

CONCERNING THE WAY

April 16, 2009

LESSON 55: PROPHECY SERIES — THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL



The Millennial Kingdom

- Promised to David (2 Samuel 7:12-17; 23:5) under oath (Psalm 89:34-37)
- Predicted in the Psalms and the Prophets (Psalm 2; 45; 110; Isaiah 2:1-5; 4:1-6; 11:1-9; 12:1-6; 30:18-26; 35:1-10; 60, 61:3-62; 66; Jeremiah 23:3-8; 32:37-44; Ezekiel 40-48; Daniel 2:44-45; 7:13-14; 12:2-3; Micah 4:1-8; Zechariah 12:10-14:21)
- Promised to Mary (Luke 1:32; Micah 5:2; Isaiah 9:6, 7; Daniel 2:44); reaffirmed to apostles (Luke 22:29-30)
- Lord's Prayer: "Thy Kingdom come" (Matthew 6:10, 13; Acts 1:6; Psalm 45, 46, 47, 48)
- Jesus will rule (Psalm 2; 110) with a "Rod of Iron" (Revelation 12:5; 19:15); "Every knee will bow" (Philemon 2:6-11).
- Creation changed: Physical changes (Zechariah 4:9,10; Isaiah 35:1-10); curse lifted (Isaiah 11:6-9); creation redeemed (Gen 3 → Rom 8:20-22); Earth in full of knowledge of the Lord (Isaiah 11:9; Habakkuk 2:14);
- Yet, it will *not be eternity* (Isaiah 65); there will still be death, sin (Isaiah 65:20); each will have land (Micah 4:15); and will be fruitful (Amos 9:13).

Millennial Limitations

- It is not "heaven:" vs. the eternal state which follows; not the "New Earth" (Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1); not "where righteousness dwells"
- There will be a limited amount of evil, it will be judged immediately (Isaiah 11:1-16).

Millennial Longevity

- Death for unbelievers only (Isaiah 65:17). Nowhere is there a resurrection of Millennial saints. The tribulation saints complete the "first resurrection" (Revelation 20:4-6).
- No Jewish unbelievers (Jeremiah 31:31-34); all accept by 100th year (Isaiah 65:20).
- So, will there be death only among Gentiles?

The Davidic Covenant – an unconditional covenant

2 Samuel 7:8-17 "Now therefore, thus you shall say to My servant David, "Thus says the LORD of hosts, "I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people Israel. (9) "I have been with you wherever you have gone and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make you a great name, like the names of the great men who are on the earth. (10) "I will also appoint a place for My people Israel and will plant them, that they may live in their own place and not be disturbed again, nor will the wicked afflict them any more as formerly, (11) even from the day that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. The LORD also declares to you that the LORD will make a house for you. (12) "When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. (13) "He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. (14) "I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men, (15)

but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. (16) "Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever." (17) In accordance with all these words and all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.

Isaiah 9:6-7 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. (7) There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

Luke 1:32-33 "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; (33) and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end."

Matthew 25:31 "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne.

Matthew 25:34 "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

The Council of Jerusalem

Acts 15:14-15 "Simeon has related how God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name. (15) "With this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written,

Then James quotes Amos 9:11, 12:

Acts 15:16-17 'AFTER THESE THINGS I will return, AND I WILL REBUILD THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID WHICH HAS FALLEN, AND I WILL REBUILD ITS RUINS, AND I WILL RESTORE IT, (17) SO THAT THE REST OF MANKIND MAY SEEK THE LORD, AND ALL THE GENTILES WHO ARE CALLED BY MY NAME,'

The Davidic Covenant

The Throne of David will be re-established *in Jerusalem*. This was also emphasized to Abraham (Genesis 17:2-8). Is *David* to rule in the Millennium? (Ezekiel 34:23,24; 37:24,25; Hosea 3:5). This cannot be applied to the Church (Ezekiel 37:21-28). It will include profound changes on the earth (Isaiah 11:1-13; 65:17-24; Micah 4:1-5; Zechariah 14:1-21).

Ezekiel 37:24 "My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd; and they will walk in My ordinances and keep My statutes and observe them.

Also Ezekiel 34:23,24; 37:25; Jeremiah 30:9; Hosea 3:5. When will all this happen?

Hosea 5:15 I will go away and return to My place Until they acknowledge their guilt and seek My face; In their affliction they will earnestly seek Me.

Daniel 2:44 "In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.

Ezekiel 40 - 48: The Millennial Temple

Ezekiel's description of the Millennial Temple is highly detailed (not simply symbolic). All nations are to worship there; offerings and sacrifices will be resumed; it will be open only on the Sabbath day and new moons.

The "Second" Temple (during the time of Jesus)



Ezekiel's Temple

Is it historical? No, this temple has never existed in history.

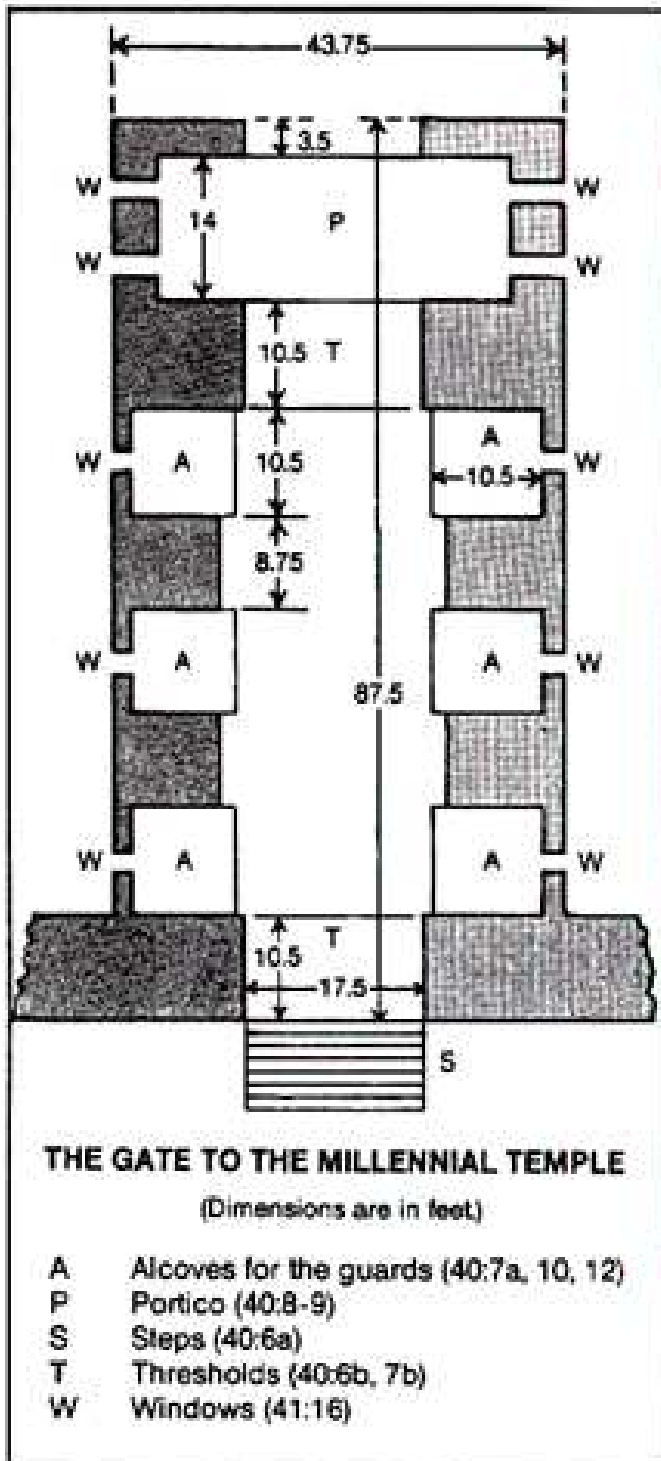
Is it allegorical? No, a normal reading of the text shows that this is a literal structure, not meant to be symbolic.

