EZEKIEL 43

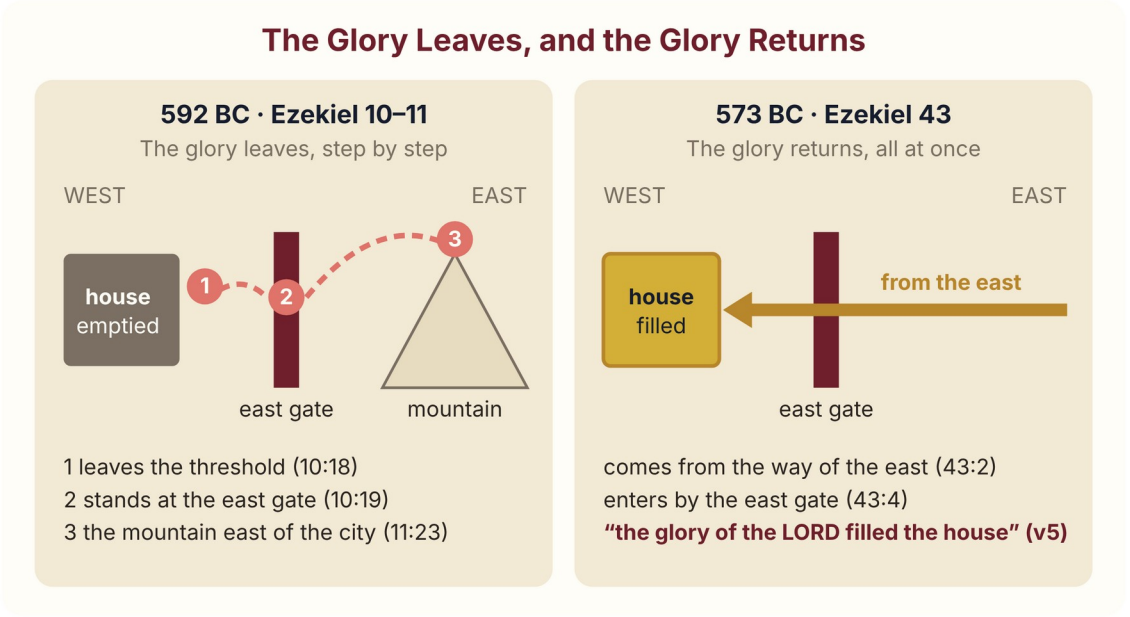
The Glory Comes Home

“And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house.”
EZEKIEL 43:5

Where Ezekiel has brought us

1. Chapter 43 sits in Ezekiel's last great vision (chapters 40–48), dated “in the twenty-fifth year of our exile” (40:1), about 573 BC, fourteen years after Jerusalem fell.

2. Years earlier, in 592 BC, Ezekiel watched God's glory leave the old temple, which was full of idols.



The Glory Returns by the East Gate

A voice like many waters, a shining earth, and a prophet on his face.

EZEKIEL 43:2

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.

DAVID GUZIK

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).

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the high point of the book. In chapters 8–11 Ezekiel saw idolatry in the temple and watched the glory leave, step by step.

kabod (כָּבוֹד)

KABOD · "WEIGHT, GLORY"

Kabod means weight, honor, splendor: the visible presence of God. In verse 2, "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."

The Place of My Throne

God claims His house forever and names what had defiled the old one.

EZEKIEL 43:6

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

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik ties the promise to dwell among Israel forever to the millennial kingdom. He hears in the language of throne and footstool an echo of Solomon's dedication (1 Kgs 8:12–13, 27).

WHAT IT MEANS

Two sins had defiled the old house. First, harlotry: idolatry, the spiritual adultery Ezekiel exposed all through the book (chapters 8, 16, 23).

shakan (שָׁכַן)

SHAKAN · "TO DWELL, ABIDE"

Shakan means to settle, abide, tabernacle; it is the root behind the word Shekinah. God calls the house "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).

Shown So They Will Be Ashamed

The measurements have a moral purpose, and one law rules the house.

EZEKIEL 43:12

"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.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik sums up the rule over everything: 'the whole area surrounding the mountaintop is most holy.'

WHAT IT MEANS

The purpose of all these measurements is moral, not architectural. God's grace, a new house and a returned glory, is what breaks the heart.

kalam (כָּלַם)

KALAM · "TO BE HUMILIATED"

Kalam means to be humiliated, put to shame. Ezekiel is told to "describe the temple to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and let them measure the plan" (v10).

The Altar Measured

A great stepped altar with four horns, square on top, its steps facing east.

EZEKIEL 43:13

"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.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik takes the long cubit, 'a cubit and a handbreadth' (v13), as about 20.5 inches (40:5), so this altar is huge.

