Ezekiel 46

The Prince and the Gate: Morning by Morning

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

God puts order into worship — when to come, how to enter, what to bring, where to eat — and He puts limits on power. The ruler worships beside his people, enters and leaves with them, and is forbidden to take what is theirs. Worship is daily, every morning, and no one leaves it the same way he came in.

Ed Smith · Started 20 October 2026

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00 The Text

EZEKIEL 46 (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 ▲ Thus saith the Lord GOD; The gate of the inner court that looketh toward the east Amber shall be shut the six working days; but Amber on the sabbath it shall be opened, and in Amber the day of the new moon it shall be opened.

2 And the Sky prince shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate without, and shall stand by the post of the gate, and the priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and Green he shall worship at the threshold of the gate: then he shall go forth; but the gate shall not be shut until the evening.

3 Likewise Green the people of the land shall worship at the door of this gate ▲ before the LORD in the sabbaths and in the new moons.

4 And the burnt offering that the Sky prince shall offer unto the LORD in the sabbath day shall be six lambs Sky without blemish, and a ram Sky without blemish.

5 And the meat offering shall be an ephah for a ram, and the meat offering for the lambs ★ as he shall be able to give, and an hin of oil to an ephah.

6 And in the day of the new moon it shall be a young bullock Sky without blemish, and six lambs, and a ram: they shall be Sky without blemish.

7 And he shall prepare a meat offering, an ephah for a bullock, and an ephah for a ram, and for the lambs according as his hand shall attain unto, and an hin of oil to an ephah.

8 And when the Sky prince shall enter, he shall go in by the way of the porch of that gate, and he shall go forth by the way thereof.

9 But when the people of the land shall come before the LORD in the solemn feasts, he that entereth in by the way of the north gate to worship shall go out by the way of the south gate; and he that entereth by the way of the south gate shall go forth by the way of the north gate: Green he shall not return by the way of the gate whereby he came in, but shall go forth over against it.

10 And the Sky prince in the midst of them, when they go in, shall go in; and when they go forth, shall go forth.

11 And in the feasts and in the solemnities the meat offering shall be an ephah to a bullock, and an ephah to a ram, and to the lambs as he is able to give, and an hin of oil to an ephah.

12 Now when the Sky prince shall prepare ★ a voluntary burnt offering or peace offerings voluntarily unto the LORD, one shall then open him the gate that looketh toward the east, and he shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings, as he did on the sabbath day: then he shall go forth; and after his going forth one shall shut the gate.

13 Thou shalt daily prepare a burnt offering unto the LORD of a lamb of the first year Sky without blemish: thou shalt prepare it Sky every morning.

14 And thou shalt prepare a meat offering for it Sky every morning, the sixth part of an ephah, and the third part of an hin of oil, to temper with the fine flour; a meat offering continually by Green a perpetual ordinance unto the LORD.

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

16 Thus saith the Lord GOD; If the prince give a gift unto any of his sons, the inheritance thereof shall be his sons'; it shall be their possession by inheritance.

17 But if he give a gift of his inheritance to one of his servants, then it shall be his to the year of liberty; after it shall return to the prince: but his inheritance shall be his sons' for them.

18 Moreover the prince shall not take of the people's inheritance by oppression, to thrust them out of their possession; but he shall give his sons inheritance out of his own possession: that my people be not scattered every man from his possession.

19 After he brought me through the entry, which was at the side of the gate, into the holy chambers of the priests, which looked toward the north: and, behold, there was a place on the two sides westward.

20 Then said he unto me, This is the place where the priests shall boil the trespass offering and the sin offering, where they shall bake the meat offering; that they bear them not out into the utter court, to sanctify the people.

21 Then he brought me forth into the utter court, and caused me to pass by the four corners of the court; and, behold, in every corner of the court there was a court.

22 In the four corners of the court there were courts joined of forty cubits long and thirty broad: these four corners were of one measure.

23 And there was a row of building round about in them, round about them four, and it was made with boiling places under the rows round about.

24 Then said he unto me, These are the places of them that boil, where the ministers of the house shall boil the sacrifice of the people.

