masses of people during the busy festival times (Eichrodt).

Ezekiel 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.

Constable: The offerings on these special occasions were to be the same as on the Sabbath days and the new moon days (cf. vv. 4-7).

Dake: is the new law regarding meat offerings for the various animals sacrificed, the amount of flour, oil, and wine being increased here over that specified by the law of Moses in Numbers 15:1-9 (Ezekiel 46:11-15).

JSB: The freewill and daily offerings of the prince are specified (Lev. 22. 18- 23, vow or freewill offering; Num. 28. 3- 8, daily offering).

Ezekiel 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.

Constable: When the prince brought a voluntary offering to the temple on other days, either a burnt or peace offering, the priests should open the east inner gate for him to use and close it after he departed from this gate complex.

Dake: [open him the gate that looketh toward the east] Four times east gate to be opened:

1. Anytime for the prince to go in and out (Ezekiel 44:1-3)
2. On Sabbaths (Ezekiel 46:1-3)
3. On new moons
4. When the prince offers voluntary burnt offerings and peace offerings (Ezekiel 46:12)

BKC: If the prince desires to make a freewill offering to the LORD... the gate facing east is to be opened for him. The regulation concerning the closing of the east gate to the inner court (cf. v. 1) will be suspended for this special offering. But after the prince leaves, the gate is to be closed again. Then Ezekiel mentioned the morning sacrifice, but not the evening sacrifice (cf. Ex. 29:38-41). This omission could be explained by the fact that he was giving only the highlights of the sacrificial system. So by listing the morning sacrifices he may have assumed that his readers would apply the same regulations to the evening sacrifice.

Ezekiel 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.

Constable 13-15: The priests were also to offer a daily sacrifice to the Lord every morning, namely, one lamb a year old without blemish as a burnt offering. Onesixth of an ephah of grain with one-third of a hin of oil mixed into it should accompany this continual daily burnt offering. Its purpose is probably to demonstrate the daily rededication of the people to the Lord, the meaning of the daily burnt offering under the Mosaic system. Under the Mosaic Law, there was a daily morning and evening sacrifice (cf. Num. 28:3-4).

Dake: The daily burnt offering of a lamb will be every morning, not every morning and evening as required by the law of Moses (Ezekiel 46:13-15).

ESV 13-15: The daily offerings were to take place morning by morning (repeated three times). Again Ezekiel's vision differs from the practice seen in the Pentateuch, where sacrifices are prescribed for morning and evening (cf. Ex. 29:38-42; Num. 28:3-6).

Ezekiel 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.

Dake: [oil] It is noticeable that there is no mention of wine in connection with the sacrifices to be offered during the Millennium and the New Earth, as so strictly required under the law of Moses. We have listed wine in the estimated costs however, because of there being no reference to a new law changing this requirement (cp. Numbers 15:1-9).

Ezekiel 46:15

Thus shall they prepare the lamb, and the meat offering, and the oil, every morning for a continual burnt offering.

Missler: Of these sacrifices, another omission is of interest. We read about the morning sacrifices. What is conspicuous by its omission, are the evening sacrifices. Does that mean anything? Are they implied? I have no idea. Cf. Numbers 28:3-4. We do know that these daily Burnt Offerings imply public worship. We saw that in Daniel 8:11-13; 11:31; and 12:11. Evening and morning oblations were symptomatic of allowing public worship. That is part of what we see here.

Daily morning sacrifices are offered, but there is no mention of the evening sacrifice which was offered daily under the Mosaic system. The evening sacrifice was at the ninth hour. It was at the time of this sacrifice that Jesus was offered for the sins of the world (Matt 27:46). Omission of the evening sacrifice in the millennial kingdom is itself a testimony of the saving work of Christ.

Ezekiel 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.

We see that there is a prince; he is admonished to behave himself. He has sons that can inherit.

Constable 16-17: The prince could give a gift to any of his sons out of his own inheritance from the Lord. This gift was theirs forever. However, if he gave such a gift to one of his servants, it would revert back to the prince on the year of liberty. This year would evidently be similar to the year of jubilee (every fiftieth year) under the Mosaic Covenant (cf. Lev. 25:10; 27:24). Its purpose, in the past and in the future, is to remind God's people that He owns everything and that they only occupy and manage what He has entrusted to them.

Dake: [his sons] Another proof that this prince is not a resurrected man—he will have sons. Here is the law of inheritance for the prince and his sons and servants. The sons shall keep the possession in their father's house without it being returned to the father in the year of jubilee; but in the case of servants receiving any part of the inheritance of the prince, it shall return to him in the year of jubilee (Ezekiel 46:16-17). The prince shall rule with justice and not oppress the people (Ezekiel 46:18).

JSB: The prince may pass property on to his sons, but property passed to servants reverts to the prince at the jubilee year (Lev. 25. 8- 17). The prince may not pass property of the people to his own sons.

ESV 16-18: Rules for Inheritance of the Prince. Encroachment by the prince on the land of the rest of the community has already been forbidden (45:7–9), and now the prince's territories are protected from slipping into other hands. These stipulations do not limit the prince's capacity for generosity—servants can still receive gifts (46:17) —but such property reverts to the prince in the year of liberty (v. 17, Hb. shenat deror). This recalls the Jubilee of Lev. 25:10, although Ezekiel does not indicate how frequent the "liberty" (Hb. deror) is to be; cf. Zedekiah's futile attempt to proclaim "liberty" in Jer. 34:8–22.

