

CHAPTER 43

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 43

The temple or house of God being measured, the worship of God in it is pointed out and observed in this and the following chapter; and which, though evangelical, is expressed in the language of the Old Testament. An account is given of the glory of the Lord returning to the house, and the way he did, and his taking possession of it, which the prophet was favoured with a view of, (²⁵⁶⁰Ezekiel 43:1-5), a promise is made of his continuance there, provided his people behaved as they should, (²⁵⁶⁶Ezekiel 43:6-9), an order is given to the prophet, to show them the form and fashion, the laws, orders, and ordinances of the house to them, to be observed by them, (²⁵⁶⁰Ezekiel 43:10-12), then follows the measuring of the altar of burnt offerings; which, though measured before in chapter forty, the dimensions are here given, (²⁵⁶³Ezekiel 43:13-17), and the chapter is concluded with directions about the consecration of it, (²⁵⁶⁸Ezekiel 43:18-27).

Ver. 1. *Afterward he brought me to the gate, &c.*] The dimensions of this wonderful building being finished, the prophet's divine guide brought him from the wall about it, he had last measured, to the gate he first had him to, after he had observed to him the same wall, (²⁵⁰⁵Ezekiel 40:5,6):

even the gate that looketh toward the east; or, as the Targum, which was open to the way of the east. The reason of his being brought hither follows.

Ver. 2. *And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east, &c.*] The God of Israel is Jehovah the Father, the covenant God of literal Israel; and the covenant God and Father of the whole spiritual Israel, or his elect, whether Jews or Gentiles; whom he has taken into covenant, loves, cares, provides for, and protects: Christ, who is the brightness of his Father's glory, whose glory is the glory of the only begotten of the Father, is here meant; and who has the same glorious attributes, the same glorious names, and the same worship, honour, and glory, his Father has; and in whom, as Mediator, is displayed the glory of all the divine perfections: he is said to "come from the way of the east";

which agrees with him in his character as the rising sun of righteousness; and with his incarnation, when as the day spring from on high, from heaven, he visited us, was born in the east, where his star appeared; from this part of the world his Gospel first came; here it was first preached, and churches planted; and though these parts have been forsaken by him a long time, he will return hither again; when he will dry up the river Euphrates, and make way for the kings and kingdoms of the east to be converted to him, (~~600~~ Revelation 7:2 16:12), to which a “behold” is prefixed, as a note exciting attention, and raising admiration; as it was matter of wonder and joy to the prophet, to see the glory of the Lord returning to his house, the same way he departed, (~~200~~ Ezekiel 10:4,19):

and his voice was like a noise of many waters; this is to be understood of his Gospel, in which he speaks to men, and which is a voice of love, grace, and mercy; of peace and reconciliation; of pardon and righteousness; of life, liberty, and salvation: and the metaphor here used is expressive of the swiftness of its motion in the world; of its general spread in it, and all over it; of the noise it will make, as it always does among men, wherever it comes; and of the rapidity and force of it, being attended with almighty power; and is a soul shaking, heart melting, soul quickening, enlightening, alluring, and comforting voice; (see ~~270~~ Daniel 10:6 ~~605~~ Revelation 1:15). The Targum is,

“and the voice of them that bless his name is as the voice of many waters.”

The Septuagint and Arabic versions, the voice of the camp or army.

And the earth shined with his glory; with the brightness of his glory, as the Targum; with his glorious Gospel, in which the glory of his person, office, and grace, is displayed; this will be spread all over the earth, and that will be enlightened by it: it will remove the darkness and infidelity, error, superstition, idolatry, and all false doctrines from the world, and the darkness of calamity and distress from the church; which will cast a lustre and glory upon it; and with the brightness of which the Lord will destroy antichrist, and by it set up his kingdom in the world, and reign before his ancients gloriously: this will bring on Zion’s light and glory, to which kings will come, and upon which will be a defence; (~~680~~ Revelation 18:1 ~~308~~ 2 Thessalonians 2:8 ~~200~~ Isaiah 40:1,3 4:5).

