

Ezekiel 43 - The Return of the Shekinah Glory to the Temple; Ezekiel Explains the Millennial Temple to the Exiles; Measurements and Consecration of the Altar

III. Restoration of Israel (Ezek 33:1—48:45)

(7) Restored Temple (Ezek 40:1—48:35)

(A) Temple (Ezek 40:1—43:27)

(e) Return of the Lord's glory (43:1-12)

(i) Return of the Lord's glory (43:1-5)

(ii) Israel's perpetual holiness (43:6-9)

(iii) Ezekiel to explain the Temple to the exiles (43:10-12)

(f) Altar of burnt offering (43:13-27)

(i) Altar (43:13-17)

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Ezekiel 43

(e) Return of the Lord's glory (43:1-12)

(i) Return of the Lord's glory (43:1-5)

1 Then he led me to the gate, the gate facing east;

1 Then he led me to the gate, the gate facing toward the east;

1 Next, he brought me to the east-facing gate,

1 Afterward he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the east:

- The angel now led Ezekiel to the East Gate. In 42:15, Ezekiel and the angel had left the Outer Court through this gate to measure the larger Temple complex (42:16-19). After completing the measurements around the outside of the Outer Wall, they returned to the same gate.

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 from His glory.

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.

2 and the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the east. His voice sounded like roaring water, and the land shimmered from his glory.

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

- The return/arrival of the *Shekinah* Glory of God

- "...coming from the way of the east" - the *Shekinah* returns to the Temple from the same direction as its departure (Cf. 10:18-19; 11:23).

- "...like the sound of many waters" - one of 24 identities of Jesus Christ (1:24; Cf. Rev 1:15-16; 14:2; 19:6).

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.**

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.

3 His appearance in the vision that I was having was similar to what I observed in the vision where he had come to destroy the city, and also like the visions that I saw by the Chebar River. I fell flat on my face

3 And it was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, even according to the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city: and the visions were like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell upon my face.

- Ezekiel here is not claiming to have been the one who destroyed Jerusalem; rather, he identified himself with his prophetic vision. The reference is to the earlier vision of the *Shekinah* Glory departing from the Temple (Cf. 8:2-4; 9:1-11).

- "...the visions *were* like the vision which I saw by the river Chebar" - Ezekiel further noted that this vision was like the vision that he saw by the river Chebar, recalling his earlier encounters with the *merkavah* (1:3-28; 3:22-23; 10:20-22).

- "...I fell on my face" - the *Shekinah*, as the visible manifestation of God's presence, elicits reverence and worship. By falling on his face, Ezekiel paid homage to God, acknowledging the holiness and majesty of God's presence.

4 And **the glory of the LORD entered** the house by way of the gate facing east.

4 And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate facing toward the east.

4 while the glory of the LORD entered the Temple through the east-facing gate.

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

- "...the glory of the LORD entered" - this event is described with precision for the direction of the *Shekinah*'s return is specified as by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east.

— This detail confirms that God's glory returned through the same entryway from which it had previously departed—the outer eastern gate—although now as part of a completely new Temple.

5 And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner courtyard; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house.

5 And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house.

5 Just then, the Spirit lifted me up and carried me into the inner courtyard, where the glory of the LORD was filling the Temple!

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

- Up to this point, it had been the angel guiding Ezekiel from one location to another. Now, the Holy Spirit transported him from the Outer Court, where he stood by the Eastern Gate (v1), into the Inner Court.

— From this new vantage point, Ezekiel witnessed the culmination of the vision: the *Shekinah* took up residence within the Temple, signifying that God's presence had returned to dwell among His people.

The return of the *Shekinah* Glory highlights not only the restoration of divine fellowship but also serves to authenticate the Millennial Temple. This follows the same pattern seen in earlier structures of worship. In Ex 40:34-35, the *Shekinah* entered the Tabernacle as a sign of divine approval. It also entered Solomon's Temple for the same purpose (1 Kings 8:10-11 (Cf. 2 Chr 5:13-14; 7:1-2). Likewise, it will return to the Millennial Temple to authenticate this building as the dwelling place of God's presence.

(ii) Israel's perpetual holiness (43:6-9)

6 Then I heard *Him* speaking to me **from the house**, while **a man** was standing beside me.

6 Then I heard one speaking to me from the house, while a man was standing beside me.

6 I heard someone speaking to me from the Temple, and a man appeared, standing beside me!

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

- "...*Him*" - the *Shekinah*; the word of the LORD

- "...from the house" - the voice originated from within the Temple, while Ezekiel was outside of the Temple

- "...a man" - the angel who had been guiding Ezekiel throughout the Temple compound

God to Live among His People

7 And 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 prostitution and by the corpses of their kings when they die**,

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,

7 "Son of Man," the Lord GOD told me, "This is where my throne is, where I place the soles of my feet, and where I will live among the Israelis forever. The house of Israel will no longer defile my holy name—neither they nor their kings—by their unfaithfulness, by the lifeless idols of their kings on their funeral mounds,

7 And he said unto me, Son of man, [Behold] the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever, and my holy name, shall the house of Israel no more defile, neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom, nor by the carcasses of their kings in their high places.

- The word of the LORD to Ezekiel is contained in v7-9...

- "...*this is* the place of My throne" - the Most Holy Place in the Millennial Temple will once again become God's throne, the central seat of His presence on earth.