Is it the Church? Are you kidding? How can you relate this to the church? It is Jewish through and through.

Ezekiel 40

The temple area consists of three terraces, on the highest of which, facing east, stands the Temple with its annexes, the temple yard, and a large building directly behind it. On a middle terrace are kitchens and chambers for the priests, the court containing the altar of burnt offering, and the inner courts with three elaborate porticos. The lowest terrace, surrounded by an exterior wall, contains the outer courts with three porticos and kitchens and chambers for the people.

Ezekiel 40:1-6 In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was taken, on that same day the hand of the LORD was upon me and He brought me there. (2) In the visions of God He brought me into the land of Israel and set me on a very high mountain, and on it to the south *there was a structure like a city.* (3) So He brought me there; and behold, there was a man whose appearance was like the appearance of bronze, with a line of flax and a measuring rod in his hand; and he was standing in the gateway. (4) The man said to me, "Son of man, see with your eyes, hear with your ears, and give attention to all that I am going to show you; for you have been brought here in order to show *it* to you. Declare to the house of Israel all that you see." (5) And behold, there was a wall on the outside of the temple all around, and in the man's hand was a measuring rod of six cubits, *each of which was a cubit and a handbreadth.* So he measured the thickness of the wall, one rod; and the height, one rod. (6) Then he went to the gate which faced east, went up its steps and measured the threshold of the gate, one rod in width; and the other threshold *was one rod in width.*

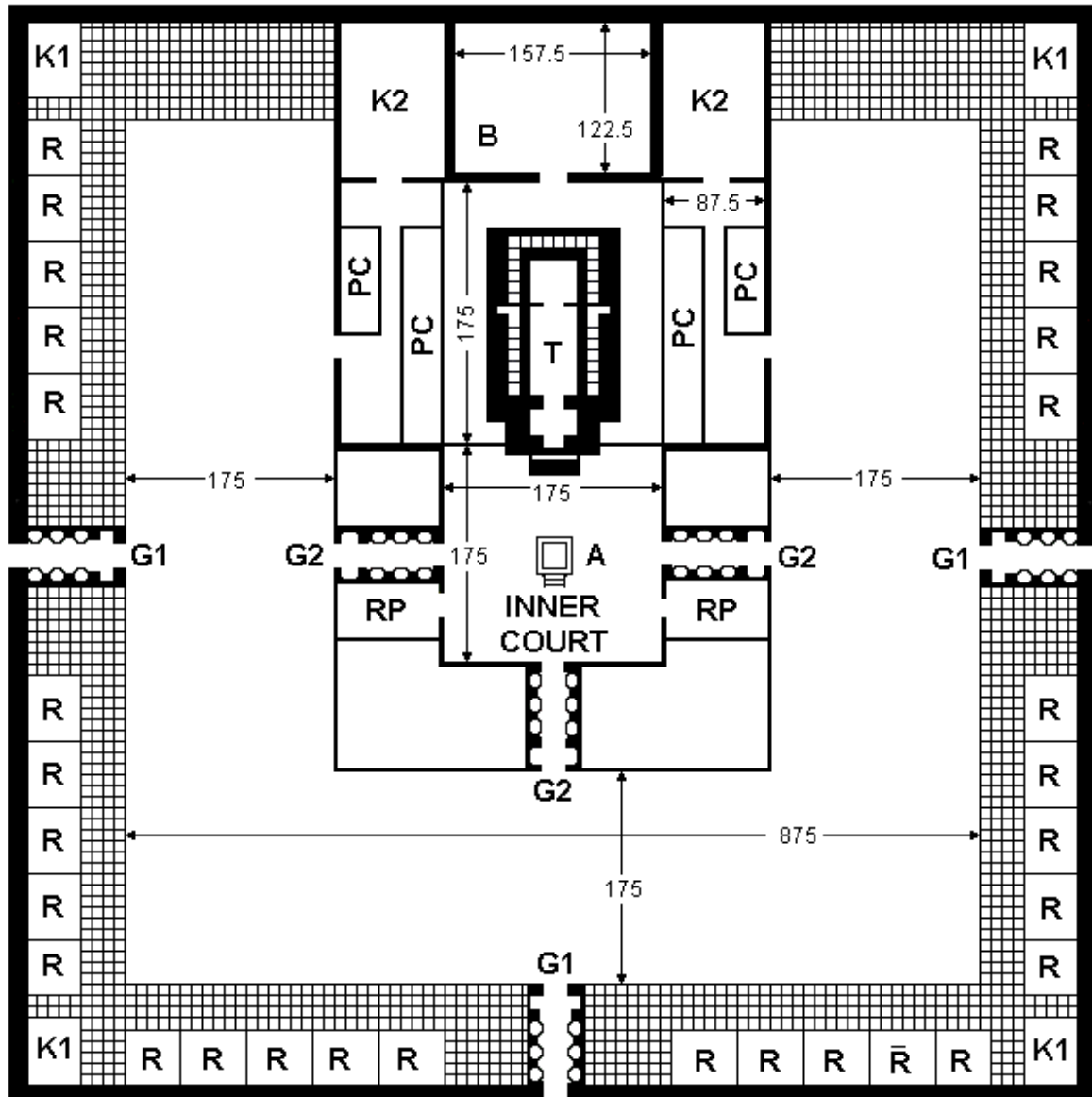


Every time in Scripture that we find a man with a measuring rod—it generally is an angel, and it is an angel here—it means that God is getting ready to move again in dealing with His earthly people. We find this again in the minor prophets and in the Book of Revelation.