Ver. 3. *And it was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, &c.]* Recorded in the first, ninth, and tenth chapters of this book; the form in which the glory of the God of Israel now appeared was like to what he then saw; in each of which visions was the likeness of a throne, and on it the appearance of the glory of God:

even according to the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city; the city of Jerusalem; not that the prophet destroyed it, or came to destroy it himself, which was to be done, and was done, by the Chaldeans; but to foretell the destruction of it; which prediction of his made it as certain as if it was done. So the Targum,

“when I prophesied to destroy the city;”

and this was, when he was bid to cause, in a visionary and prophetic manner, six men, with their destroying weapons, to draw near unto it, and smite it; at which time he saw the glory of the God of Israel go up from the cherub, (^{<200B>}Ezekiel 9:1-3).

And the visions were like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar; the four living creatures and the wheels; the throne of sapphire stone, and the glorious appearance above it, (^{<200B>}Ezekiel 1:3-28 10:1-20) only with this difference, then he saw the glory of the God of Israel departing, especially in the last vision, but now returning:

and I fell upon my face; in reverence of such glorious majesty: affected with such a display of grace and goodness, and sensible of his own unworthiness to behold it: the clearer and fuller views saints have of the grace and glory of Christ, the more humble they are; (see ^{<200B>}Isaiah 6:1-3,5).

Ver. 4. *And the glory of the Lord came into the house, &c.]* Before described and measured; and being fitted and prepared, the builder and owner of it comes and takes up his residence in it; as Christ will do in his church, more especially and more visibly in the latter day:

by the way of the gate whose prospect is towards the east; which was the direct way into the outward court, and so to the inward court, and into the holy, and into the most holy place; and was the way by which he departed from hence, (^{<200B>}Ezekiel 10:18,19).

Ver. 5. *So the Spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court, &c.]*

The prophet was fallen down on his face, upon the sight of the glory of the Lord, and there he lay, until a wind came, as the word signifies; or the Holy Spirit, which is compared to the wind, for its invisible and irresistible power, came and took him up: humble souls are regarded by the Lord; he raises them up, and exalts them, and brings them into nearer and more intimate communion with God; and gives them clearer views still of the glories of Christ's person, grace, and love: and it is the Spirit of God only that does this, and that to priests only, such an one as Ezekiel was; for none but priests went into the inner court:

and, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house; the body of it; both the holy and the most holy place, with all its courts and apartments; so the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle when that was set up in the temple of Solomon, when it was built; and the glory of the Lord will fill the church of God, yea, the whole earth, in the latter day, (^{230B}Isaiah 6:3), of this Christ's personal appearance in the second temple, which gave it a greater glory than the former, was an emblem and pledge, (^{301B}Haggai 2:7,9), here, it may be observed, no mention is made of a cloud, as at the setting up of the tabernacle, and dedication of the temple; denoting the clear light of the Gospel in those times, and how the glory of the Lord will be seen with open face by all the saints.

Ver. 6. *And I heard him speaking unto me out of the house, &c.]* The holy place, the prophet being in the inward court: this is Jehovah the Father, the God of Israel, whose glory entered into it; who utters his voice out of Zion; who speaks in his church by his word, and the ministers of it; and which is to be heard and regarded, not as the word of man, but as the word of God:

and the man stood by me: whom he saw at first with a measuring line in his hand, (^{260B}Ezekiel 40:3), and with whom he had been all along, and had seen him measure the house, and all belonging to it: he stood by him as the Mediator between God and him; as the medium of communion with him; as the advocate with the Father: he stood by him to interpret what was said to him; to guide him further into the knowledge of divine things; to assist him, protect and defend him, to continue him in fellowship with God, and to preserve him in grace to glory. Here is an appearance of the three Persons in the Godhead; the Father speaking to the prophet out of the house; the

Son in human form standing by him; and the Spirit of the Lord, who had took him up from the ground, and had brought him into the inner court.