- "...the place of the soles of My feet" - signifies that God will dwell among His people, as He had during the Tabernacle era.

— Thus, the Millennial Temple will be both God's throne and His footstool, fulfilling Ps 99:5; 132:7.

Ps 99:5: Exalt the LORD our God And worship at His footstool; Holy is He.

Ps 132:7: Let's go into His dwelling place; Let's worship at His footstool.

- "...I will dwell" - *eshkan*, "to tabernacle"; God's presence will once again "tabernacle" with His people.

— This promise fulfills a prayer in 1 Kings 8:12-13, where King Solomon asked for God's abiding presence in the Temple. That prayer could not be fully realized in Solomon's era, but it will be perfectly fulfilled in the Millennial Temple.

- Two primary ways that Israel defiled the LORD's name were:

- "...by their prostitution" - Ezekiel had previously detailed the extent of Israel's idolatry (8:5-18). This was spiritual idolatry, referring to Israel's persistent worship of idols.

- "...by the corpses of their kings when they die" - this involved the burial of Israel's kings within the grounds of their palaces, which were dangerously close to the temple (Cf. 2

Kings 21:18; 21:26).

— Since Solomon's palace was located on the southeast hill of the City of David near the Temple, these practices defiled the sacred space.

8 by **putting 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.**

8 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.

8 by their setting up their threshold too close to my threshold and their door post too close to my door post, with a wall between me and them. After all, they have defiled my holy name by the loathsome things that they did, so I devoured them in my anger.

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

- YHWH elaborates on Israel's defilement (v7)...

- "...putting their threshold by My threshold, and their door post beside My door post" - the royal palace, particularly Solomon's, was so close to the Temple that one side of the palace practically shared the south wall of the Temple Court (1 Kings 7:8). This proximity showed a lack of reverence for the boundary that was to separate the holy from the common.

- "...So I have consumed them in My anger" - the consequences for this defilement was divine judgment. God has never tolerated the desecration of His holy name.

9 Now let them remove their prostitution and the corpses of their kings far from Me, and I **will dwell** among them **forever**.

9 Now let them put away their harlotry and the corpses of their kings far from Me; and I will dwell among them forever.

9 But now let them send their unfaithfulness—that is, the lifeless idols of their kings—far away from me, and I will live among them forever."

9 Now let them put away their whoredom, and the carcasses of their kings, far from me, and I will dwell in the midst of them for ever.

- The admonition is clear: Israel must ensure that these practices never recur.

— In the Messianic Age, Israel will be a saved nation and these warnings will not apply anymore. So the admonition here held relevance for Ezekiel's immediate audience.

— Following the Babylonian Captivity, the Israelites were to avoid spiritual idolatry and ensure that burials no longer occurred near the Temple compound. These actions symbolized a renewed commitment to separating the holy from the common.

- "...I will dwell" - *shakan*, emphasizes the permanence of God's presence
- "...forever" - marks a new era of divine fellowship in the Millennial Kingdom

(iii) Ezekiel to explain the Temple to the exiles (43:10-12)

10 "As for you, son of man, inform the house of Israel of the temple, **so that they will be ashamed of their wrongdoings**; and have them measure the plan.

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.

10 "And now, Son of Man, describe the Temple to the house of Israel. They will be ashamed because of their sin. They will measure its pattern.

10 Thou son of man, shew the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities: and let them measure the pattern.

- Ezekiel is now commissioned to inform his fellow exiles of the full details of the Temple's design, structure, and rules. He was to reveal the full details of the Millennial Temple to the people of Israel exiled in Babylon.

- "...so that they will be ashamed of their wrongdoings" - the clear purpose for this commission: so that Israel, upon hearing of the blessings of the LORD, will be ashamed of their wrongdoings.

— The LORD wanted these exiles to reflect on their past sins and repent. The hope was that seeing the holiness of their future would inspire them to acknowledge their failings and commit to change.

11 And if they are ashamed of everything that they have done, make known to them **the plan of the house, its layout, its exits, its entrances, all its plans, all its statutes, and all its laws**. And write *it* in their sight, so that they may observe its entire plan and all its statutes and execute them.

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.

11 If they are ashamed of everything that they've done, you are to reveal to them the design of the Temple, its structure, its exits and entrances, its plans, its ordinances, and all of its regulations. Write it down where they can see it and remember all of its designs and regulations, so they will implement them.

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

thereof: and write it in their sight, that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them.

- "...if they are ashamed" - if the exiles reacted properly to what Ezekiel revealed (ashamed of their sin, with a heart of repentance), then Ezekiel was to go ahead and disclose to them:

- "...the plan of the house" - the overall structure, which includes the outline of the Outer Wall

- "...its layout" - refers to the layout of the various chambers and cells

- "...its exits" - refers to the gates located in both the outer and inner walls

- "...its entrances" - the actual doors that lead into different areas of the Temple compound

- "...all its plans" - the shapes and designs of the various rooms within the Temple

- "...all its statutes" - refers to the specific uses and functions assigned to each section and element of the Temple

- "...all its laws" - refer to the rules and regulations governing the service of the Levites and the priests, particularly the sons of Zadok

- "...write *it* in their sight" - Ezekiel was to record every detail of the vision, which is what he did in Ezek 40-48.

