# Ezekiel 43

## *The Glory Returns:*
## *The Altar and the Law of the House*

**OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION**

*"These were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so."*
**Acts 17:11**

**CHAPTER THEME**

The God who walked out of His defiled house comes back — the same way He left — and fills it with glory. But He comes back to a holy house, built around an altar where blood is shed and sin is dealt with. The road home to God's presence always runs through shame for sin, cleansing by blood, and then those words every prodigal longs to hear: "I will accept you."

Ed Smith · Started 20 October 2026

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# 00 The Text

EZEKIEL 43 (KJV), MARKED

▲ Gold God — His character & actions
Green Command / instruction
Sky Key repeated word
⚠ Rose Sin / warning
★ Violet Promise / blessing
Amber Time / place / contrast

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

[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.

[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 Amber I fell upon my face.

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

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

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

[7] And he said unto me, Son of man, ▲ 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 carcases of their kings in their high places.

[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.

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

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

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

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

[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.

[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.

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

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

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.

## Marked in the text

- **v2** the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east
- **v2** his voice was like a noise of many waters
- **v2** the earth shined with his glory
- **v2** glory *(every occurrence)*
- **v3** I fell upon my face
- **v5** the glory of the LORD filled the house
- **v7** the place of my throne
- **v7** where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever
- **v7** by their whoredom
- **v8** they have even defiled my holy name by their abominations
- **v8** I have consumed them in mine anger
- **v9** Now let them put away their whoredom
- **v9** I will dwell in the midst of them for ever
- **v10** that they may be ashamed of their iniquities
- **v10** let them measure the pattern
- **v11** write it in their sight
- **v12** This is the law of the house
- **v12** shall be most holy
- **v17** his stairs shall look toward the east
- **v19** a young bullock for a sin offering
- **v20** thus shalt thou cleanse and purge it
- **v25** Seven days
- **v27** upon the eighth day
- **v27** I will accept you, saith the Lord GOD

*Marks are drawn on the KJV text. Quotations in the notes are from the NASB95, so their wording may differ from the KJV above.*

# 01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · EZEKIEL 43:2 (KJV)

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.

## Setting

This chapter sits in Ezekiel's last great vision (chs 40–48), dated "in the twenty-fifth year of our exile" — fourteen years after Jerusalem fell (40:1), about 573 BC. A man with a measuring rod has walked Ezekiel through a new temple (chs 40–42). Years earlier Ezekiel watched God's glory leave the old temple by the east gate and stop over the mountain east of the city (10:18–19; 11:22–23). Now, at that same east gate, he watches it come back.

## Structure

- vv1–5 — **the glory returns:** Ezekiel is brought to "the gate facing toward the east" (v1), and "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" (v2). It looks like the visions of judgment and of the river Chebar, and "I fell on my face" (v3). The glory enters by the east gate (v4); "the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house" (v5).
- vv6–9 — **God claims His house:** a voice speaks from the house (v6): "the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell among the sons of Israel forever" (v7). Israel "will not again defile My holy name … by their harlotry and by the corpses of their kings" (v7). They had built their palace threshold next to His, "with only the wall between Me and them" (v8). "So I have consumed them in My anger" (v8). "Now let them put away their harlotry … and I will dwell among them forever" (v9).
- vv10–12 — **shown so they will be ashamed:** "describe the temple to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and let them measure the plan" (v10). If they are ashamed, show them its design, statutes and laws, and write it down so they will do them (v11). "This is the law of the house: its entire area on the top of the mountain all around shall be most holy" (v12).
- vv13–17 — **the altar measured:** the cubit is "a cubit and a handbreadth" (v13). Base, two ledges, the hearth, four horns (vv13–16), a square of twelve by twelve cubits on top (v16), and "its steps shall face the east" (v17).
- vv18–27 — **the altar consecrated:** "These are the statutes for the altar on the day it is built" (v18). The Levitical priests of Zadok's line, "who draw near to Me to minister to Me," receive "a young bull for a sin offering" (v19). Blood goes on the horns, corners and border: "thus you shall cleanse it and make atonement for it" (v20). Goats, bulls and rams without blemish follow (vv21–25). "For seven days they shall make atonement for the altar and purify it" (v26). Then, "on the eighth day and onward," the priests offer the people's burnt and peace offerings — "and I will accept you," declares the Lord GOD (v27).