Ver. 7. *And he said unto me, son of man, &c.*] A kind, usual, and singular appellation, given to this prophet: these are the words either of the man that stood by him, so the Arabic version; or of Jehovah, speaking out of the house to him:

the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet: that is, this house, the church of God, is the place where the throne of the Lord is set; where he rules and reigns; where he sets his feet, and is his resting place; even his, whose throne is the heaven, and the earth his footstool; here Christ, as King of saints, dwells, and here he walks and shows the glory of his majesty:

where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever; not Carnal, but spiritual Israel; such as are Israelites indeed, or which the church will be full in the latter day, both Jews and Gentiles; and in the midst of these will Jehovah dwell, and grant his gracious presence, and never more depart from them: this shows that this house or building can not be understood of the second temple; since the Lord did not dwell in that for ever, but has left that house desolate hundreds of years ago: some Jewish writers^{f755} have owned that it belongs to the times of the Messiah:

and my name shall the house of Israel no more defile, or “profane”; or cause to be blasphemed by immoralities, or false doctrines, or superstition and will worship; denoting the holiness of life, purity of doctrine and worship, in the churches of Christ in the latter day; (see ^{<30B>}Isaiah 4:3 ^{<30B>}Joel 3:17 ^{<30B>}Zechariah 14:20,21):

neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom: that is, idolatry, which is spiritual fornication; such as the kings of Israel, and their subjects, were often guilty of, before their captivity in Babylon, though not after; nor will they ever return to it in the latter day, when converted; for they will never espouse the idolatries of Rome; and those kings and people that bear the name of Christians, and yet commit fornication with the whore of Babylon, shall do so no more after these times, (^{<67D>}Revelation 17:2,16):

nor by the carcasses of their kings in their high places; or, and “their high places”^{f756}; that is, by both; by the carcasses of their kings being buried in or near the house of God; so the Targum adds, at their death^{f757}; or by human carcasses being sacrificed to Molech or Milcom, which signifies

their king: or else the idols themselves are so called, because lifeless and abominable; (see ^{<216B>}Jeremiah 16:18), and the worship of which the kings of Israel encouraged by precept and practice, order and example, and therefore called theirs; and also by their high places, which they made for idolatrous worship, and which were made where the carcasses of their kings were laid, as Ben Melech observes; and all which were done, especially in the reigns of Manasseh and Ammon: but now nothing of this kind shall be hereafter, or any thing now similar to it, in the antichristian state.

Ver. 8. *In their setting of their threshold by my threshold, &c.]* The threshold is the way of entrance into the house; when men open any other way of entrance into the house of God than he has directed, it is setting up their threshold by his: the Gospel way of entrance into the church of Christ is Christ himself, and faith in him, and a profession of it, and submission to the ordinance of baptism, (^{<630E>}John 10:1,7,9) (^{<4124E>}Acts 2:41 9:18,26) but when men make carnal descent, religious education, mere morality and civility, the way of entrance into church communion; this is opposite to God's way, and is resented by him; this shall not be hereafter:

and their post by my post; which is done when the ordinances of men are substituted in the room of the ordinances of God, or set upon a level with them; when the ordinances of God are changed and altered, or that brought into his worship which he has not commanded; and the commandments of men are taught for the doctrines of God: so the Pharisees set up the traditions of the elders as equal to the written word, and, made it of no effect by them; as the Papists do, by setting up their traditions, under the name of the traditions of the apostles, and of the church, upon a level with the Scriptures; and the same is done when men set up their own doctrines, concerning the Persons in the Godhead, concerning the power and purity of human nature, and the way of redemption; and oppose their own works to the grace of God, in justification, pardon, and salvation; the allusion is to the setting up of altars and idols in the house of the Lord, by his altar, (^{<1220E>}2 Kings 21:4,7):

and the wall between me and them; that these sins and abominable practices were a wall of separation between God and them, and caused him to hide himself from them, withdraw his presence, and deny them communion with him, (^{<2341E>}Isaiah 49:2), some render it, “for” or “so that

there was but a wall between me and them”^{f758}; so near were their thresholds, posts, and altars, to his:

they have even defiled my holy name by their abominations that they have committed: by their false doctrines, idolatrous worship, and immoral lives; such abominations as before mentioned:

wherefore I have consumed them in mine anger; as the Jews are now, and all the antichristian states will be.