Marked in the text

- **v1** Thus saith the Lord GOD
- **v1** shall be shut the six working days
- **v1** on the sabbath it shall be opened
- **v1** the day of the new moon
- **v2** prince *(every occurrence)*
- **v2** he shall worship at the threshold of the gate
- **v3** the people of the land shall worship
- **v3** before the LORD
- **v4** without blemish *(every occurrence)*
- **v5** as he shall be able to give
- **v9** he shall not return by the way of the gate whereby he came in
- **v10** the prince in the midst of them
- **v12** a voluntary burnt offering
- **v13** every morning *(every occurrence)*
- **v14** a perpetual ordinance unto the LORD
- **v16** inheritance *(every occurrence)*
- **v17** the year of liberty
- **v18** shall not take of the people's inheritance by oppression
- **v18** that my people be not scattered every man from his possession
- **v20** the trespass offering and the sin offering
- **v20** to sanctify the people
- **v24** the ministers of the house shall boil the sacrifice of the people

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 46:1 (KJV)

1 ▲ Thus saith the Lord GOD; The gate of the inner court that looketh toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the sabbath it shall be opened, and in the day of the new moon it shall be opened.

Setting

This is the seventh of the last nine chapters of Ezekiel (40–48), one long vision given "in the twenty-fifth year of our exile" (40:1) — about 573 BC, fourteen years after Jerusalem fell. The glory of the LORD has returned to the new temple (43:1–5), and chapters 44–46 set the order of worship there. Chapter 45 assigned the prince his land and his offerings; chapter 46 tells how he and the people come and go, what they offer and when, how the prince's land may be passed on, and where the sacrifices are cooked.

Structure

- vv1–3 — **the east gate of the inner court:** "Thus says the Lord GOD, 'The gate of the inner court facing east shall be shut the six working days'" (v1), but opened on the sabbath and the new moon. "The prince shall enter by way of the porch of the gate from outside" (v2); the priests offer his sacrifices while "he shall worship at the threshold of the gate," and "the gate shall not be shut until the evening" (v2). "The people of the land shall also worship" at that doorway on sabbaths and new moons (v3).
- vv4–8 — **sabbath and new moon offerings:** "six lambs without blemish and a ram without blemish" on the sabbath (v4), with grain and oil (v5); a young bull, six lambs and a ram at the new moon (vv6–7). The prince goes in and out by the same porch (v8).
- vv9–11 — **the feasts:** at the appointed feasts, "he who enters by way of the north gate to worship" leaves by the south, and the reverse. "No one shall return by way of the gate by which he entered" (v9). And "the prince shall go in among them" (v10). Grain offerings are set for the feasts (v11).
- v12 — **the prince's freewill offering:** when the prince brings a "freewill offering," "the gate facing east shall be opened for him," and "the gate shall be shut after he goes out" (v12).
- vv13–15 — **the daily offering:** "a lamb a year old without blemish" (v13), offered "morning by morning" (vv13–15) with grain and oil, "by a perpetual ordinance" (v14), "for a continual burnt offering" (v15).
- vv16–18 — **the prince's land:** "If the prince gives a gift out of his inheritance" to a son, "it shall belong to his sons" (v16); a gift to a servant lasts only "until the year of liberty" and then returns (v17). "The prince shall not take from the people's inheritance," "thrusting them out of their possession"; "he shall give his sons inheritance from his own possession so that My people will not be scattered" (v18).
- vv19–24 — **the kitchens:** near the "holy chambers for the priests" (v19): "This is the place where the priests shall boil the guilt offering" and the sin offering and bake the grain offering, so as not to

bring them out and "to transmit holiness to the people" (v20). In the four corners of the outer court are small courts, "forty cubits long and thirty wide" (v22). "These are the boiling places where the ministers of the house shall boil the sacrifices of the people" (v24).

Repeated words

gate (vv1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 12, 19); prince (vv2, 4, 8, 10, 12, 16, 17, 18); sabbath(s) (vv1, 3, 4, 12); new moon(s) (vv1, 3, 6); worship (vv2, 3, 9); without blemish (vv4, 6, 13); morning (vv13, 14, 15); inheritance (vv16, 17, 18); possession (vv16, 18); boil / boiling places (vv20, 23, 24).