Is this a literal temple? Many people say it is not. Here's some reasons why it is literal:

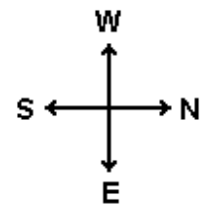
1. There is great detail here.
2. The angel says record everything I'm going to tell you about the temple.
3. All of Ezekiel's prophecies so far have come to pass literally, why not this one?
4. The glory of God literally left the temple in chapters 8-11, why wouldn't the glory of God return to a literal temple in chapters 40-48?

Chapters 40-42 give detailed measurements and descriptions of this future temple in the Kingdom, so detailed that we can show exact floor plans for it. We won't take the time to go through these chapters verse by verse, but you can read them in your own time. Tell me if you think they are merely symbolic, or if they are describing a real temple to be built in the future Kingdom. I've included drawings here so you can see what these chapters are describing. These are taken from the *Bible Knowledge Commentary*.

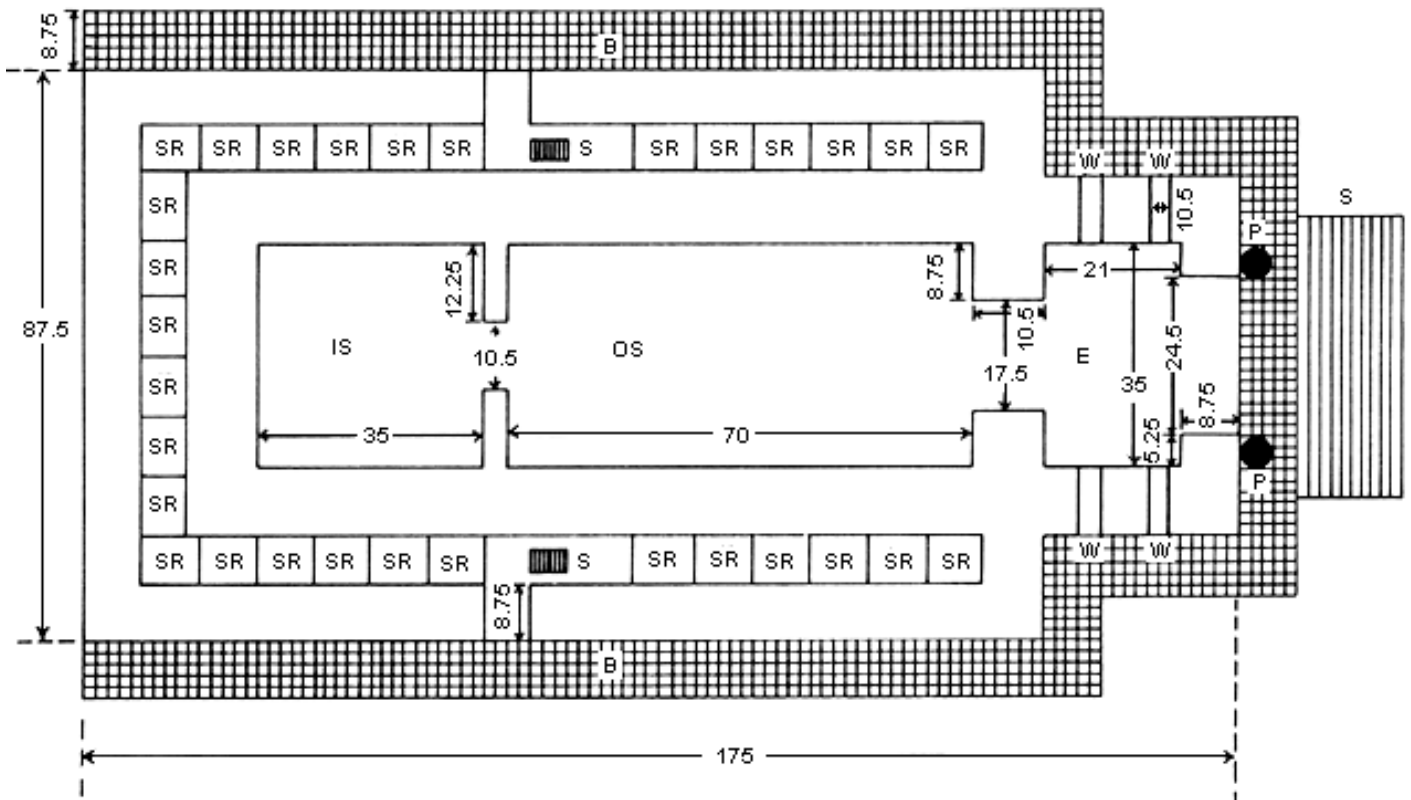


The Millennial Temple

(Dimensions are in feet.)



- A Altar (43:13-17)
- B Building (function not explained) (41:12)
- G1 Outer Gates (40:6-17,20-27)
- G2 Inner Gates (40:28-37)
- K1 Kitchens for people's sacrifices (48:21-24)
- K2 Kitchens for priests (46:19-20)
- PC Priests' Chambers (42:1-14)
- R 30 Rooms in outer court (40:17)
- RP Rooms for ministering priests (40:44-47)
- T Temple proper (40:48 - 41:11,13-14,16-26)



THE MILLENNIAL TEMPLE PROPER
(Dimensions are in feet)

B	Base surrounding temple (41:11)	P	Pillars (40:49b)
E	Entrance to temple (protico; 40:48,49; 41:2a,26)	S	Steps (40:49b; 41:7b)
IS	Inner Sanctuary (41:3-4)	SR	Side Rooms (41:5-11)
OS	Outer Sanctuary (41:2b,21)	W	Windows (41:26)

The Temple Observances

Chapter 43 The Future Sanctuary:

- The consecration of the new temple by the entrance of the glory of God (vv. 1-12).
- A description of the altar and its dedication (vv. 13-27).

Chapter 44 The Sacrifices:

- To be offered in the temple

Chapter 45 Regulations:

- To be observed in the maintenance of worship.

Chapter 46 Supplementary orders:

- For the prince, the people, and the priests

Millennial Sacrifices?

What? There will be animal sacrifices in the Millennial Kingdom? Apparently so. Some people really have a hard time with this, Because of this, some take these passages symbolically rather than literally. However, there is no problem here if you understand the proper function of these sacrifices. First, animal sacrifices *never* took away human sin; only the sacrifice of Christ can do that (Hebrews 10:1-4, 10). In Old Testament times Israelites were saved by grace through faith, and the sacrifices helped restore a believer's fellowship with God.