Ver. 9. *Now let them put away their whoredom, &c.*] Idolatry, superstition, and will worship, with which the corrupt church of Rome abounds; and whatever appearance thereof is in the reformed churches:

and the carcasses of their kings far from me; their idols; (see Gill on “³⁸⁰⁷Ezekiel 43:7”),

and I will dwell in the midst of them for ever; now though the Jews were never guilty of idolatry after their return from the Babylonish captivity, nor even to this day; yet the Lord has departed from them, and left them to blindness and stupidity, they having rejected the Messiah he sent unto them; which shows that this passage refers not to those times, but to future times; when the whole Israel of God shall be cleared of all corruptions in doctrine and worship, and the Lord will take up his abode with them, and no more depart from them.

Ver. 10. *Thou son of man, show the house, &c.*] That is, the house the prophet had seen measured, its gates, courts, and all belonging to it; which he was at first bid to observe, that he might show it to others; the house that the glory of the Lord was now come into, and had filled; and which is no other than the Gospel church in its perfection and glory in the latter day. This the prophet, who is addressed under his usual character in this book, is bid to show “to the house of Israel”; either to the captives in Babylon, among whom he was, and to whom he often speaks in this book, being sent with a message to them: and this he is ordered to show them, both to comfort them in their present state, with a view of what would be hereafter; and to humble them, and bring them to a sense of their sins, and shame for them, which had brought them into the condition they were, and so greatly short of this happy one: or else to the Jews in the first times of the Gospel; the prophet representing the apostles of Christ, who delivered out the form of a Gospel church state to the believing ones, far superior to that they had been in, and into which they entered: or rather he represented

the ministers of the word in the latter day, showing to the Christians of those times the order, worship, and discipline of a pure Gospel church, who have been greatly deficient in their observance of them; and which is the work and business of Gospel ministers to do, as well as to preach the doctrine of the Gospel:

that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; how far short they have come of the model of true Gospel churches, and of observing the order, and maintaining the ordinances, and keeping up the discipline of such churches; and when persons are brought to blush and be ashamed, it looks as if they had a true sight and sense of their mistakes, and of repentance for them:

and let them measure the pattern; that is, of the house, and what belongs to it; by which they will see their defects, and correct them; (see ~~and~~ Revelation 11:1,2).

Ver. 11. *And if they be ashamed of all that they have done*, &c.] As sinful and, criminal, at least as very imperfect and defective, and not answerable to the pattern shown them, from which they have sadly deviated; if made sensible of this, and they acknowledge it with shame, not only the house in general, but the particulars of it, are to be shown with them; for, to sensible and penitent persons, more grace, light, knowledge, and judgment in divine things, are given:

shew them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof; the form and order of a Gospel church; which is not national, provincial, or parochial, nor Presbyterian, but congregational; consisting of persons called out of the world by the grace of God, and who are incorporated and knit together in Gospel bonds; among whom the word of God is faithfully preached, and the ordinances truly administered, and furnished with proper officers, pastors, and deacons; the one to take care of the spiritual, the other of the temporal affairs of the church; and to see a church in such form and order, and thus organized, is a very beautiful sight.

And the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof; the gates and way of entrance into it, which is only by Christ, and a profession of faith in him; and care should be taken that none be admitted but such who appear to be regenerated and sanctified by the Spirit of God; to be righteous through the righteousness of Christ; and that keep the truth, and hold the doctrines of the Gospel: and also the way and manner of excluding unworthy persons, such who are immoral in their lives, and erroneous in their principles,

should be observed. And all the forms thereof; the decorations of it, signified by the cherubim and palm trees; so Jarchi and Kimchi; and these expressive of ministers of the word, and faithful men: this is often repeated, that it might be the more observed; for to have ministers to answer such characters is of great consequence.