- "...so that they may observe its entire plan and all its statutes and execute them" - the purpose of documenting this vision was not merely informational but transformational.

— By providing a clear, written description of the future Temple, the people of Israel were given a tangible goal to strive for—a call to begin obeying God's commands in the present as preparation for the glorious future outlined in the vision.

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.

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.

12 This is to be the regulation for the Temple: the entire area on top of the mountain is to be considered wholly consecrated. This is to be the law of the Temple."

12 This is the law of the house; Upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy. Behold, this is the law of the house.

- "...the law of the house" - the detailed plan and regulations (v11)

- "...on the top of the mountain" - the plateau on top of Millennial Mountain

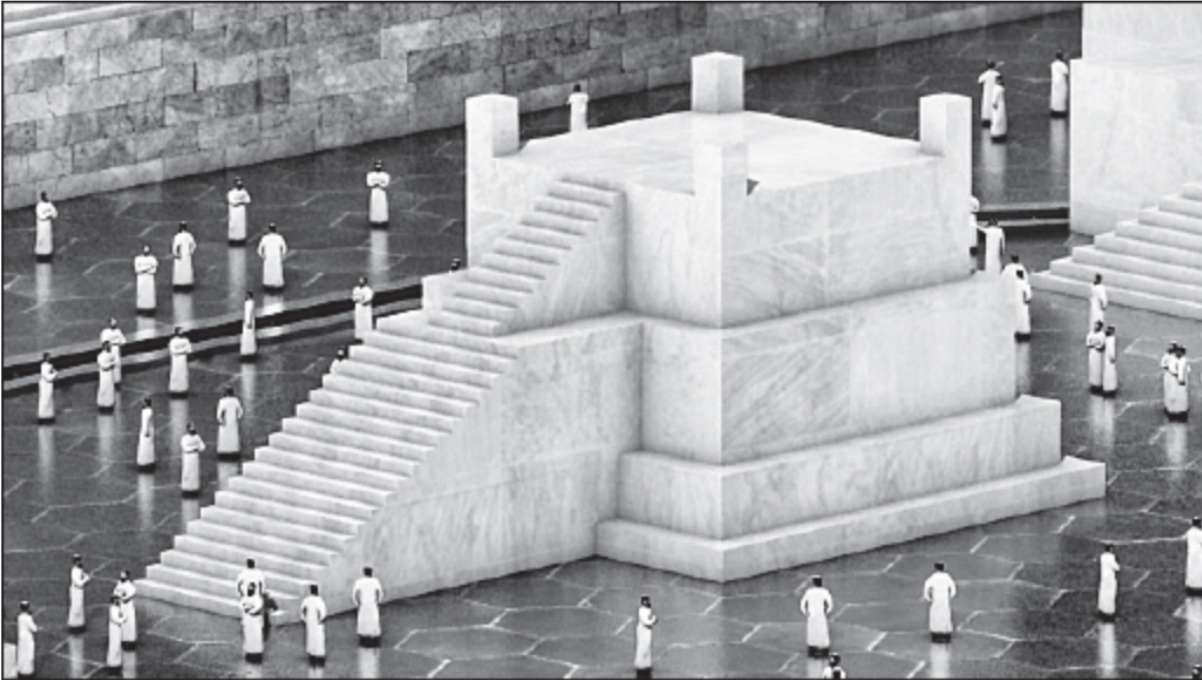
- "...*shall be most holy*" - the holiness of the entire Temple complex will match the sacredness of the Most Holy Place within the Temple itself.

- "...law" - *torah*, shows that these instructions are not suggestions, but constitute a divine mandate—Kingdom Law—that will govern the worship and administration of the Millennial Temple.

(f) Altar of burnt offering (43:13-27)

The OT contains several passages that suggest the reinstatement of animal sacrifices during the Messianic Kingdom. While some references, such as Is 56:6-8, Zech 14:16, and Jer 33:15-18, briefly mention these occasions in the context of the millennium, the most detailed description appears in Ezek 43:18—46:24.

Ezek 40:47 already noted the inclusion of an altar of sacrifice in the Millennial Temple. Ezek 43:13-27 provides further details in three sections: the design and measurements of the altar (v13-17), the consecration of the altar (v18-27).



(i) Altar (43:13-17)

13 "And these are the measurements of the altar by cubits (**the cubit *being* a cubit and a hand width**): the **base** *shall be* a cubit and the width a cubit, and its border on its edge all around one span; and this *shall be the height* of the base of the altar.

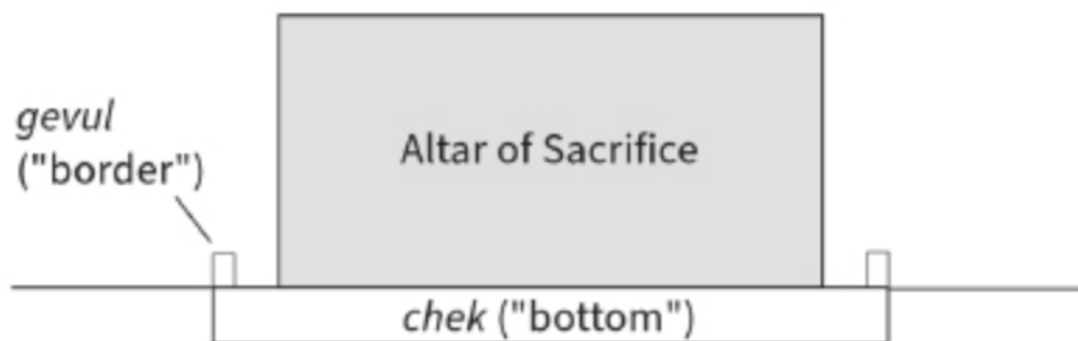
13 "And these are the measurements of the altar by cubits (the cubit being a cubit and a handbreadth): the base *shall be* a cubit and the width a cubit, and its border on its edge round about one span; and this *shall be the height* of the base of the altar.