John Whitcomb: “Now what does all of this indicate with regard to animal sacrifices in the millennial Temple for Israel under the New Covenant? It indicates that future sacrifices will have nothing to do with eternal salvation which only comes through true faith in God. It also indicates that future animal sacrifices will be “efficacious” and “expiatory” only in terms of the strict provision for ceremonial (and thus temporal) forgiveness within the theocracy of Israel. Thus, animal sacrifices during the coming Kingdom age will not be primarily memorial, like the bread and the cup (“do this in remembrance of Me” – 1 Corinthians 11:24), in church communion services, any more than sacrifices in the age of the Old Covenant were primarily prospective or prophetic in the understanding of the offerer.”

With respect to the Millennium, Auerbach concludes: This accords well with the issue of the millennial sacrifices mentioned in Ezekiel. These rituals will not be memorials. They will atone . . . in the same efficacious way as the ones in Aaronic times. Why will this be necessary? Because God will again be dwelling, in His glory, among [mortal] men. . . . Christ did not shed His blood for the cleansing of any physical altar. Therefore, the special rite for the yearly cleansing of the millennial sanctuary will be required (Ezek. 45:18–20). Regular sacrifices will be reinstated in the millennium.

Just because God will have finished His work of sanctification and glorification of the Church at the time of the Rapture is no warrant for assuming He has finished His work of instruction, testing, and sanctification of Israel.

The offerings will not take away sin (Hebrews 10:4), but they will be effective in sanctifying Israelites ceremonially because of His infinitely Holy presence in their midst.

It's also important to note that, even after the church began, Jewish believers did not hesitate to take part in the temple worship (Acts 2:46; 3:1; 5:42), and even to offer sacrifices (Acts 21:26). They could do this because they viewed the sacrifices as memorials of Christ's death. The millennial sacrifices will differ from the Levitical sacrifices though there are some similarities. Other passages also refer to a sacrificial system in the Millennium (Isaiah 56:7; 66:20-23; Jeremiah 33:18; Zechariah 14:16-21; Malachi 3:3-4).

Levitical Difficulties

There are differences in the practices here in Ezekiel from the Levitical laws of Moses, which has always confused rabbis. The rabbis of the Talmud said that only the prophet Elijah, who will herald the ultimate redemption, will explain the discrepancies with the Torah laws and the terms which do not occur elsewhere. [Babylonian Talmud, Menahot 45a.] Had it not been for Rabbi Chanina ben Hezekiah, who explained away several of these difficulties, the Book of Ezekiel would have been excluded from the Canon of Scripture [Babylonian Talmud, Hagiga 13a].

Of course, this is not a problem for us, because we know that the Mosaic system of laws is finished, it was fulfilled completely in Jesus Christ. This Millennial sacrificial system is different, it is not the Mosaic system.

It is interesting to note the things which are *not* mentioned. Throughout the entire nine chapters describing Ezekiel's Temple we don't see any gold or silver mentioned. There is no Table of Shewbread. No Golden Lampstand; no Ark of the Covenant mentioned (Jeremiah 3:16). Where's the Seat of Mercy? Where's the Throne?

The Ark of the Covenant

Where is the Ark today? Some think that the Ark of the Covenant is hidden somewhere today, and will be found at some point, possibly motivating Israel to build a new temple, the one that the antichrist will

desecrate in the Tribulation. There is a theory that Moses himself will be resurrected, find the Ark and bring it to Jerusalem, and he will be one of the two witnesses spoken of in Revelation. That is possible for the Tribulation period temple, but in the Kingdom temple it will not be needed:

Jeremiah 3:16-17 "It shall be in those days when you are multiplied and increased in the land," declares the LORD, "they will no longer say, 'The ark of the covenant of the LORD.' And it will not come to mind, nor will they remember it, nor will they miss it, nor will it be made again. (17) "At that time they will call Jerusalem 'The Throne of the LORD,' and all the nations will be gathered to it, to Jerusalem, for the name of the LORD; nor will they walk anymore after the stubbornness of their evil heart.

The Jews in the Kingdom will not think of it or miss it, and it will not be made again.

Chapter 43

Ezekiel 43:1-4 Then he led me to the gate, the gate facing toward the east; (2) and behold, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the way of the east. And His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory. (3) And *it was* like the appearance of the vision which I saw, like the vision which I saw when He came to destroy the city. And the visions *were* like the vision which I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell on my face. (4) And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate facing toward the east.



"...the glory of the LORD came...": God comes back! This is the climax of Ezekiel's entire book. The *Shekinah* Glory left the Temple through this gate in Ezekiel 10:19; and 11:23. Earlier, the Glory entered Solomon's Temple in 1 Kings 8:10-11; 2 Chronicles 5:13-14; and 2 Chronicles 7:1-3.

The glory of God enters through the King's gate, the east gate. The King arrives. Is this some nebulous anthropomorphic idea of God? No, this is Jesus Christ, the King who will reign physically from His throne in this temple. And He will live there FOREVER.

Ezekiel 43:5-6 And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house. (6) Then I heard one speaking to me from the house, while a man was standing beside me.

- Where was Ezekiel? On the outside

- Where is “he”? On the inside.
- Who is “he”? Yahweh – Jesus Christ

Ezekiel 43:7 He said to me, "Son of man, this is the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell among the sons of Israel forever. And the house of Israel will not again defile My holy name, neither they nor their kings, by their harlotry and by the corpses of their kings when they die,

God will dwell in a special, spiritual, and supernatural manner in this temple.

His Throne

Isaiah 16:5 A throne will even be established in lovingkindness, And a judge will sit on it in faithfulness in the tent of David; Moreover, he will seek justice And be prompt in righteousness.

Matthew 25:31 "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne.

Zechariah 6:12-13 "Then say to him, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Behold, a man whose name is Branch, for He will branch out from where He is; and He will build the temple of the LORD. (13) "Yes, it is He who will build the temple of the LORD, and He who will bear the honor and sit and rule on His throne. Thus, He will be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace will be between the two offices.'"

Chuck Missler: The Ark and Mercy Seat were two separate objects in the Scripture. The Ark is no longer the focus of worship in Jerusalem. It will be replaced by the Throne of the Lord as all nations shall be gathered to it. The only object known in all history that is suitable for the Throne of Christ is the Mercy Seat. This suggests that the Mercy Seat may have a distinct place in Biblical prophecy, as it relates to Christ's Second Coming, where He will rule and reign on earth in the Temple on Mount Zion.

Ezekiel 43:8-12 by setting their threshold by My threshold and their door post beside My door post, with only the wall between Me and them. And they have defiled My holy name by their abominations which they have committed. So I have consumed them in My anger. (9) "Now let them put away their harlotry and the corpses of their kings far from Me; and I will dwell among them forever. (10) "As for you, son of man, describe the temple to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and let them measure the plan. (11) "If they are ashamed of all that they have done, make known to them the design of the house, its structure, its exits, its entrances, all its designs, all its statutes, and all its laws. And write it in their sight, so that they may observe its whole design and all its statutes and do them. (12) "This is the law of the house: its entire area on the top of the mountain all around shall be most holy. Behold, this is the law of the house.