And all the ordinances thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the laws thereof; the ordinances are those of baptism and the Lord's supper, which are to continue until the second coming of Christ: the laws are, besides the moral law, in the hands of Christ the lawgiver, the law of loving one another, called the law of Christ, and his new commandment; and all the laws relating to worship and discipline, concerning the reproof of members, in case of private or public offences; and concerning the exclusion of disorderly or heretical persons:

and write it in their sight; the plan and model of this house, and all things belonging to it, that they may have it before them, as the rule of their conduct and behaviour:

that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them; for all this is shown, not for mere speculation, and to gratify curiosity, but in order to be put in practice; all these rules, laws, and ordinances, are to be kept in faith, from a principle of love, in the name and strength of Christ, and with a view to the glory of God.

Ver. 12. *This is the law of the house*, &c.] Which follows, the more general one, which comprehends the rest:

upon the top of the mountain; denoting the exaltation and visibility of the church of Christ in the latter day, as well as its firmness and stability; (see ^{<38B>}Isaiah 2:2,3):

the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy; all belonging to it shall be as the most holy place in the temple, sacred to the Lord; laws, ordinances, doctrines, worship, members, ministers, all holy; nothing said or done, or have a place here, but what is holy; (see ^{<38D>}Zechariah 14:20,21):

this is the law of the house; the principal one, according to which are directed and governed.

Ver. 13. *And these are the measures of the altar after the cubits, &c.]* Of the altar of burnt offering, which though measured before, the dimensions were not given till now; (see ^{<3647>}Ezekiel 40:47), this altar was a type of Christ, (^{<5830>}Hebrews 13:10) with respect to his deity, which is greater than the sacrifice of his human nature, the support of it, which sanctified it, and gave virtue and efficacy to it, and rendered it acceptable to God, (^{<4239>}Matthew 23:19) and the measures of it are said to be after the cubits used in the measuring of places and things belonging to this house, described; and what these were appears by what follows:

the cubit is a cubit and an hand breadth; not the common cubit, but what was larger than that by a hand breadth, or three inches:

even the bottom shall be a cubit, and the breadth a cubit; or, “the bosom”^{f759}; that is, the foundation of the altar, as the Targum and Jarchi; the basis, foot, or settle of it; this was a cubit high, and a cubit broad:

and the border thereof by the edge thereof round about shall be a span; the edge or “lip”^{f760}, of this bottom or settle, was a cubit broad, for the priests to stand and go round the altar, and to this there was a border of a span, or half a cubit, to prevent their slipping; or else to keep the blood, poured at the foot of the altar, from running upon the pavement:

and this shall be the higher place of the altar; or the projection or jetting of it out beyond others, which was further than any other part; otherwise it was the lower part of the altar.

Ver. 14. *And from the bottom upon the ground, even to the lower settle, &c.]* From the basis or foundation of the altar, as it stood upon the ground, to the lower settle or “court”^{f761}, as it is called, where the priests stood; and in which they could walk round the altar, to do their business:

shall be two cubits, and the breadth one cubit; that is, two cubits high, and one broad:

and from the lesser settle or court, to the greater settle or court, shall be four cubits, and, the breadth one cubit; the lowermost settle is called the lesser, not in quantity, but in height, it being but two cubits high from the ground; but the upper settle was four cubits from that, and one broad, for the priests to walk on round about; in all six cubits from the bottom.

Ver. 15. *So the altar shall be four cubits, &c.]* That is, from the greater settle; so that in the whole it was ten cubits high, the same with Solomon's, (^{<400>}2 Chronicles 4:1) some make this to be eleven cubits high, one higher than Solomon's; it is here called "Harel", the mountain of God, because it looked like a mountain in the court, for its size: it was on a mountain our Lord was offered up a sacrifice for the sins of his people; and which was far superior to all other sacrifices, and for more persons than those sacrifices offered up on the altar of burnt offerings.