13 "Here are the measurements of the altar in cubits that were a cubit and a handbreadth long: its base is a cubit long and a cubit wide, and its border around the edge at one handbreadth is to be the height of the altar.

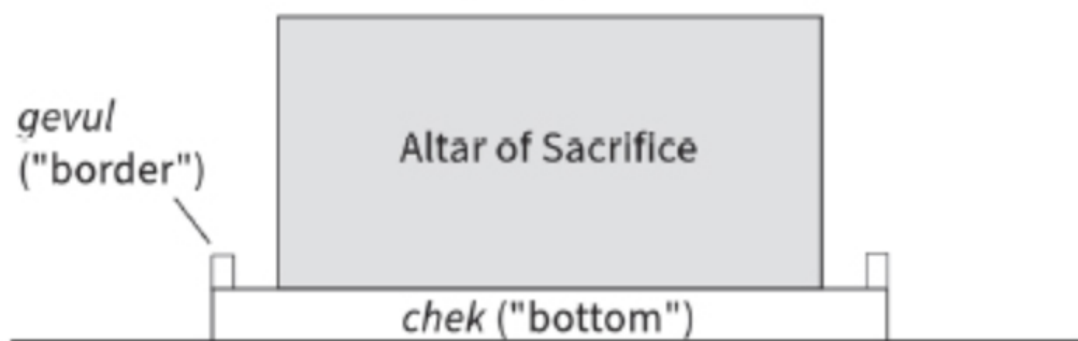
13 And these are the measures of the altar after the cubits: The cubit is a cubit and an hand breadth; even the bottom shall be a cubit, and the breadth a cubit, and the border thereof by the edge thereof round about shall be a span: and this shall be the higher place of the altar.

- The same Voice who has been speaking to Ezekiel since v2 (the *Shekinah* Glory, from inside the Millennial Temple, is speaking to Ezekiel who is outside the Millennial Temple).
- "... (the cubit *being* a cubit and a hand width)" - the Voice confirms the continued use of a "royal cubit" (21 inches), in the following measurements. This measurement is consistent with the measurements used for the rest of the Temple.
- "...base" - *chek*, means "bosom," "lap," or "embrace"; in 1 Kings 22:35 it refers to a groove that collected blood, suggesting it is some sort of channel or groove to collect and carry off the blood of sacrifices.
- However, it could also describe the foundation upon which the altar rests, either recessed or at ground level. See possibilities below; it's likely Option 2.

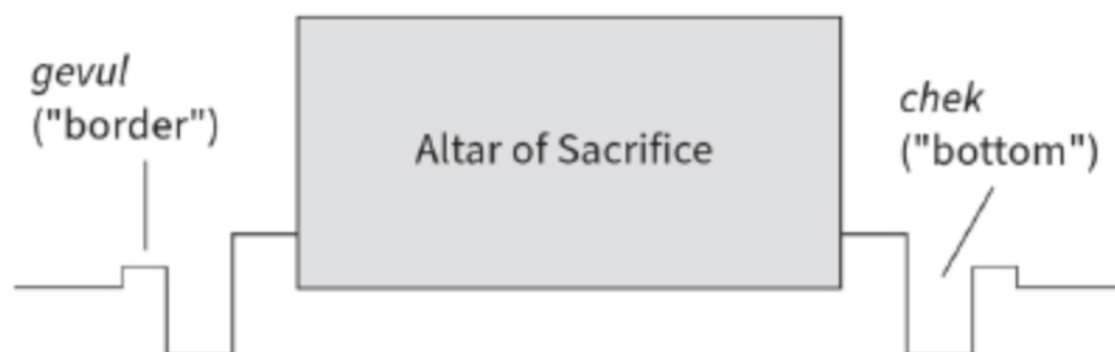
Option 1



Option 2



Option 3



14 And from the base on the ground to the lower ledge *shall be* two cubits, and the width one cubit; and from the smaller ledge to the larger ledge *shall be* four cubits, and the width one cubit.

14 From the base on the ground to the lower ledge *shall be* two cubits and the width one cubit; and from the smaller ledge to the larger ledge *shall be* four cubits and the width one cubit.

14 From the base on the ground to its lower edge is to be two cubits, with its width to be one cubit. From the lesser ledge to the larger edge is to be four cubits. Its width is to be one cubit.

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

- Verses 14-15a describe the three-tiered structure of the altar, which resembles a stepped design:

- The lowest section: from the base on the ground to the lower ledge equals 42 inches (1.07 meters) high.

- The breadth, or setback, of this section measures 21 inches (53 cm) from the edge of this tier, there is an indentation similar to the one described for the foundation.

- The middle section: from the smaller ledge to the larger ledge measures 84 inches, or 7 feet (2.1 meters) high, and its indentation is again 21 inches from the edge.

