

THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL IS NOT MILLENNIAL

Time line:

Mishkan -1200BCE - Solomon temple 960BCE - Assyrian captivity 733 BCE -
Babylonian Captivity 597 BCE - Jeconiah reigned three months and ten days, from
December 9, 598 to March 15/16, 597 BC when he was taken into captivity!

Remember 10 Israel along with their princes were already dispersed some 136 years
prior to Ezekiel, some in the area just N to where the prophet Ezekiel was held captive.

Zerubabels temple - In 538 BC, Zerubbabel, the leader of the tribe of Judah, was part of
the first wave of Jewish captives to return to Jerusalem (Ezra 1:1–2). The Persian king
appointed Zerubbabel as governor of Judah (Haggai 1:1), and right away Zerubbabel
began rebuilding the temple with the help of Joshua, the high priest (Ezra 3:2–3, 8). The
first temple, built by King Solomon, had been destroyed by the Babylonians in 587 BC
(2 Kings 25:8–10).

“There’s nothing new under the sun.” Prior to the invention of the State of Israel in 1948
it wasn’t uncommon for those committed to the study of the word to become aware to
the dating mechanism apparent within the “book” of Ezekiel in the 17- 19th century
especially.

But today with the birth of the State of Israel, Christian Zionism and Messianic believers
alike frame their eschatological world view through the lens of the *‘last’* nine chapters of
the book of Ezekiel. The new temple, the reinstatement of animal sacrifices and the
Aaronic priesthood

The problem is that in fact S.a.tan through his false prophet plans to make the Antonia
Fortress platform the center of world government and of universal worship and he’s
using peoples twisted Levitical view of Ezekiel to attain that very goal. All the while
leading masses of well meaning believers to their peril as they’ll climb the steps back to
the days of constant ritual bloodletting for an insatiable Levitical altar system funded by
the illuminati and funneled through Haim Richman and the Temple Institute.

I however, like many of the tzadik’s before me (T.H.Whitehouse) believe the *‘book’* of
Ezekiel not to be a *‘book’* at all, but a collection of 13 dated scrolls each containing a
vision given to the prophet over a period of 25 years whilst he was in the Babylonian
Exile (597BCE).

These 13 scrolls, would have been rolled up one of two ways and placed into a stone jar
depository.

1. In the case Jer. 32:10, *“and I signed the deed and sealed it, took witnesses, and weighed the money on the scales. 11 So I took the purchase deed, both that which was sealed according to the law and custom, and that which was open.....* the scroll would be hole punched in the middle, the lower half contains the deed – is rolled tied and sealed with 7 seals – reflecting the year of release/Schemata or date of writing. The top half would have an abridged description of the deed left open for reference with a scribal date tab often attached by the jar merchant.

2. In the case of Rev 5. The deed is written on one side rolled and sealed with 7 seals and then an abridged description is written on the outside for reference.

Now, due to a careless handlers breaking the date seals upon their discovery and compiling the text into one scroll we have the 'book' of Ezekiel as we find it today. Compounded with that, the rabbis advocated the withdrawal of the book from circulation and prohibited the reading of the beginning and end of the book by anyone under the age of thirty. Needless to say it was a book that was overlooked and understudied for many centuries and by the time it became more widely accepted its format had already been established thus not questioned.

Ezekiel's visions were to the House of Israel that had been scattered abroad (721 BCE) during the Assyrian Captivity. Many of Israel's princes were scattered in the province of Ecbatana in Media just a short journey from where Ezekiel was exiled in NE Babylonia. He visited them (Ch. 2 & 3) and was visited by them (Ch. 14 & 20).