“...most holy”: This description, which had been used exclusively of the holy of holies (Exodus 26:34) now characterizes the entire building. “...the law of the house”: This all-pervading sanctity was to be “*the* law of the (whole) house,” as distinguished from the Levitical law, which had confined the sanctity to a single room of it.

Ezekiel 44:1-46:24: New Service of Worship

The ordinances in this section deal with: who may minister in the Temple (Ezekiel 44:1- 31); the revenues of the priests, the Levites, and the prince, and the prince's obligations to the Temple (Ezekiel 45:1-17); and the festal and daily offerings in the Temple, and the special offerings of the prince (Ezekiel 45:18-46:24).

Ezekiel 44

- 1) The relation of the prince to the sanctuary (vv. 1-3);
- 2) The relation of the people, Levites, and priests (vv. 4-16);
- 3) The duties and compensation of the priests (vv. 17-31).

Ezekiel 44:1-2 Then He brought me back by the way of the outer gate of the sanctuary, which faces the east; and it was shut. (2) The LORD said to me, "This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no one shall enter by it, for the LORD God of Israel has entered by it; therefore it shall be shut.

East Gate

- The prince cannot enter through the gate but is permitted to eat the sacrificial meal in its vestibule (v. 3; Jeremiah 30:21).
- The East gate was the place where the Shekinah Glory left the Temple (Ezekiel 10).
- It is the same gate by which the Shekinah Glory just entered the Temple (Ezekiel 43).
- The East Gate is special: It is used only by the Lord.
- It was an eastern tradition that one way to honor a king was to provide a gate for him that no one else used. So it is a point of honor. (There is a gate on the east, toward the Mount of Olives, sometimes called the Golden Gate, which has been sealed since 1543 a.d.; but this has nothing to do with the Temple Gate, which is yet future.)

Ezekiel 44:3-4 "As for the prince, he shall sit in it as prince to eat bread before the LORD; he shall enter by way of the porch of the gate and shall go out by the same way." (4) Then He brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the house; and I looked, and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD, and I fell on my face.

Who Is the "Prince"?

- The Messiah? • David? • Lineage of David?

The prince cannot enter through the gate but is permitted to eat the sacrificial meal in its vestibule (Jeremiah 30:21).

The Messiah?

There are at least three reasons why the prince here is not the Messiah.

- 1) This prince has no priestly rights. Even some of the former kings of Israel picked up certain priestly rights (1 Kings 8:22, 54; 9:25; 10:5). Some of the kings of Judah even usurped some of the priestly rights (2 Kings 16:12-13; 2 Chronicles 26:16). This prince has no priestly prerogatives as described in Psalm 110:4 and very prominent in Zechariah 6:12-13. Clearly, the Messiah has a priestly role.
- 2) This prince offers a sin offering (Ezekiel 45:22). The Messiah would not offer a sin offering; He offered Himself for sin. That offering was not ceremonial as we see here.
- 3) This prince has natural sons (Ezekiel 46:24).

David?

Some scholars believe that the prince may be David himself; we have had reference to David reappearing

(Ezekiel 34:23-24; 37:24). A literal appearance of David himself might qualify quite nicely to be this prince; but if that were the case, why didn't the text just say David and not this "prince"? Ezekiel had no problem of speaking of him as David before.

The Lineage of David?

So he's not the Messiah, but he may be from David's lineage. He has no priestly rights, but is favored above the people. He is not permitted to enter the inner court, but he can get closer to it than the people can. This prince is obligated to provide certain offerings on behalf of Israel (Ezekiel 45:13-22). There is a portion for the prince; but he is prohibited from taking anybody else's inherited land (Ezekiel 45:7-8; 46:18; 48:21-22).

So, this is apparently a Tribulation saint (in other words, not yet resurrected), a Jew, possibly from the lineage of David, who will have children. He will be the representative of Christ in Jerusalem, serving as an example of spiritual fidelity and integrity.

Ezekiel 44:5-6 The LORD said to me, "Son of man, mark well, see with your eyes and hear with your ears all that I say to you concerning all the statutes of the house of the LORD and concerning all its laws; and mark well the entrance of the house, with all exits of the sanctuary. (6) "You shall say to the rebellious ones, to the house of Israel, "Thus says the Lord GOD, "Enough of all your abominations, O house of Israel,

The word "rebellious" is a very frequently used word by Ezekiel in the first 24 chapters. The words "rebellious" in verse 6, and "abominations" leap out at us here, because Ezekiel has not used those words for several sections; but now they come up again. As you recall, in chapter after chapter after chapter Ezekiel proclaims a heavy message on his people. Once Jerusalem fell, his message shifted to the future, and he talked positively, upliftingly. There was the dry bones, the regathering to the land, and all that. Remember?

Ezekiel 44:7-9 when you brought in foreigners, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in My sanctuary to profane it, even My house, when you offered My food, the fat and the blood; for they made My covenant void--this in addition to all your abominations. (8) "And you have not kept charge of My holy things yourselves, but you have set foreigners to keep charge of My sanctuary." (9) "Thus says the Lord GOD, "No foreigner uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, of all the foreigners who are among the sons of Israel, shall enter My sanctuary.

The Jews who returned from the Babylonian Captivity stressed this prohibition (Ezra 4:1-3; Nehemiah 13:1-9; Acts 21:27-32).

Strangers

Part of the indictment was their permitting foreigners to enter and profane the Sanctuary. Under the Levitical laws, it was permissible under certain circumstances to allow foreigners to offer offerings (Leviticus 17:10, 12; Numbers 15:4), but never was it allowed to have foreigners officiate in the Sanctuary. Not only did they have to be Jewish, but of the Tribe of Levi.

Ezekiel 44:10-13 "But the Levites who went far from Me when Israel went astray, who went astray from Me after their idols, shall bear the punishment for their iniquity. (11) "Yet they shall be ministers in My sanctuary, having oversight at the gates of the house and ministering in the house; they shall slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister to them. (12) "Because they ministered to them before their idols and became a stumbling block of iniquity to the

house of Israel, therefore I have sworn against them," declares the Lord GOD, "that they shall bear the punishment for their iniquity. (13) "And they shall not come near to Me to serve as a priest to Me, nor come near to any of My holy things, to the things that are most holy; but they will bear their shame and their abominations which they have committed.

Duties of the Levites

Because of their sinful practices before Israel's fall to Babylon, the position of the Levites will be downgraded in the new temple from ministers to servants. They will be allowed to serve as gatekeepers, slayers of the sacrifices, and to help the worshipers. However, they will not be allowed to serve the Lord as priests or come near any of His holy things or offerings. The tasks of the Levites in Solomon's temple were more extensive (1 Chronicles 15:16; 16:4; 23:28-31).