Contrasts

the gate shut six working days ⟷ opened on the sabbath and new moon (v1). The prince at the threshold ⟷ the people at the doorway (vv2–3). Enter by the north ⟷ leave by the south (v9). A gift to a son that stays ⟷ a gift to a servant that returns at the year of liberty (vv16–17). A prince who gives from his own land ⟷ a prince who takes the people's land (v18). Holy offerings kept in the inner kitchens ⟷ the people's sacrifices cooked in the outer court (vv20, 24).

Chapter theme (my words)

God puts order into worship — when to come, how to enter, what to bring, where to eat — and He puts limits on power. The ruler worships beside his people, enters and leaves with them, and is forbidden to take what is theirs. Worship is daily, every morning, and no one leaves it the same way he came in.

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · EZEKIEL 46:3 (KJV)

3 Likewise the people of the land shall worship at the door of this gate before the LORD in the sabbaths and in the new moons.

What is this temple? (overview)

Christians read Ezekiel 40–48 in three main ways. (1) A literal future temple in the millennial kingdom, with real sacrifices — Guzik's view; he treats the detailed instructions here as evidence of a literal fulfillment. (2) A symbolic picture of true worship, fulfilled in Christ and His people and finally in the new creation (compare Rev 21:22) — the common amillennial and Reformed reading. (3) A pattern offered to the returning exiles (43:10–11) that Israel never fully carried out. Whichever view we hold, the chapter's point is plain: God dwells with His people, and He sets the terms of how they draw near.

The east gate and the prince (vv1–3)

The outer east gate is shut for good because the glory of the LORD entered by it (44:1–2). This chapter is about the inner east gate, shut on working days and open on sabbaths and new moons. The prince does not perform priestly service; he stands at the threshold while the priests offer his sacrifices — the line King Uzziah crossed and was struck with leprosy for (2 Chr 26:16–21). Block, in Guzik: "This

vantage point enables him, as guardian and patron of the cult, to observe the cultic activity of the priests." Who is the prince? Guzik identifies him only as God's appointed ruler of Israel in that day. Many note he cannot be Christ Himself, since he offers a sin offering for himself (45:22) and has sons (46:16); others see him as a Davidic ruler serving under the Messiah.

Offerings and the sabbath (vv4–8)

Guzik notes that the sabbath here is tied to sacrifice, not only rest, and cites Feinberg that the sabbath burnt offering is larger than the Mosaic requirement (compare Num 28:9). Trapp, in Guzik, on why the sabbaths were given: "That the people may see Christ in the glass of the ceremonies, and call upon his name." Notice that the grain offering with the lambs is left to what the worshiper is able to give (vv5, 7, 11) — God sets a floor, not a ceiling, on generosity.

Through the gate and out the other side (vv9–11)

At the great feasts the crowds were huge, and one-way traffic kept order. But it also preaches: no one turns around and walks back out the way he came. The prince comes and goes with the people (v10). Guzik draws from Wiersbe that the prince will not isolate himself from the people on feast days, and he cites Meyer on Jesus leading His people by going before them (John 10:4).

The freewill offering (v12)

Not every offering is commanded. When the prince chooses to give, the gate opens for him — then shuts after him. Guzik sees this detail as one more sign that the vision is meant literally.

Morning by morning (vv13–15)

The Mosaic law had a lamb at morning and at evening (Exod 29:38–42; Num 28:3–8). Here only the morning is named; Poole, in Guzik, takes the evening offering as implied. How can sacrifices return after the cross (Heb 10:10–14)? Guzik holds that these offerings are memorials looking back to Christ's finished work, as Morgan says, rather than pointing forward the way the Mosaic sacrifices did. Those who read the vision symbolically answer that the sacrifices are the language Ezekiel's hearers understood for perfect, unbroken worship, fulfilled in Christ.