Text In Chronological Order (Chapter & Verses)	Date Given In Text (M/D/Y) (of King Jehoiachin's captivity)
(Descriptive docket) 1:2-3 <i>(only date NOT affixed by Ezekiel - a descriptive scribal tab written in the third person)</i>	?/05/05 <i>(only date NOT affixed by Ezekiel - a descriptive scribal tab written in the third person)</i>
(Scroll 1) 8:1 - 19:14 <i>(the present state of Israel, temple abominations, wicked slain, the glory departs- E, opportunity of regathering, Judah & Jerusalem's guilt)</i>	06/05/06
(Scroll 2) 20:1 - 23:49 <i>(more rebellions of Israel, Judah & Jerusalem with opportunity for restoration)</i>	05/10/07
(Scroll 3) 24:1 - 25:17 <i>(the proclamations against the surrounding territories)</i>	10/10/09
(Scroll 4) 29:1-16 <i>(proclamation against Egypt)</i>	10/12/10 <i>(#17 year jump from 29:16 - 29:17)</i>
(Scroll 5) 26:1 - 28:26 <i>(proclamation against Tyre & its King (S.a.tan) with a future blessing)</i>	?/01/11
(Scroll 6) 30:20-26 <i>(proclamation against Pharaoh)</i>	01/07/11
(Scroll 7) 31:1-18 <i>(Egypt cut down like a tree)</i>	03/01/11
(Scroll 8) 32:17 - 33:20 <i>(Egypt assigned to pit)</i>	?/15/12

Text In Chronological Order (<i>Chapter & Verses</i>)	Date Given In Text (<i>M/D/Y</i>) (<i>of King Jehoiachin's captivity</i>)
(Scroll 9) 32:1-16 (<i>lamentation for Egypt</i>)	12/01/12 (**fall of Egypt came before fall of Jerusalem)
(Scroll 10) 33:21 - 39:29 (<i>fall of Jerusalem - any prophetic aspect of Volume closes here</i>)	10/05/12
(Scroll 11) 40:1 - 48:35 (<i>regulated to back of Volume as an appendix. Ez. as ambassador with a Provisional Constitution, inc. temple visions, a conditional offer of national restoration contingent on both houses repenting. This would have been an interim constitution "until the time of reformation when the seed would come."</i>)	10/04/25 (<i>after 13 year silence</i>) 43:10 purpose: to shame Israel into repentance
(Scroll 12) 29:17 - 30:19 (<i>Babylon will plunder Egypt</i>)	01/01/27 #
(Scroll 13) 1: 1-2 - 7:27 (<i>Priestly Commission of judgment discharged as rebellious Israel has rejected the constitution set forth</i>)	04/05/30

- * All dates in the text EXCEPT 1:2,3 were affixed by Ezekiel.
- * All dates are from 1st year of the captivity of King Jehoiachin, 599 BCE (2 Ki 24:15) which lasted 37 years, then later alleviated (2 Ki 25:27). Ezekiel's visions lasts 25 years of this period.
- * The closing chapters (inc. the temple visions) predate the opening chapters by 5 years!
- * *Fall of Jerusalem: Jerusalem was destroyed by fire 05/?/11 of Jehoiachin's rule (2 Kin. 25:8, Jer. 52:12). If news didn't reach the exiles until the twelfth year, tenth month, it took over a year and a half for the news to travel a distance covered by Ezra in four months (Ezra 7:9). A few Hebrew texts and one ancient translation read "eleventh" year instead of "twelfth year". עֲשֶׂתִּי אֶשְׁתֵּי *`ashtey (ayeen, sheen, tav, yod)* אֶשְׂרָה *`asar*; (ayeen, sheen tav). The difference is only one letter, the Yod in the Hebrew, and "twelfth" looks to be another later Masorite copyist mistake.

Ezekiel's Temple and Sacrifices:

Will Temple Sacrifices *Resume* in the Millennium?

Many readers of the Bible think they see -- in the last nine chapters of Ezekiel -- a portrayal of a new religious state and a new Temple and services in Jerusalem -- all in the predicted Millennial Age. Others see it as a constant ritual blood-letting of animals for the insatiable altar of the new Temple -- and abhor it! What is the TRUTH? The *KEY* to understanding the book of Ezekiel is the *FACT* that the closing chapters *ANTEDATE* the opening ones by 5 years. Once this is understood, everything falls into place and the book of Ezekiel no longer appears to contradict the gospel of the Messiah and the epistles of Paul!