And from the altar and upward shall be four horns; or, "from Ariel"^{f762}; which was the focus or hearth where the wood was laid, and the fire kindled, called "Ariel"; which some render the lion of God, because, as the Jewish Rabbins^{f763} say, the fire of the altar lay upon it in the form of a lion; or rather, because like a lion it devoured the sacrifices: this name of the altar agrees well with Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah; who was strong to bear the sins of men, and the wrath of God for them, whereby they are no more; though it rather signifies the fire of God, which consumed the sacrifice, and denoted the wrath of God on Christ, and also the divine acceptance of his sacrifice: now from hence and upwards were four horns at the four corners of the altar; which denote the strength of Christ, to save all that come unto God by him, and his being a refuge to them that by faith lay hold upon him; and that he is accessible to persons that come from all parts, from the four corners of the earth.

Ver. 16. *And the altar shall be twelve cubits long, twelve broad, &c.]* The length of it, from east to west, was twelve cubits; and the breadth, from north to south, was the same; so that it was a proper foursquare, as follows: Christ the altar, or the doctrine of his sacrifice and satisfaction for the sins of men, is the doctrine of the twelve apostles of Christ, and embraced by the twelve times twelve, the 144,000 that belong unto him:

square in the four squares thereof; as the altar in the tabernacle, and Solomon's temple, were, (^{<220>}Exodus 27:1 ^{<400>}2 Chronicles 4:1), denoting the largeness of Christ's sacrifice, the perfection of it, and its stability and permanency, to take away the sin, of his people.

Ver. 17. *And the settle shall be fourteen cubits long and fourteen broad in the four squares thereof, &c.]* Here Kimchi confesses his ignorance. Jarchi interprets it, the top of the altar, with the place of the horns, and of the feet of the priests, and was twenty eight cubits by twenty eight, the fourteen mentioned being to be measured from the middle^{f764}; and he seems to be

right in making it to be the upper part of the altar, and not the lower settle, as some; the focus or hearth where the wood was laid, and the sacrifice burnt; and which had a projection of a cubit on each side, and so made the twelve cubits, the length and breadth of the altar, fourteen:

and the border about it shall be half a cubit; or the enclosure, as the Targum; the ledge about it, which went round the altar, to keep the fire or sacrifice from falling, or that the feet of the priests might not slip: the Jews expound it of the horns:

and the bottom thereof shall be a cubit about; or the foundation, as the Targum; which was between the altar, and the border on which the priests walked, when they went round it, to do the business of it: here Kimchi owns his ignorance again;

and his stairs shall look towards the east; steps to the altar were forbidden by the law of Moses, (⁴⁰²⁶Exodus 20:26) wherefore, as the height of the altar of Solomon, and so of the second temple, required some way and method of ascent to the top of it, to do the business upon it; the Jews had what they call “kibbesh”, a way made of earth thrown up, which rose gradually, and led to the top of it, and was about two and thirty cubits long, and sixteen broad⁴⁷⁶⁵; but here steps or stairs are expressly mentioned, which show that this refers to times when the Mosaic and ceremonial laws should be abolished. These stairs were placed eastward, so that those that went up them looked toward the west, toward the temple and house of God, where he dwelt; and turned their backs to the east, or rising sun, in direct opposition to the worshippers of the sun, whose faces were to the east. How many steps or stairs there were to the altar is not said; Starckius conjectures there might be twelve or fourteen of them, and allows for each step half a cubit; but as the altar was ten, or, as others, eleven cubits high, there should be twenty steps or more, of such a measure. These may signify the several ways and means of coming to, and increasing in, the knowledge of the doctrine of the altar, or of Christ’s satisfaction for sin; as hearing, reading, prayer, meditation, &c.