Ezekiel 44:14-15 "Yet I will appoint them to keep charge of the house, of all its service and of all that shall be done in it. (15) "But the Levitical priests, the sons of Zadok, who kept charge of My sanctuary when the sons of Israel went astray from Me, shall come near to Me to minister to Me; and they shall stand before Me to offer Me the fat and the blood," declares the Lord GOD.

Priesthood History

The priesthood, at its institution, was entrusted to Aaron and his sons (Exodus 27:20, 21; 28:1-4; 29:9, 44; Numbers 3:10; 16:40; 18:7; 25:13). On Aaron's death the high priesthood passed into the hands of Eleazar, his eldest (living) son (Numbers 20:26-28). After Eleazar's death it was Phinehas, his eldest son (Numbers 25:11-13). In the last days of the judges the high priesthood belonged to Eli, of the line of Ithamar (1 Samuel 14:3; 22:20; 1 Chronicles 24:3). It continued till the reign of David, when it was held jointly by Abiathar of the line of Ithamar, and Zadok of the line of Eleazar (2 Samuel 8:17; 20:25; 1 Kings 4:4).

This arrangement, however, Solomon eventually overturned, by deposing Abiathar for supporting Adonijah's pretensions to the Throne (1 Kings 1:7; 2:26,27). From that time forward until the exile the high priesthood remained with Zadok and his sons (1 Kings 2:35; 1 Chronicles 29:22). In Ezekiel he and his sons are mentioned a total of 4 times (Ezekiel 43:19; 44:15; 48:11). There is no high priest mentioned; which is consistent with Zechariah 6:12,13. Jesus Himself will be high priest.

Chapter 45 Regulations:

- To be observed in the maintenance of worship.

Chapter 46 Supplementary orders:

- For the prince, the people, and the priests

Best Offering

In regard to the offerings here, they give nothing but the best. If you have studied the offerings in Leviticus 22:8 or 17:15 or Deuteronomy 14:21, etc., you know that the Lord is entitled to the best, not the left-overs. Not only without blemish, but the best, whatever it is. It is something we usually forget when we are making a sacrifice of ourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ, whether it is an offering in the Sunday morning envelope, or whether it is some other kind of sacrifice that we are giving to the Lord, like our time. He is entitled to the firstfruits, and He is entitled to whatever is our best.

Missing Feasts?

Only four of the seven annual feasts under the Levitical system are reported in these passages (Leviticus 23:4-44). Passover, Unleavened Bread, & Firstfruits are combined as one feast; which will point back to

Christ's death and resurrection. The Feast of Tabernacles will celebrate Israel's new position in God's Millennial Kingdom. Why did Ezekiel omit Israel's other national feasts, the Feast of Pentecost, the Feast of Trumpets, and the Day of Atonement? The fulfillment of Israel's Kingdom (and the Church) promises may render those three feasts obsolete.

Chapter 47

In these verses there is a description of a literal life-giving river with the details such as the fishermen (v.10) and the salty swamps and marshes (v.11). Joel had mentioned this river before Ezekiel's time (Joel 3:18); Zechariah spoke of it after Israel returned from the Babylonian Captivity (Zechariah 14:8).

Ezekiel 47:1-2 Then he brought me back to the door of the house; and behold, water was flowing from under the threshold of the house toward the east, for the house faced east. And the water was flowing down from under, from the right side of the house, from south of the altar. (2) He brought me out by way of the north gate and led me around on the outside to the outer gate by way of the gate that faces east. And behold, water was trickling from the south side.

"...eastward": Zechariah recorded that the water flowing from Jerusalem will divide, with half flowing East toward the Dead Sea and half flowing West toward the Mediterranean (Zechariah 14:8). Ezekiel followed only the branch that went toward the east.

Ezekiel 47:3-5 When the man went out toward the east with a line in his hand, he measured a thousand cubits, and he led me through the water, water reaching the ankles. (4) Again he measured a thousand and led me through the water, water reaching the knees. Again he measured a thousand and led me through the water, water reaching the loins. (5) Again he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not ford, for the water had risen, enough water to swim in, a river that could not be forded.

The River

Ezekiel is brought from the outer court (Ezek 46:21) to the vestibule of the Temple (Ezek 40:48, 49). There he sees a stream issuing from below the threshold of the Temple, eastward, passing south of the altar (v. 1) and south of the outer east gate (v. 2). At 1,000 cubits from the gate, the waters are ankle deep (v. 3), but within 4,000 cubits they have become a river, deep enough to swim in (vv. 4, 5).

Ezekiel 47:6-8 He said to me, "Son of man, have you seen this?" Then he brought me back to the bank of the river. (7) Now when I had returned, behold, on the bank of the river there were very many trees on the one side and on the other. (8) Then he said to me, "These waters go out toward the eastern region and go down into the Arabah; then they go toward the sea, being made to flow into the sea, and the waters of the sea become fresh.

The water goes down into the Arabah, the depression of the Jordan Valley reaching to the Gulf of Akabah, transforming it, making the waters of the (Dead) Sea fresh (v. 8) and teeming with life (v. 9) like the Mediterranean Sea (v. 10).

Ezekiel 47:9 "It will come about that every living creature which swarms in every place where the river goes, will live. And there will be very many fish, for these waters go there and the others become fresh; so everything will live where the river goes.

The Dead Sea, now some six times saltier than the ocean, will become completely salt-free.

Ezekiel 47:10 "And it will come about that fishermen will stand beside it; from Engedi to Eneglaim there will be a place for the spreading of nets. Their fish will be according to their kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea, very many.

"...Eneglaim": (literally, "Spring of the Two Calves") is uncertain. Suggestions have included the southwest shore of the Dead Sea near Zoar and an area on the northwest shore south of Khirbet Qumran.

Ezekiel 47:11-12 "But its swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they will be left for salt. (12) "By the river on its bank, on one side and on the other, will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither and their fruit will not fail. They will bear every month because their water flows from the sanctuary, and their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing."

Also see Joel 3:18; Zechariah 13:1; 14:8; John 4:14; 7:37, 38; Revelation 22:1, 2

Ezekiel 47:13-14 Thus says the Lord GOD, "This shall be the boundary by which you shall divide the land for an inheritance among the twelve tribes of Israel; Joseph shall have two portions. (14) "You shall divide it for an inheritance, each one equally with the other; for I swore to give it to your forefathers, and this land shall fall to you as an inheritance.

The Land Covenant

- God promised Abraham and his descendants the land of Palestine (Genesis 13:14-17; 15:17-21) and that promise has never been rescinded.
- Israel's experiencing blessing in the land was conditioned on her obedience (Deuteronomy 28), but her right to possess the land has never been revoked.
- When God inaugurates His New Covenant with Israel in the future, she will be restored to her place of blessing in the land (Ezekiel 36-37).
- To prepare the people for this new occupation, God defined the boundaries of the country. This will be Israel's borders during the Millennium
- It will be similar to those promised her during the time of Moses (Numbers 34:1-12).