T. H. Whitehouse

SINCE the British undertaking in 1917 to give the Jewish people a "national home" in Palestine, many Christian people are convinced that what they see in the establishment of the state of Israel is a real fulfillment of Biblical prophecies concerning the Jews and the Land. But it cannot be said that popular knowledge on these matters is very exact -- or more than merely superficial!

A very large number of Bible readers -- to whom prophecy is of great interest -- are looking with great expectations to soon seeing realized "that blessed hope" of the Messiah's return and reign in his kingdom during the thousand years of peace and prosperity called the Millennium. They believe that the center of world government and of universal worship will then be Jerusalem. And they think they see, in the *LAST NINE CHAPTERS OF EZEKIEL*, a vivid portrayal of the new religious state, the new Temple and services, and the predicted Millennial Age.

Yet, in the minds of these people, so fervently desirous of the realization of the Millennial glories, there is a painful undercurrent of uneasiness because -- reading Ezekiel's chapters as a forecast of those days -- they do not envision them as days of the deliverance of the suffering creation from groaning and travailing in pain at the manifestation of the sons of YEHOVAH God. But instead they see it as days of the

constant ritual blood-shedding of various kinds of beasts for the insatiable altar of the new Temple. And they are not happy about it.

Nor is it clear to their troubled understanding why it should even be necessary to have a revival of such sacrifices in that period which is to be the consummation of human history - - and the perfected development of the Christian religion under the personal administration of YEHOVAH God and the Messiah himself.

Other people, whose intense interest is attracted by the Temple chapters of Ezekiel, see in the establishment of the state of Israel the re-erection of the Temple, as described by Ezekiel, along with its appropriate Jewish system of worship and sacrifices. This is a standard view held by authors such as Hal Lindsay, Tim LaHay and other writers who hold to the Dispensational view promoted by the Scofield Reference Bible.

Writes Jory Steven Brooks --

"It is a foundational premise of modern Dispensational Futurism that at the end of this age the Muslim Mosque of Omar on the temple mount in Jerusalem will be torn down by the Jews, who will rebuild their temple and reinstate animal sacrifices. Why such a thing would be part of God's plan and purposes has been widely questioned by theologians, since the New Testament tells us that Christ is 'the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world' (Rev. 13:8). Animal sacrifices are **no longer necessary ever again**, and are a component of the Old Covenant that was replaced by the New Covenant in this Christian era. The Apostle Paul specified that 'He does away with the first in order to establish the second' (Heb. 10:9, Weymouth). This was signified symbolically by the rending of the curtain of the temple at the time of the crucifixion (Mt. 27:51; Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45). ***There is no further need of animal sacrifices ever again" (Ezekiel's Temple and Sacrifices: When???)***.

The writer of this article offers reasons that have fully convinced him that the foregoing ideas are ill-founded, misleading and, in more senses than one, dangerous. He therefore asks for the reader to patiently reconsider the whole matter, guided by a closer reading of the chapters concerned and of the suggestions for their correct interpretation.

Historic Foundation

The original Hebrew commonwealth of the twelve tribes of Israel -- founded by Moses and consolidated by David into a united kingdom circa 1050 B.C. -- was disrupted by revolution less than one hundred years later. From that period on to the close of the Biblical histories there were two separate kingdoms -- the northern ten-tribed House of Israel (capital, Samaria), and the southern two-tribed House of Judah (capital, Jerusalem). The breach was never healed in Biblical times.

About 721 B.C. a succession of wars with the Assyrian Empire culminated in the destruction of the northern House of Israel as a sovereign nation, and the deportation of the ten tribes into captivity, as preliminary to the foretold judgment of dispersion among the nations. They were distributed in various territories held by the Assyrian empire --

extending from Armenia in the west to Media in the east. Here, in the province of Ecbatana, there were considerable Israel settlements. The ten tribes never returned to Palestine.