15 The **altar hearth** *shall be* four cubits; and from the altar hearth *shall extend upward four horns*.

15 The altar hearth *shall be* four cubits; and from the altar hearth shall extend upwards four horns.

15 The hearth is to be four cubits high, and four horns are to extend upwards from the hearth.

15 So the altar shall be four cubits; and from the altar and upward shall be four horns.

- The top section: the altar hearth measures 7 feet (2.1 meters).

- "...altar hearth" - *har'el*, means "the mountain of God"; this emphasizes the spiritual significance of the altar's "summit" where sacrifices are offered. The sacrifices are burned on "God's mountain."

- "...extend upward four horns" - from each corner of the top of the altar ("hearth"), a horn protrudes upward. This matches a similar design in the altar in the Tabernacle (Ex 29:12).

- In total, the altar stands 210 inches high (17 feet 6 inches, 5.3 meters) about its foundation.

16 Now the altar hearth *shall be* twelve cubits long by twelve wide, square in its four sides.

16 Now the altar hearth *shall be* twelve *cubits* long by twelve wide, square in its four sides.

16 The hearth is to be twelve cubits long and twelve cubits wide; that is, it will be a four-sided square.

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

- The top section of the altar ("hearth") measured 21 feet (6.4 meters) square. This is consistent with the squared design of the altar in the Tabernacle (Cf. Ex 27:1; 38:1).

17 And **the ledge** *shall be* fourteen *cubits* long by fourteen wide in its four sides, the **border** around it *shall be* half a cubit, and **its base** *shall be* a cubit all around; and **its steps shall face east.**"

17 The ledge *shall be* fourteen *cubits* long by fourteen wide in its four sides, the border around it *shall be* half a cubit and its base *shall be* a cubit round about; and its steps shall face the east."

17 It is to have a ledge fourteen cubits long by fourteen cubits wide around the four sides. Its border is to be half a cubit and its base is to be a cubit all around, with its steps facing east."

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

- "...the ledge" - the level below the altar hearth; it measured 24 feet 6 inches (7.5 meters) square.

- "...border" - *gevul*, refers to a rim or an edge.

- "...half a cubit" - 10.5 inches (26.7 cm); this matches the span referred to earlier.

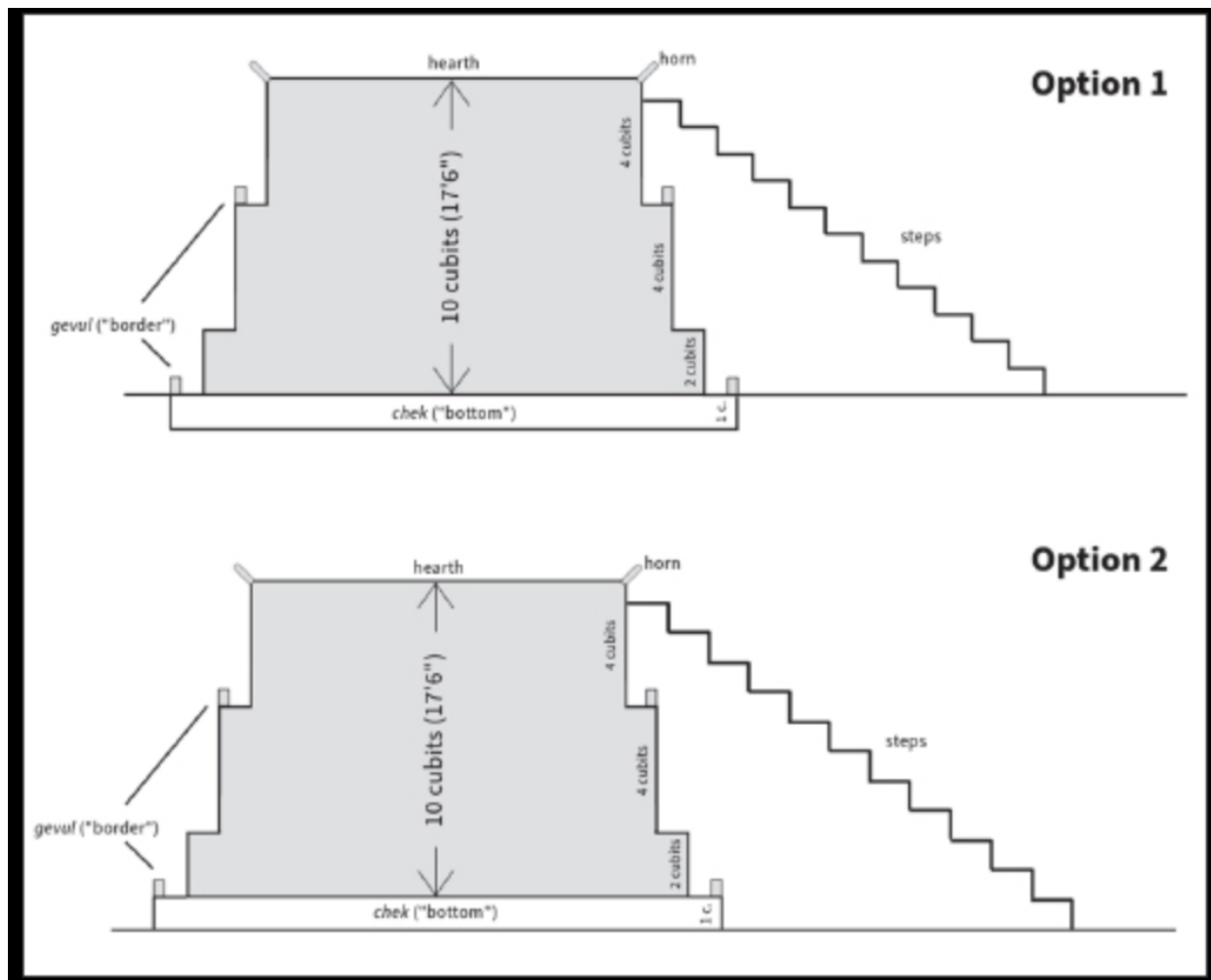
- "...its base" - measured 21 inches (53 cm)