Ezekiel 47:15 "This shall be the boundary of the land: on the north side, from the Great Sea by the way of Hethlon, to the entrance of Zedad;

"...Zedad": on the northern boundary of Canaan.

Ezekiel 47:16 Hamath, Berothah, Sibram, which is between the border of Damascus and the border of Hamath; Hazar-hatticon, which is by the border of Hauran.

Between the parallel ranges of Lebanon is the El-Bekaa valley, leading to "the border of Hamath" on the Orontes, in the Syrian frontier.

- Berothah—a city in Syria conquered by David; meaning "wells."
- Hazar-hatticon—meaning "the middle village."
- Hauran—a tract in Syria, south of Damascus.

Ezekiel 47:17 "The boundary shall extend from the sea to Hazar-enan at the border of Damascus, and on the north toward the north is the border of Hamath. This is the north

side.

Hazar-Enan—a town in the north of Canaan, meaning “village of fountains.” The northern border will stretch east from the Mediterranean Sea north of the modern city of Tripoli and will include what was then the northern border of Syria; 115 miles north of Damascus.

The North Boundaries

- From the great (Mediterranean) sea by way of Hethlon (Heitela, 6 miles north of Tripoli, or Adlun, between Zarephath and Tyre);
- to the entrance of Hamath on the Orontes (115 miles N of Damascus (Amos 6:2);
- to Zedad (Sadad, southeast of Homs), Berothah (belonging to Zobah (2 Samuel 8:8); or Beraitan near Baalbek), Sibram (Ziphron, between Hamath and Homs (Numbers 34:9);
- to Hazer-hatticon on the border of Hauran (east of the Jordan, south of Damascus).

Ezekiel 47:18 "The east side, from between Hauran, Damascus, Gilead and the land of Israel, shall be the Jordan; from the north border to the eastern sea you shall measure. This is the east side.

The eastern border will be the Jordan River and 25 mi southeast of the Dead Sea. Gilead and the Transjordan area to the east of the Jordan will not be included in Israel's future inheritance.

Ezekiel 47:19-20 "The south side toward the south shall extend from Tamar as far as the waters of Meribath-kadesh, to the brook of Egypt and to the Great Sea. This is the south side toward the south. (20) "The west side shall be the Great Sea, from the south border to a point opposite Lebo-hamath. This is the west side.

The southern boundary is 50 miles south of Beersheba. The country east of Jordan is excluded.

Ezekiel 47:21-23 "So you shall divide this land among yourselves according to the tribes of Israel. (22) "You shall divide it by lot for an inheritance among yourselves and among the aliens who stay in your midst, who bring forth sons in your midst. And they shall be to you as the native-born among the sons of Israel; they shall be allotted an inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel. (23) "And in the tribe with which the alien stays, there you shall give him his inheritance," declares the Lord GOD.

Chapter 48

Ezekiel 48:1 "Now these are the names of the tribes: from the northern extremity, beside the way of Hethlon to Lebo-hamath, as far as Hazar-enan at the border of Damascus, toward the north beside Hamath, running from east to west, Dan, one portion.

The locations of all 12 tribes will differ from their locations during Joshua's time to the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities (Joshua 13-19).

Tribe of Dan

Dan, so long morally semi-heathen, is to have the least honorable place, at the extreme north (Judges 18:1-31). Dan has the largest population (Numbers 1:39) but the smallest allocation, west of Benjamin. It lost territory after the death of Samson (Judges 16-21) and resettled at Laish in the north (Deuteronomy 33:22; Josephus, *Antiquities* 5:3:1).

Ezekiel 48:2-7 "Beside the border of Dan, from the east side to the west side, Asher, one portion. (3) "Beside the border of Asher, from the east side to the west side, Naphtali, one portion. (4) "Beside the border of Naphtali, from the east side to the west side, Manasseh, one portion. (5) "Beside the border of Manasseh, from the east side to the west side, Ephraim, one portion. (6) "Beside the border of Ephraim, from the east side to the west side, Reuben, one portion. (7) "Beside the border of Reuben, from the east side to the west side, Judah, one portion.

In dividing the millennial land among the people, God will give seven tribes portions in the northern part of the land. Starting from the north these tribes will be **Dan** ([v. 1](#)), **Asher** ([v. 2](#)), **Naphtali** ([v. 3](#)), **Manasseh** ([v. 4](#)), **Ephraim** ([v. 5](#)), **Reuben** ([v. 6](#)), and **Judah** ([v. 7](#)).

Ezekiel 48:8-22 "And beside the border of Judah, from the east side to the west side, shall be the allotment which you shall set apart, 25,000 cubits in width, and in length like one of the portions, from the east side to the west side; and the sanctuary shall be in the middle of it. (9) "The allotment that you shall set apart to the LORD shall be 25,000 cubits in length and 10,000 in width. (10) "The holy allotment shall be for these, namely for the priests, toward the north 25,000 cubits in length, toward the west 10,000 in width, toward the east 10,000 in width, and toward the south 25,000 in length; and the sanctuary of the LORD shall be in its midst. (11) "It shall be for the priests who are sanctified of the sons of Zadok, who have kept My charge, who did not go astray when the sons of Israel went astray as the Levites went astray. (12) "It shall be an allotment to them from the allotment of the land, a most holy place, by the border of the Levites. (13) "Alongside the border of the priests the Levites shall have 25,000 cubits in length and 10,000 in width. The whole length shall be 25,000 cubits and the width 10,000. (14) "Moreover, they shall not sell or exchange any of it, or alienate this choice portion of land; for it is holy to the LORD. (15) "The remainder, 5,000 cubits in width and 25,000 in length, shall be for common use for the city, for dwellings and for open spaces; and the city shall be in its midst. (16) "These shall be its measurements: the north side 4,500 cubits, the south side 4,500 cubits, the east side 4,500 cubits, and the west side 4,500 cubits. (17) "The city shall have open spaces: on the north 250 cubits, on the south 250 cubits, on the east 250 cubits, and on the west 250 cubits. (18) "The remainder of the length alongside the holy allotment shall be 10,000 cubits toward the east and 10,000 toward the west; and it shall be alongside the holy allotment. And its produce shall be food for the workers of the city. (19) "The workers of the city, out of all the tribes of Israel, shall cultivate it. (20) "The whole allotment shall be 25,000 by 25,000 cubits; you shall set apart the holy allotment, a square, with the property of the city. (21) "The remainder shall be for the prince, on the one side and on the other of the holy allotment and of the property of the city; in front of the 25,000 cubits of the allotment toward the east border and westward in front of the 25,000 toward the west border, alongside the portions, it shall be for the prince. And the holy allotment and the sanctuary of the house shall be in the middle of it. (22) "Exclusive of the property of the Levites and the property of the city, which are in the middle of that which belongs to the prince, everything between the border of Judah and the border of Benjamin shall be for the prince.