Ver. 18. *And he said unto me, son of man, thus saith the Lord God, &c.]* This is the voice of the Lord continued, speaking out of the house to the prophet; (see ²⁵⁸⁶Ezekiel 43:6):

these are the ordinances of the altar: not what go before, concerning the measures of it, but what follow, concerning the sacrifices to be offered on it:

in the day when they shall make it, to offer burnt offerings thereon, and sprinkle blood thereon; this plainly shows that this altar is the altar of burnt offerings; such were to be offered on it, and the blood of them to be sprinkled thereon, as follows; that is, upon the horns, corners, and border of it, (³⁶⁶¹Ezekiel 43:20).

Ver. 19. *And thou shalt give to the priests the Levites, that be of the seed of Zadok, &c.]* Who, in Solomon's time, was put in the room of Abiathar; (see ³⁶⁰⁶Ezekiel 40:46), his name signifies a "righteous" one, a type he was of Jesus Christ the righteous; and here his seed signify the seed of Christ, such whom he makes priests unto the Lord; to these, in a visionary way, the prophet was to give this altar, for them to serve at, and eat of; and all the rites and ordinances to observe and keep; and the sacrifices to offer on it, after mentioned:

which approach unto me, to minister unto me, saith the Lord God; (See Gill on "³⁶⁰⁶Ezekiel 40:46"):

a young bullock for a sin offering: typical of Christ, strong and laborious, able to bear the sins of his people; to become a sin offering, and to be made sin itself for them.

Ver. 20. *And thou shalt take of the blood thereof, &c.]* Ezekiel being a priest. This must be understood in a visionary way; for, as Kimchi observes, Ezekiel did not live to come up out of the captivity, but died, and was buried in the land of Babylon, and so did not actually do this: though it is a mere dream of the same writer, that this is to be understood of the resurrection of the dead, when he supposes Ezekiel will be high priest, though Aaron be present; or however be the second, or deputy to him.

And put it on the four horns of it, and on the four corners of the settle, and upon the border round about; that is, on the four horns of the altar, and on the four corners of the settle which went round it, for the priests to walk on, and do their business; either the uppermost, or as others the lowermost, and as some both; and also on the border or ledge that enclosed the settle. The prophet's doing this, putting the blood on these several things, represents the nature of the Gospel ministry, and the

business of it; which is to hold forth the blood of Christ, and the blessings of grace through it, as redemption, peace, pardon, righteousness, and life.

Thus shall thou cleanse and purge it; the altar; thus Christ, though without sin, and needed no cleansing and purging for himself, yet was sanctified by his own blood; that he might sanctify his people, and perfect by his sacrifice them that were sanctified, (^{<6179>}John 17:19 ^{<5814>}Hebrews 10:14,29 13:12).

Ver. 21. *Thou shalt take the bullock also of the sin offering, &c.]* Which was appointed for the sin offering, according to the divine direction, (^{<2689>}Ezekiel 43:19), the prophet was to take it out of the herd, and separate it from the rest for this purpose, and deliver it into the hands of one of the priests:

and he shall burn it in the appointed place of the house; that is, one of the sons of Zadok should receive it of the prophet, and burn it in its proper place; not within the house, without the court, but within the wall of the house: this burning of it was typical of the dolorous sufferings of Christ; (see Gill on "^{<2619>}Ezekiel 40:39"), or of the zeal and fervency of the ministers of the Gospel, in preaching a crucified Christ in the proper place, in the house and church of God: without the sanctuary; the holy place or temple, properly so called; or without the camp, typical of Christ's suffering without Jerusalem, and of his being preached not only there, but in the Gentile world; (see ^{<5811>}Hebrews 13:11,12), this was the work of the first day of the consecration of the altar.