### Repeated words

glory (vv2, 4, 5); east (vv1, 2, 4, 17); My holy name (vv7, 8); dwell … forever (vv7, 9); harlotry (vv7, 9); ashamed (vv10, 11); law of the house (v12, twice); sin offering (vv19, 21, 22, 25); without blemish (vv22, 23, 25); seven days (vv25, 26); atonement (vv20, 26); declares the Lord GOD (vv19, 27).

### Contrasts

the glory leaving by the east gate (10:19; 11:23) ⟷ the glory returning by the east gate (v4). Kings' palaces built wall-to-wall with God's house (v8) ⟷ the whole mountaintop most holy (v12). "I have consumed them in My anger" (v8) ⟷ "I will dwell among them forever" (v9). Defiled by harlotry and corpses (v7) ⟷ cleansed by blood on the altar (v20). Seven days of atonement (v26) ⟷ the eighth day: "I will accept you" (v27).

### Chapter theme (my words)

The God who walked out of His defiled house comes back — the same way He left — and fills it with glory. But He comes back to a holy house, built around an altar where blood is shed and sin is dealt with. The road home to God's presence always runs through shame for sin, cleansing by blood, and then those words every prodigal longs to hear: "I will accept you."

## 02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · EZEKIEL 43:7 (KJV)

7 And he said unto me, Son of man, ▲ 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 carcases of their kings in their high places.

### The glory comes home (vv1–5)

This is the high point of the whole book. In chapters 8–11 Ezekiel saw idolatry in the temple and watched the glory leave, step by step. Now it returns by the same east gate. The "many waters" sound matches what Ezekiel heard in chapter 1 (1:24) and what John heard from the risen Christ (Rev 1:15). Guzik traces the cloud of glory through Scripture — the Exodus, the tabernacle, the Mount of Transfiguration, the ascension and Christ's return (Exod 40:34–35; Luke 9:34–35; Acts 1:9; Rev 1:7). He also notes the difference in pace: the glory left slowly and reluctantly, but it fills the house at once. Ezekiel's response is the same as every other time he met the glory — face down (1:28; 3:23). Guzik cites Feinberg's argument that the temple rebuilt after the exile cannot be what Ezekiel saw, because the glory is never said to have filled it.

### The place of My throne (vv6–9)

God calls the house the place of His throne and of the soles of His feet — language that echoes Solomon's dedication (1 Kgs 8:12–13, 27). Guzik ties the promise to dwell among Israel "forever" to the

millennial kingdom. Two sins had defiled the old temple. First, "harlotry" — idolatry, the spiritual adultery Ezekiel has exposed all through the book (chs 8, 16, 23). Second, "the corpses of their kings" — probably the royal tombs or memorial monuments near the temple, though some take it to mean dead idols. Solomon's palace complex sat right beside the temple, so that only a wall separated the throne of Judah's kings from the throne of God (v8). Guzik notes that in this new temple the dividing line is not Jew and Gentile but holy and common. God will not share the space.

### Shown so they will be ashamed (vv10–12)

The purpose of all these measurements is moral, not architectural. Seeing what God intended was meant to make Israel ashamed of what they had made of it. God's grace — a new house, a returned glory — is what breaks the heart. And the one rule over everything: "This is the law of the house" (v12). Guzik sums it up: "the whole area surrounding the mountaintop is most holy." Block, in Guzik, calls the section beginning here (43:12–46:24) "The New Torah" — the priestly instruction that had failed in Ezekiel's day (7:26).

### The altar (vv13–17)

Guzik takes the long cubit as about 20.5 inches (40:5). The altar is huge — stepped, with horns on its corners, the place of refuge and atonement (Exod 29:12; 1 Kgs 1:50). Guzik notes that its steps face east, so the priest climbs facing west toward the sanctuary — and that steps at all set aside the old rule of Exodus 20:26. For him, the altar at the center of the vision points to the cross and the finished work of Jesus.

### Seven days, then the eighth (vv18–27)

The consecration follows the pattern of Aaron's ordination (Exod 29; Lev 8): blood on the horns, a sin offering, seven days of atonement, and on the eighth day the regular worship begins. Only the priests of Zadok's line serve (v19; 44:15) — the line that stayed faithful when others strayed. The goal of it all is the last line: "I will accept you" (v27).

### How should Ezekiel's temple be read?

Christians differ.