The central band of land was allotted to the prince, the priests, and the Levites. That central portion will also include the city of Jerusalem and its suburbs. The city will be laid out as a square 7,875 feet (4,500 cubits) on each side and will cover approximately 2.2 square miles ([48:16](#)). Jerusalem will be surrounded by a band of land 437½ feet (250 cubits) wide, which will serve as pastureland for flocks and herds

belonging to people living in the city (v. 17). On either side of the city proper will be two portions of land 3.3 miles (10,000 cubits) long (v. 18) and 1.65 miles (5,000 cubits) wide (v. 15). This farmland will be cultivated to supply food for the workers of the city.

Ezekiel 48:23-29 "As for the rest of the tribes: from the east side to the west side, Benjamin, one portion. (24) "Beside the border of Benjamin, from the east side to the west side, Simeon, one portion. (25) "Beside the border of Simeon, from the east side to the west side, Issachar, one portion. (26) "Beside the border of Issachar, from the east side to the west side, Zebulun, one portion. (27) "Beside the border of Zebulun, from the east side to the west side, Gad, one portion. (28) "And beside the border of Gad, at the south side toward the south, the border shall be from Tamar to the waters of Meribath-kadesh, to the brook of Egypt, to the Great Sea. (29) "This is the land which you shall divide by lot to the tribes of Israel for an inheritance, and these are their several portions," declares the Lord GOD.

The lower part of the land will be allotted to the five remaining tribes. Going southward these will be Benjamin (v. 23), Simeon (v. 24), Issachar (v. 25), Zebulun (v. 26), and Gad (v. 27). The locations of all 12 tribes will differ from their locations during Joshua's time to the captivities (Joshua 13-19).

Ezekiel 48:30-31 "These are the exits of the city: on the north side, 4,500 cubits by measurement, (31) shall be the gates of the city, named for the tribes of Israel, three gates toward the north: the gate of Reuben, one; the gate of Judah, one; the gate of Levi, one.

The new city of Jerusalem will have 12 gates, 3 on each side. Why these gates are grouped as they are is obscure. The three gates on the north side (closest to the sanctuary) will be named for Reuben, Judah, and Levi. Perhaps these three were listed first because of their preeminent positions among the tribes. Reuben was the firstborn of Jacob's 12 sons, Judah was the royal tribe, and Levi was the tribe of the priesthood. Also all three were children of Jacob's first wife Leah (Genesis 29:31-35).

Ezekiel 48:32 "On the east side, 4,500 cubits, shall be three gates: the gate of Joseph, one; the gate of Benjamin, one; the gate of Dan, one.

The tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh were combined as the tribe of Joseph (Genesis 48:1). Joseph and Benjamin were both sons of Rachel (Genesis 30:22-24; 35:16-18). Dan was the first son of Rachel's servant Bilhah, who became Jacob's concubine (Genesis 30:4-6).

Ezekiel 48:33 "On the south side, 4,500 cubits by measurement, shall be three gates: the gate of Simeon, one; the gate of Issachar, one; the gate of Zebulun, one.

These three were also born to Leah (Genesis 29:33; 30:17-20). Since each of these tribes was relocated in the southern portion of the land the gates faced their inheritances (Ezekiel 48:24-26).

Ezekiel 48:34 "On the west side, 4,500 cubits, shall be three gates: the gate of Gad, one; the gate of Asher, one; the gate of Naphtali, one.

These three tribes descended from sons of Jacob's concubines. Gad and Asher were born to Zilpah (Genesis 30:9-13). Naphtali was born to Bilhah (Genesis 30:7-8).

Ezekiel 48:35 "The city shall be 18,000 cubits round about; and the name of the city from that day shall be, "The LORD is there."

The most remarkable aspect of the new city of Jerusalem will be the presence of the Lord. God's glory had departed from the city as a prelude to its judgment ([chaps. 10-11](#)), and His return will signal Jerusalem's blessing. This fact so impressed Ezekiel that he wrote that the city will be given a new name: **THE LORD IS THERE**. As the Prophet Ezekiel had stated repeatedly, God will return to dwell with His people. No longer worshipping lifeless idols and engaged in detestable practices, Israel will enjoy the Lord's holy presence in the Millennium.

The Millennium

- Promised to David (2 Samuel 7:12-17; 23:5) under oath (**Psalm 89:34-37**).
- Predicted in the Psalms and the Prophets (Psalm 2; 45; 110; Isaiah 2:1-5; 4:1-6; 11:1-9; 12:1-6; 30:18-26; 35:1-10; 60, 61:3-62; 66; Jeremiah 23:3-8; 32:37-44; Ezekiel 40-48; Daniel 2:44-45; 7:13-14; 12:2-3; Micah 4:1-8; Zechariah 12:10-14:21).
- Promised to Mary (Luke 1:32; Micah 5:2; Isaiah 9:6, 7; Daniel 2:44); reaffirmed to apostles (Luke 22:29-30).
- Lord's Prayer: "Thy Kingdom come" (Matthew 6:10, 13; Acts 1:6; Psalm 45, 46, 47, 48).
- Rule (Psalm 2; 110) with a "Rod of Iron" (Revelation 12:5; 19:15); "Every knee will bow" (Philemon 2:6-11).

Millennial Limitations

- It is Not "heaven" or the Eternal State which follows.
- It is Not the "New Earth" (Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1).
- There will be sin, and a limited amount of evil, it will be judged immediately (Isaiah 11:1-16).

Millennium Changes

- Creation will be changed: Physical changes (Zechariah 4:9,10; Isaiah 35:1-10;55:3; Joel 3:18; Amos 9:13). The curse will be lifted (Isaiah 11:6-9).
- Lambs will lie down with lions, etc. Creation will be redeemed (Genesis 3 → Romans 8:20-22).
- There will be seven times as much light (Isaiah 30:26; 60:19-20). The Earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord (Isaiah 11:9; Habakkuk 2:14)
- Yet, it is *not eternity* (Isaiah 65): There will still be death and sin (Isaiah 65:20-22).
- Extended longevity: People will live longer, each will have their own land (Micah 4:15); the land will be fruitful (Amos 9:13).

Millennial Longevity

- Isaiah 65:20 has been interpreted as meaning that unbelievers in the Millennium will die if they have not accepted Christ by the age of 100.
- Jeremiah 31:31-34 would seem to be saying that there will be no Jewish unbelievers in the kingdom, so there may be death only among Gentiles.