Ver. 22. *And on the second day thou shalt offer a kid of the goats without blemish for a sin offering, &c.]* Jarchi observes, that this was not in the tabernacle, but ordered to be in future time by him that speaks; instead of this, another ram was appointed by the law, (^{<1295>}Exodus 29:15,19), this shows the ceremonial law to be changeable, and now abolished: this was typical of Christ, without spot and blemish, and yet figured by the goat, being made sin for his people:

and they shall cleanse the altar, as they did cleanse it with the bullock; (see Gill on "^{<2681>}Ezekiel 43:20").

Ver. 23. *When thou hast made an end of cleansing it, &c.]* The altar, by the sacrifices of the bullock and the kid, on the first and second days; then, on the third day,

thou shalt offer a young bullock without blemish, and a ram out of the flock without blemish; all these sacrifices point at the one sacrifice of Christ; which was pure and perfect, and once offered up for the sins of many, and needs no reiteration; only the doctrine of it is to be frequently inculcated in the ministry of the word and ordinances.

Ver. 24. *And thou shalt offer them before the Lord, &c.*] Upon the altar of burnt offering, which stood before the house or temple where Jehovah dwelt, (^{<2647>}Ezekiel 40:47):

and the priests shall cast salt upon them; which was to be used in all sacrifices under the law, (^{<4023>}Leviticus 2:13), this may denote the savoury doctrines and lives of the ministers of the Gospel, who thereby recommend the truths they deliver, concerning a crucified Christ, his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, to others; (see ^{<4153>}Matthew 5:13):

and they shall offer them up for a burnt offering unto the Lord; throughout the whole seven days of the consecration and cleansing of the altar, as follows:

Ver. 25. *Seven days shalt thou prepare every day a goat for a sin offering, &c.*] By this it appears that the altar was seven days a consecrating and cleansing; and that on each day a goat was prepared and offered, typical of Christ, as before observed. Here Kimchi owns that this was not according to the order of Moses, or was done by those that came out of the captivity of Babylon; and is obliged to confess that there will be a change or an innovation in the order of sacrifices in time to come, or under the Messiah.

They shall also prepare a young bullock, and a ram out of the flock without blemish; which, either one or all of them, should be offered up on each of the seven days; (see Gill on “^{<2623>}Ezekiel 43:23”).

Ver. 26. *Seven days shall they purge the altar, and purify it, &c.*] Which denotes the perfect purity and sanctification of it; which how to be applied to Christ, (see Gill on “^{<2630>}Ezekiel 43:20”);

and they shall consecrate themselves: the priests shall consecrate themselves, or devote themselves to the service of the altar; so Gospel ministers to the ministry of a crucified Christ: or they themselves should consecrate the altar by the above rites: or rather it may be literally rendered,

and they shall fill its hands, or “their own hands”^{f766}; that is, either they shall fill the sides of the altar with sacrifices, as much as it could hold; or the hands of the priests with parts of the sacrifice, or with gifts, as a token of their being inaugurated into, and invested with, the priestly office: so Gospel ministers should have their hands full of, or be filled with, the gifts and graces of the Spirit, and with the knowledge of Christ, his person, offices, grace, righteousness, and sacrifice, that they may minister unto others.

Ver. 27. *And when these days are expired*, &c.] The seven days of consecration, and all these rites and sacrifices observed:

it shall be, that upon the eighth day, and so forward; that is, on the first day of the week, or Lord’s day, the Christian sabbath, the next day after the seventh, and so upon every return of it; in which Christian ministrations are exercised, the word preached, ordinances administered, and works of righteousness and charity done; (see ~~409~~ John 20:19,26 ~~410~~ Acts 20:7 ~~411~~ 1 Corinthians 16:2).

The priests shall make your burnt offerings upon the altar, and your peace offerings; or “thank offerings”^{f767}; preach Christ and him crucified to the people, and offer up the sacrifices of prayer and praise unto God for them:

and I will accept you, saith the Lord God; through Christ the Mediator, in whom he is well pleased; who is the altar on which such sacrifices are accepted, and become well pleasing to God, (~~280~~ Isaiah 56:7 ~~406~~ 1 Peter 2:5).