- The description in this verse mirrors what has been said about the foundation of the altar. It appears there is a rim and an indentation on the middle section.

- "...its steps shall face east" - under the Mosaic Law, such steps were forbidden (Cf. Ex 20:26). However, they will be permitted under Kingdom Law.

— This distinction highlights one of the many differences between the Mosaic system and the system described in Ezek 40-48. It is crucial not to conflate these two systems, as Ezekiel's system is not a reinstatement of the Mosaic Law but a distinct one, marked by both similarities and differences.

— For other differences between the Sacrificial System according to Moses and the Sacrificial System according to Ezekiel, see [Millennial Sacrifices: Difference Between Moses & Ezekiel](#).



In summary (v13-17), the altar is constructed in three square tiers or ledges. The top section measures 12 cubits, the middle section 14 cubits, and the bottom section 16 cubits. The lowest section rests on a foundation referred to as *chek* ("bosom"), measuring 18 cubits square. This platform could be either set into the pavement at surface level or slightly elevated above it. In either case, it is distinguished by the raised rim described in v13.

The total height of the altar amounts to 17 feet 6 inches (5.3 m). This height makes the inclusion of steps necessary.

The altar's topmost level measures 12 cubits square and is designated for burning sacrifices. There are one-cubit horns on each corner as well as a half-cubit rim or border, which protrudes around the edge of the hearth. Including the horns, the entire structure reaches 19 feet 3 inches (5.87 meters).

With the exception of the steps, the altar's overall design is very similar—though not identical—to the Solomonic altar of sacrifice described in 2 Chr 4:1.

(ii) Offerings by priests (43:18-27)

18 And He said to me, "Son of man, this is what the Lord GOD says: 'These are the statutes for the altar **on the day it is built, to offer burnt offerings on it and to sprinkle blood on it.**

18 And He said to me, "Son of man, thus says the Lord God, 'These are the statutes for the altar on the day it is built, to offer burnt offerings on it and to sprinkle blood on it.

18 Then he told me, "This is what the Lord GOD says: 'These are the regulations for the altar, starting the day that it is constructed for presenting burnt offerings and sprinkling blood.

18 And he said unto me, Son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD; These are the ordinances of the altar in the day when they shall make it, to offer burnt offerings thereon, and to sprinkle blood thereon.

- Verses 18-27 describe the consecration process for the altar of sacrifice, detailing the ordinances to sanctify the altar for its function.

- "...He said to me" - the same voice of the *Shekinah* Glory, from inside the Temple, is speaking to Ezekiel, who is outside the Temple.

- "...on the day it is built" - these regulations are specific to the future Millennial Temple and will be implemented when the altar is constructed.

- Once construction is completed, the altar must be sanctified through the process given in these ordinances.

- "...to offer burnt offerings on it and to sprinkle blood on it" - the purpose of the altar in the Millennial Temple is clear: to offer burnt offerings on it and to sprinkle blood on it.

19 **You shall give** to the Levitical priests who are from the descendants of Zadok, who come near to Me to serve Me,' declares the Lord GOD, '**a bull as a sin offering.**

19 You shall give to the Levitical priests who are from the offspring of Zadok, who draw near to Me to minister to Me,' declares the Lord God, 'a young bull for a sin offering.

19 You are to present to the Levitical priests, Zadok's descendants, who will approach me to serve me, a young bull for a sin offering,' declares the Lord GOD.

19 And thou shalt give to the priests the Levites that be of the seed of Zadok, which approach unto me, to minister unto me, saith the Lord GOD, a young bullock for a sin offering.

- "...You shall give" - indicates that Ezekiel will personally have a distinct role in installing the priests who will consecrate the altar.

- The sons of Zadok will be appointed priests in the Millennial Temple (Cf. 40:46; 44:15; 48:11).

- Zadok, the first high priest in Solomon's Temple, was a descendant of Phinehas, who was rewarded with the covenant of an everlasting priesthood (Cf. Num 25:13). Only his descendants would be found worthy to minister in the Millennial Temple.

- "...a bull as a sin offering" - the sacrifice required to consecrate the altar is a young bull, designated as a sin offering. The purpose of this sin offering is to purify and sanctify the altar for its sacred function.

Num 25:13: and it shall be for him and for his descendants after him, a covenant of a permanent priesthood, because he was jealous for his God and made atonement for the sons of Israel."

20 And **you shall take** some of its blood and put it on its **four horns** and on the **four corners of the ledge**, and on the **border all around**; so you shall cleanse it and make atonement for it.