Ezekiel 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.

BKC: Another topic related to freewill gifts is the Year of Jubilee. Every 50 years property was to revert to its original owners (Lev. 25:10-13). Ezekiel posed two hypothetical cases based on the generosity of the prince to show that the Year of Jubilee will be in force during the Millennium. If the prince will give part of his estate to one of his sons, it will also belong to his descendants. Property given to a family member will not be returned in the Year of Jubilee. However... a gift made to a servant will not be permanent; the servant may keep it until the year of freedom; then it will revert to the prince. Because the land will belong to God, He will apportion it to Israel as His stewards. This regulation assures that no one individual will gain permanent control of the land.

the year of liberty—probably referring to the year of Jubilee, the fiftieth, when property was returned to its original owner (Carley) (Lev. 25:8-17).

Ezekiel 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.

Missler: Now you notice that verse 17 reference to the Year of Liberty, the year of Jubilee. We are talking about a thousand year millennium; there are going to be about 20 Jubilees. So the administrative perspective here is going to endure for a substantial period of time.

Constable: The prince was not to give gifts from the inheritances of the other people of the land but only from his own inheritance. Israel's leaders and people in the past had appropriated other people's property as their own (cf. 45:8-9; 2 Sam. 24:24; 1 Kings 21:19; Mic. 2:1-2). This ordinance would also result in the prince's sons remaining in his allotment of land rather than being scattered among the other tribal allotments. Since this prince would have sons it seems clear that he will not be the Messiah.

Ezekiel 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.

Constable 19-20: The Lord, or Ezekiel's guide, then took the prophet into the structure that housed the priests' rooms that were beside the south inner gate complex that faced north (cf. 40:44, 46). This was evidently one of the two three story structures in which the priests will eat the sacrifices and change their clothes (cf. 42:1-14). At the west side of this building there were kitchen facilities where the priests could boil the guilt and sin offerings and bake the grain offerings. They were to prepare these offerings there so they would not have to enter the outer court and thus transmit holiness to the people.

JSB: Areas for the preparation of sacrifices for consumption by the priests are located in the northwestern area of the inner court. Kitchens for the people are located at the four corners of the outer court.

ESV 19-24: The Temple Kitchens. First, an area in the inner courts is designated for the priests (vv. 19–20), thus protecting its sacred status. Then Ezekiel tours the four corners of the outer court, each equipped with a kitchen for the cooking of the wider community's sacrifices by the Levitical priests (vv. 21–24).

Ezekiel 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.

The priests are here instructed to boil sacrifices at the appointed places on the two sides westward (Ezekiel 46:19-20).

The reinstatement of the sacrificial system in the millennial kingdom will have as its purpose the restoration of a sense of holiness and awe for service to the Lord.

BKC: Ezekiel's angelic guide led him to the kitchens in the temple complex. He first described the priests' kitchens (vv. 19-20), then the kitchens for the people's sacrifices (vv. 21-24).

The kitchens for the priests are to be at the west end of the priests' chambers adjacent to the temple proper (see the sketch "The Millennial Temple," near 40:1-4). There the priests will cook the guilt offering and the sin offering... to avoid bringing them into the outer court. The priests will be allowed to eat a portion of the sacrifices brought to the temple.

The kitchens for the sacrifices of the people will be in the four corners of the outer court. When the people offer fellowship offerings to the Lord, they will be allowed to eat part of the sacrifice in a fellowship meal (cf. Lev. 7:15-18). Evidently at these four kitchens the priests will cook the people's sacrifices. This magnificent temple will be a place of fellowship as well as worship.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty.

Ezekiel 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.

Constable 21-24: The same person then took Ezekiel out to the outer court and showed him the four corners of that court. In each of the four corners there was a courtyard 40 cubits (66 feet 8 inches) by 30 cubits (50 feet). Within each of these enclosures there were ledges with fireplaces underneath that created cooking areas where the priests were to boil the sacrifices that the people brought to the temple. Since the people would eat some of the sacrifices they brought, the outer court would be a place of both spiritual worship and social interaction. There they would enjoy fellowship with other worshippers as well as fellowship with God.

Ezekiel 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.

Dake: The boiling places for the people, each 30 cubits by 40 cubits (52 feet 6 inches by 70 feet, assuming the long cubit of 21 inches is still being used), will be located in the 4 corners of the outer court (Ezekiel 46:21-24).

kitchens for offering preparation. A good number of temples in the ancient Near East were attached to kitchens. These have been found at Ur, Tell Asmar and Terqa in Mesopotamia, and at Karnak in Egypt. Many of the kitchen complexes were larger than the temple it serviced. Second Chronicles 35:11-13 implies the existence of kitchens associated with the Solomonic temple.

Ezekiel 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.

The attention given to the preparation of the priests' food suggests the holiness of God even in the smallest things. One kitchen was to be at a corner of the inner court, reserved for the meat of the sin offerings, eaten only by the priests. The other kitchen, at a corner of the outer court, was for cooking the flesh of the peace offerings, which both the priests and the people could eat.

Ezekiel 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.

Note that no wine is mentioned. That is kind of interesting.

We have a lunar calendar introduced which implies some astronomical things.

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