WHAT IT MEANS

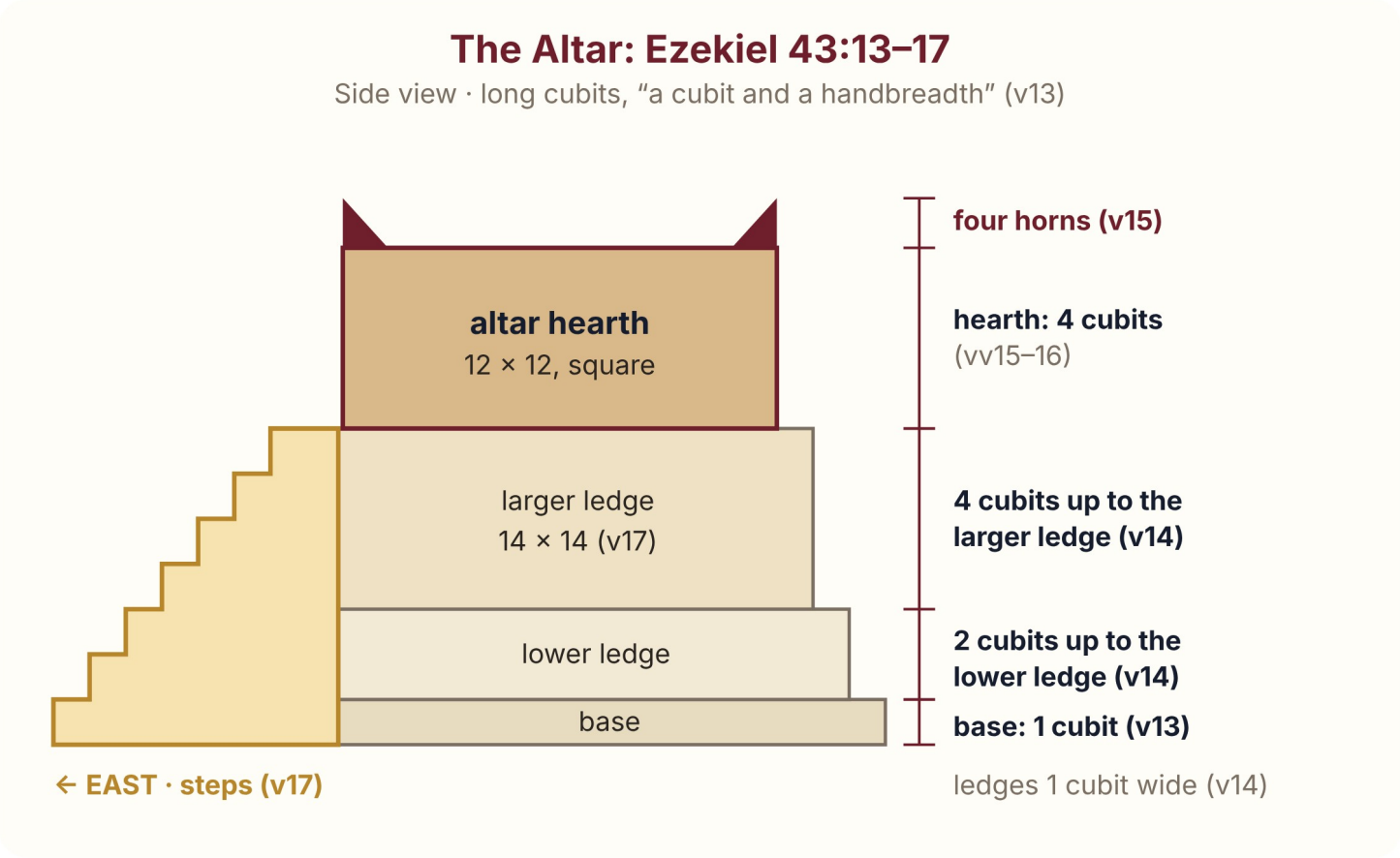
Right after the glory returns, God measures an altar. That order is the gospel.

qeren (קֶרֶן)

QEREN · "HORN"

Qeren is a horn, and here the raised corners of the altar. "From the altar hearth shall extend upwards four horns" (v15).

The Altar of Ezekiel 43:13–17



A side view of the stepped altar from the measures in verses 13–17: base, two ledges, the hearth twelve cubits square, four horns, and steps facing east.

Seven Days, Then Acceptance

Blood on the horns, seven days of atonement, and on the eighth day, acceptance.

EZEKIEL 43:18

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.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik holds that this is a literal future temple, noting that 'there is no command to build' it, so it will be 'God's doing and not man's.'

WHAT IT MEANS

The consecration follows the pattern of Aaron's ordination (Exod 29; Lev 8): blood on the horns, a sin offering, seven days, and on the eighth day the regular worship begins.

ratsah (רָצָה)

RATSAH · "TO ACCEPT"

Ratsah means to be pleased with, to accept favorably.

What to carry from this chapter

1

The same gate.

The glory that left by the east gate (10:19; 11:23) comes back by the east gate (43:4).

2

Slow to leave, quick to fill.

Guzik notes the glory left slowly and reluctantly, but fills the house at once.

3

Never filled the second temple.

Guzik cites Feinberg: the glory is never said to have filled the temple built after the exile.

4

Dwell, tabernacle.

Shakan, the root behind Shekinah, is God's promise to settle among His people forever (vv7, 9).

More to carry

5

Only a wall between.

Judah's kings built their threshold by God's threshold, living wall-to-wall with His house (v8).

6

Grace breaks the heart.

Kalam, to be ashamed: seeing God's good plan was meant to make Israel ashamed of their sin (v10).

7

Horns of refuge.

The altar's four horns were the place of atonement and the place a guilty man took hold (v15).

8

Memorials, not substitutes.

Guzik holds the millennial sacrifices look back to the cross, as the Lord's Table does, and never cleansed sin by themselves.

Talk it through

1. Every time Ezekiel saw the glory, he fell on his face. What does real worship look like for you before you start talking about God?

2. The kings lived with only a wall between their palace and God's house. What have you kept built right up against your worship?

3. God showed Israel His plan so they would be ashamed. How has seeing God's goodness, not His anger, changed you?

4. Why do you think the altar comes right after the glory returns?

5. Who do you know who needs to hear God say, “I will accept you,” and how could you tell him?

CLOSING

The glory that walked out of a defiled house came home by the same gate and filled it. The way back to God's presence still runs through honest shame, cleansing by blood, and the word He speaks over every prodigal who comes home through Christ: I will accept you.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

O·I·A study, slides and reflection journal: see the Ezekiel study page.