20 You shall take some of its blood and put it on its four horns and on the four corners of the ledge and on the border round about; thus you shall cleanse it and make atonement for it.

20 You are to take some of its blood and put it on the four horns of the altar, on the four corners of its ledge, and on the border that surrounds it, thus cleansing it and making an atonement for it.

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

- "...you shall take" - again shows that Ezekiel will personally apply the blood from the sin offering (v19) to the altar.

- Ezekiel was instructed to apply the blood of the sin offering to three specific locations of the altar:

- "...four horns" - Cf. v15

- "...four corners of the ledge" - Cf. v14

- "...border all around" - Cf. v13,17

- The purpose of applying the blood of these three locations was to "cleanse it" (the altar) and "make atonement for it" (setting it apart for sacred use).

— The blood of the sacrificed bull makes the transforms the altar from secular to sacred to prepare it for use in the Millennial Temple.

21 **You shall also take** the bull as the sin offering, and it shall be burned in the **appointed place** of the house, outside the sanctuary.

21 You shall also take the bull for the sin offering, and it *shall be* burned in the appointed place of the house, outside the sanctuary.

21 You are also to present a bull for a sin offering, incinerating it in the appointed place at the Temple, outside the sanctuary.

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

- "You shall also take" - again Ezekiel is receiving the instruction and will perform the acts

- "...appointed place" - the burning of the bull was to take place in the Outer Court, outside of the Inner Court but still within the sacred precinct.

— The burning of the bull completes the sin offering ritual and the altar's consecration process on the first day.

22 'And on the **second day** you shall offer a **male goat** without blemish as a sin offering, and they shall cleanse the altar from sin as they cleansed *it* with the bull.

22 'On the second day you shall offer a male goat without blemish for a sin offering, and they shall cleanse the altar as they cleansed *it* with the bull.

22 'The second day following commencement of offerings, you are to offer a male goat without defect for a sin offering to cleanse the altar the same way they cleansed it with the bull.

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

- "...second day" - Ezekiel now received instructions for the second day rituals for the altar consecration process

- "...a male goat" - this highlights a distinction between the Mosaic system and the Millennial system. The consecration of the Tabernacle did not include the offering of a goat (he-goat) as part of its rituals.

- The rest of the procedure mirrors the first day rituals, applying the blood to purify and consecrate the altar.

23 When you have **finished cleansing *it***, you shall offer a **bull without blemish and a ram without blemish** from the flock.

23 When you have finished cleansing *it*, you shall present a young bull without blemish and a ram without blemish from the flock.

23 After you've finished the cleansing, you are to present a young bull without defect and a ram from the flock without defect.

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

- "...finished cleansing *it*" - after purifying the altar with the blood of the bull and goat (v19-22)

- "...a bull without blemish and a ram without blemish" - these animals, free from any defect, are designated for the burnt offering.

24 You shall offer them before the LORD, and **the priests** shall throw **salt** on them, and they shall offer them up as a burnt offering to the LORD.

24 You shall present them before the Lord, and the priests shall throw salt on them, and they shall offer them up as a burnt offering to the Lord.

24 You are to present them in the LORD's presence, and the priests are to throw salt on them and then present them as a burnt offering to the LORD.

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

- They were to burn these animals on the altar

- "...the priests" - up to now, Ezekiel has been the primary actor in consecrating the altar, but now the priests assume responsibility

- "...salt" - symbolically significant in that with earlier biblical covenants, salt represents the enduring and binding nature of a covenant (Cf. Lev 2:13; Num 18:19; 2 Chr 13:5).

- In this context, it symbolizes the New Covenant, which is the basis for the entire Millennial Temple system.

25 For seven days you shall prepare a goat as a sin offering daily; also a bull and a ram from the flock, *both* without blemish, shall be prepared.

25 For seven days you shall prepare daily a goat for a sin offering; also a young bull and a ram from the flock, without blemish, shall be prepared.

25 'Every day for a week, you are to prepare a goat for a sin offering, a young bull, and a ram from the flock, each without defect.

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

- Verses 25-26 outline the seven-day process for consecrating the altar.

- The sacrifices on the second day, including the goat for a sin offering and a bull and ram for a burnt offering (v22) will be repeated daily for the remaining six days of the consecration period.

- This seven-day sacrifice of a goat for a sin offering is unique to the Millennial Temple and has no precedent in earlier in earlier consecration ceremonies.

26 For seven days they shall make atonement for the altar and **purify it**; so shall they consecrate it.

26 For seven days they shall make atonement for the altar and purify it; so shall they consecrate it.

26 For a seven day period they are to make atonement for the altar, purifying it and consecrating it.

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

- "...purify it" - *umil'u yadov yadav*, typically refers to the initiation or consecration of priests, but in this context it is applied to the altar itself.

27 When they have completed the days, it shall be that on the eighth day and onward, the priests shall offer your burnt offerings on the altar, and your **peace** offerings; and I will accept you,' declares the Lord GOD."

27 When they have completed the days, it shall be that on the eighth day and onward, the priests shall offer your burnt offerings on the altar, and your peace offerings; and I will accept you,' declares the Lord God."

27 When they will have completed this period, starting the next day, the priests are to offer your burnt offerings on the altar, along with your peace offerings, and I will accept you,' declares the Lord GOD."