The prince may not take (vv16–18)

The prince may give land to his sons for good. A gift to a servant goes back at "the year of liberty" — the jubilee (Lev 25:10–13). And the prince may never seize the people's land, as Ahab took Naboth's vineyard (1 Kgs 21) and as Israel's princes had done (45:8–9; compare 1 Sam 8:14). Vawter and Hoppe, in Guzik: "The prophet did not want royal property to grow at the expense of ordinary citizens." God's concern is stated: "so that My people will not be scattered" (v18).

The kitchens (vv19–24)

Ezekiel is shown two kinds of kitchens. In the priests' area, the most holy offerings are cooked so they are not carried out "to transmit holiness to the people" (v20; compare 44:19) — holiness here is treated as something that must be handled God's way. In the four corners of the outer court the Levites cook the people's sacrifices, so families can eat their peace offerings before the LORD (Deut 12:7). Guzik notes that meals were part of worship and fellowship, and cites Taylor that the church has sometimes separated the spiritual and the social.

Word study (Hebrew)

- **prince — *nasiʾ* (H5387):** one lifted up; a leader, chief, ruler.
- **gate — *shaʿar* (H8179):** gate, entrance.
- **threshold — *miphtan* (H4670):** threshold, sill of a doorway.
- **worship — *shachah* (H7812):** to bow down, prostrate oneself.
- **sabbath — *shabbath* (H7676):** a day of rest, cessation.
- **new moon — *chodesh* (H2320):** new moon, month.
- **without blemish — *tamim* (H8549):** complete, whole, sound.
- **freewill offering — *nedabah* (H5071):** a voluntary gift, offered willingly.
- **burnt offering — *ʿolah* (H5930):** that which goes up; a whole offering.
- **continual — *tamid* (H8548):** continually, regularly.
- **ordinance — *chuqqah* (H2708):** statute, fixed decree.
- **inheritance — *nachalah* (H5159):** an inherited possession, portion.
- **possession — *ʾachuzzah* (H272):** a possession, holding of land.
- **liberty — *deror* (H1865):** freedom, release.
- **boil — *bashal* (H1310):** to boil, cook.

Cross-references

Exod 29:38–42; Lev 25:10–13; Num 28:3–10; Deut 12:7; 1 Sam 8:14; 1 Kgs 21:1–16; 2 Chr 26:16–21; Ps 5:3; Lam 3:22–23; Ezek 44:1–3; Ezek 45:8–9; Ezek 45:17; John 10:4; Rom 12:1; Heb 10:10–14; Heb 13:15; Rev 21:22.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · EZEKIEL 46:2 (KJV)

2 And the prince shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate without, and shall stand by the post of the gate, and the priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate: then he shall go forth; but the gate shall not be shut until the evening.

Command to obey — "No one shall return by way of the gate by which he entered"

(v9). I can't come into God's presence and walk back out unchanged. The men I disciple come in through the gate of a broken life — a cell, a detox bed, a divorce. When they meet God, they don't go back out the same door. Neither should I after an hour in the Word.

Sin to confess — taking what isn't mine

The prince was forbidden to grab the people's land (v18). Power wants more. I confess the times I've used influence, position or a stronger personality to take what belonged to someone else — their

time, their credit, their voice — and I ask God to make me a giver from my own possession.

Warning to heed — holiness isn't casual

God told the priests exactly where to cook the holy offerings (v20). He hasn't changed. I don't get to handle holy things — His Word, His table, His name — carelessly or on my own terms.

Promise to trust — "the year of liberty"

(v17). God built release into the law: what was given away would come home. For the man who has lost years to addiction or a sentence, God's heart still bends toward restoration. And "so that My people will not be scattered" (v18) tells me God cares about families staying on their ground.

Example to follow — the prince among them

The prince didn't watch the feast from a balcony; he went in and out with the crowd (v10). Leading men means walking with them, not above them — the same gate, the same crowd, the same worship.

Worship

The LORD is worthy every morning. He is holy, and He sets the way to approach Him. He protects the small from the powerful, gives release to the bound, and spreads a table for His people in His own house.

Prayer

Lord GOD, meet me morning by morning. Don't let me leave Your presence the way I came in. Keep me from taking what is not mine, and make me generous from what You've given me. Let me lead the men You've given me from among them, not above them. Thank You for the year of liberty — bring the scattered home. In Jesus' name. Amen.