- **A plan for the returned exiles** — a blueprint they could have built if they had repented (vv10–11), never carried out.
- **A symbolic picture** — of the church, of Christ, or of the new creation (compare Rev 21–22, where there is no temple), with the measurements teaching God's holiness and order.
- **A literal future temple** — built in the millennial reign of the Messiah. This is Guzik's view. He notes that "there is no command to build" it, so it will be "God's doing and not man's."

The hardest question is the sacrifices, since Hebrews says Christ offered Himself once for all (Heb 10:10–14). Guzik answers that "Animal sacrifices were never actually effective for the cleansing of sin" — they looked forward to the cross, and in the millennium they would look back to it as memorials, much like the Lord's Table. He cites Wiersbe, who sees them as acts of devotion and fellowship. Those who read the temple symbolically see the sacrifices as Ezekiel describing perfect worship in the only terms his hearers knew.

### Word study (Hebrew)

- **glory — *kabod* (H3519):** weight, honor, splendor — the visible presence of God.
- **east — *qadim* (H6921):** the east, the direction of sunrise.
- **throne — *kisseʾ* (H3678):** a seat of honor, a royal throne.
- **dwell — *shakan* (H7931):** to settle, abide, tabernacle — the root behind "Shekinah."
- **defile — *tameʾ* (H2930):** to make unclean, pollute.
- **harlotry — *zenut* (H2184):** fornication; here spiritual unfaithfulness, idolatry.
- **corpses — *peger* (H6297):** a carcass, a dead body.
- **ashamed — *kalam* (H3637):** to be humiliated, put to shame.
- **plan — *toknit* (H8508):** a measure, pattern, proportion.
- **law — *torah* (H8451):** instruction, teaching, law.
- **altar — *mizbeach* (H4196):** a place of sacrifice.
- **horns — *qeren* (H7161):** horn; the raised corners of the altar.
- **sin offering — *chattaʾt* (H2403):** sin; also the offering for sin.
- **make atonement — *kaphar* (H3722):** to cover, atone, make reconciliation.
- **accept — *ratsah* (H7521):** to be pleased with, accept favorably.

### Cross-references

Exod 20:26; Exod 29:12, 35–37; Exod 40:34–35; Lev 8:33–35; 1 Kgs 8:10–13, 27; 2 Chr 5:13–14; Ps 99:1–5; Isa 6:1–5; Ezek 1:24, 28; Ezek 10:18–19; Ezek 11:22–23; Ezek 44:1–2; Zech 14:4; John 1:14; Rom 12:1; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 1:6; Heb 10:10–14; Heb 13:10–12; Rev 1:15; Rev 21:3, 22.

## 03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · EZEKIEL 43:9 (KJV)

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

### Command to obey — "Now let them put away their harlotry … far from Me"

(v9). God promised to come back and dwell — but He told Israel to clear out the idols first. There is a part I play. Whatever I keep built right up against God's house, separated by only a thin wall, has to go. For the men in recovery I walk with, that means the phone numbers, the stash, the old crowd. "Far from Me" means really gone.

### Sin to confess — living wall-to-wall with God

Judah's kings built their palace right next to God's house and treated the two as the same thing. I can do that — keep my own kingdom running inches from my worship, and call it all holy. I confess the places where my "palace" sits too close to His throne.

### Warning to heed — the glory can leave

Ezekiel watched the glory of God walk out of a temple full of religious people. Going through the motions near God is not the same as having God. I don't want a ministry, a home or a heart that still has the building but has lost the glory.

### Promise to trust — "I will accept you"

(v27). After the blood, after the seven days, God says it plainly. That is the word I bring to the man just out of prison who thinks his family, his church and his God are done with him. In Christ the atonement is finished (Heb 10:14), and the Father says, "I will accept you" — not because the man is clean on his own, but because the blood has been applied.

### Example to follow — Ezekiel on his face

Every time Ezekiel saw the glory, he fell down (v3). He didn't analyze it first, or explain it, or take notes. He worshiped. Before I measure and teach and write about God, I want to bow before Him.

### Worship

The God of Israel comes with a voice like many waters, and the earth shines with His glory. He chooses to dwell among His people forever. He is holy, and He makes a way for unclean people to come near and be accepted.

### Prayer

Lord GOD, fill Your house — fill me — with Your glory. Show me the idols I've kept close and give me the courage to put them far away. Thank You that Jesus is my altar and my atonement, and that because of His blood You say to me, "I will accept you." Let the men I serve hear that word and believe it. Amen.