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

- After seven days of preparation, the altar is officially sanctified and ready for use in the millennial sacrificial system, which will be detailed in Ezek 44.

- This consecration ritual is similar to earlier practices seen in the Tabernacle (Ex 29:37; Lev 8:11,15,19,33; 9:1-24) and the Solomonic Temple (1 Kings 8:62-66; 2 Chr 7:4-10).

However, significant differences between the millennial system and the Mosaic system described in Ex 29:1-37 can be observed:

1. Anointing: Under the Mosaic system, the altar had to be anointed. In the millennial system, no anointing is required.
2. The bullock: In the Mosaic system, a bullock was offered as a sin offering on all seven days. In the Ezekiel system, a bullock is offered only on the first day.
3. The goat: The Mosaic system did not involve a goat, whereas the Ezekiel system includes goats as sin offerings during the last six days of the consecration process.
4. Application of blood: In the Mosaic system, blood was applied only to the horns of the altar. In the millennial system, blood is applied to the horns, the corners, and the lower molding round about.
5. The burnt offerings: Under the Mosaic system, only a ram was offered each day. In the millennial system, both a bullock and a ram are offered daily.
6. The role of the ram: In Ezekiel's system, the ram is used solely for the consecration of the altar, unlike in the Mosaic system, where it was also used for the consecration of the priesthood.

A frequently asked question about the purpose of the sacrificial system in the Messianic Age: Since the Messiah has already died and atoned for sin, why is there a sacrificial system in the millennium? Christian theologian John Whitcomb (1924–2020) posed the same question in a more extensive way:

How does the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ relate to the animal sacrifices which God gave to Israel through Moses? What did the blood of these animals accomplish for believing and/or unbelieving Israelites during the days of the Old Covenant theocracy? How does that Old Covenant sacrificial system compare with the New Covenant system envisioned in Ezek 40-48... and other OT prophets, especially in the light of the NT book of Hebrews? [Whitcomb, Christ's Atonement and Animal Sacrifices in Israel, p201.]

To answer these questions, four key aspects of the millennial sacrificial system will be considered.

(1) The Limitations of Old Testament Sacrifices

The blood of OT animal sacrifices never took away sin (Heb 10:1-4). Under the Mosaic Law, sacrifices did not remove sin but merely covered it temporarily. They pointed forward to a more complete sacrifice—Messiah's death—which would accomplish what animal sacrifices could not. This was true before Messiah's death and it remains true after it. Furthermore, not all sacrifices symbolized or looked forward to Messiah's death for sin.

(2) Prophetic References Beyond Ezekiel

Ezekiel was not the only prophet who mentioned a sacrificial system during the Messianic Kingdom. Similar references appear in Is 56:5-7; 60:7,13; 65:20,23; 66:18-23; Jer 33:18-22; Zech 14:16-21; Mal 3:3-4. These references affirm the prophetic consistency of the sacrificial system, and the book of Ezekiel provides the most detailed description. Therefore, his prophecy must be taken literally, as it is consistent with other prophecies that also envision a sacrificial system in the kingdom.

(3) A New System, Not Mosaic Reinstatement

The millennial sacrificial system is not a reinstitution of the Mosaic system. While there are similarities, the differences are too significant to ignore and even contradict the Mosaic Law in some instances. Two notable differences illustrate this: First, the Mosaic system required a high priest, but the millennial system does not; second, the Ark of the Covenant was central to the Mosaic system but is absent in the millennial system. Jer 3:16 explicitly states that the Ark of the Covenant will be neither remembered nor rebuilt in the Messianic Kingdom.

The Mosaic Law has been rendered inoperative by Messiah's death (Rom 7:1-6; 10:4; Gal 3:25) and will not be reinstated. The millennial sacrificial system operates under a different framework.

(4) Purposes of the Millennial Sacrificial System

The sacrificial system during the Messianic Age serves four primary purposes. First, for Israel, the sacrifices will function as a memorial of Messiah's death, much like communion serves as a tool to remember Yeshua's sacrifice. The millennial sacrificial system will allow Israel to commemorate His atonement in a way appropriate for the Messianic Age.

Second, whereas believers today confess their sins to restore fellowship with God (1 John 1:9), Israel will use sacrifices to achieve this restoration.

Third, the sacrifices will provide ritual cleansing from ceremonial uncleanness, just as they did in the Mosaic system.

Fourth, millennial sacrifices will not simply serve as memorials of the redemption wrought by Messiah, but they will also play a role in maintaining the privileges of living under God's direct rule. In other words, these sacrifices will ensure the continuation of physical blessings and the collective covenantal relationship with God during the Messianic Age.

This process will involve both internal and external cleansing (Heb 9:13).

Conclusion

Multiple prophets, including Ezekiel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Zechariah, spoke of a sacrificial system in the Messianic Age. Under the Mosaic Law, animal blood was ineffective in removing sin. Only the blood of God's Son was able to fully remove sin—past, present, and future. His death rendered the Mosaic Law inoperative.

The millennial system is distinct from the Mosaic Law and introduces new practices while fulfilling different purposes. The sacrifices primarily serve as a memorial and function under the principle of "Do this in remembrance of me," applied to Israel in the Messianic Kingdom. The millennial sacrificial system reflects a new divine order tailored to the Messianic Age, distinct from both the Mosaic Law and the Church Age.