The two-tribed House of Judah (Judahites) retained a very precarious independence for some 130 years longer, but was finally crushed and deported by Nebuchadnezzar about 587 B.C. They were held captive in Babylonia for 70 years, until Cyrus permitted such of them as chose to return and rebuild "the nation of the Jews".

It is imperative that these essential facts should be clearly borne in mind when making any attempt to understand the prophetic Scriptures. Moreover, this is especially true when facing up to the tremendous problems involved in the last nine chapters of Ezekiel -- and the endeavor to find a reasonable and equitable solution.

How to Read the Book

The Book of Ezekiel is a collection of documents containing that prophet's own personal statements and records of visions, prophetic revelations and Divine commissions given to him from time to time during a period extending over twenty-five years.

The Book contains THIRTEEN such documents, and there may have been another, the earliest of which however, was not preserved although the date of it is given. **Each documental section of the Book is carefully dated**, and it should be observed that in some cases the date covers a group of allied documents, the contents of which were all conveyed to the prophet at about the date given.

These dates, and the order in which they are placed in the text, must be regarded as having a PROFOUND SIGNIFICANCE in the intelligent appreciation of Ezekiel's life-work, and the interpretation of his messages. This is especially true regarding his visions of a rebuilt Temple at Jerusalem and the re-constitution of the then captive nation Israel on the basis of a revised and prolonged Levitical dispensation.

Whether attributable to careless editing, or whatever cause, it is beyond question that the whole collection of documents is VERY LOOSELY ARRANGED, without any consistent regard to the **consecutive order of the dates given**. This will be seen from the following table:

Order of the Documents in the Text

Numerical order	Date of writing as given in the text			Ussher's date B.C.	Text arranged in chrono-logical order Chapters and Verses
	Month	Day	Year		
1st	?	5	5	594	1:2-3
2nd	6	5	6	593	8:1 to 19:14
3rd	5	10	7	592	20:1 to 23:49

4th	10	10	9	590	24:1 to 25:17 29:
5th	10	12	10	589	1-16
6th	?	1	11	588	26:1 to 28:26 30:
7th	1	7	11	588	20-26
8th	3	1	11	588	31:1-18
9th	?	15	12	587	32:17 to 33:20
10th	12	1	12	587	32:1-16
11th	10	5	12	587	33:21 to 39:29
12th	10	4	25	574	40:1 to 48:35 29:
13th	1	1	27	572	17 to 30:19
14th	4	5	30	569	1:1-2 to 7:27

The kind of document with which we have to deal is described in chapter 2, verses 9 and 10, and chapter 3, verse 1:

"Behold, an hand was sent unto me; and, lo, A ROLL OF A BOOK was therein; and he spread it before me; and it was written within and without."

"Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll."

This roll consisted of a length of parchment, written in columns on both sides, attached to rollers, the turning of which would unfold the part desired to be read, or enable the whole to be closely rolled up, or, if necessary, sealed for security. Revelation 5:1 shows such a book:

"I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals."

When a number of such documents had been collected a receptacle had to be used to keep them all together; each roll with its tag or docket appended to indicate its contents and its position in the collection. In such a receptacle they could NOT, of course, be placed in ORDERED ARRAY like volumes on a bookshelf, and it is easy to see how some scribe -- probably impeccably devout and learned, but indifferent as to exactitude of order -- arranged them loosely when transcribing them into the earliest volume form: hence the rather confused positions of the dated documents.

All the dates given in the text -- except that in chapter 1, verses 2 and 3 -- were affixed by Ezekiel himself, writing in the first person. That one exception was added "editorially" by some unknown hand, writing in the third person, and was probably an explanatory docket note affixed to the collection of documents. But, unfortunately, this was later incorporated into the text without anything to mark it as a parenthetical note -- with very misleading results, for it seems to confuse or even, on the face of it, contradict the date of the first placed documental set dated in chapter 1, verse 1, "the thirtieth year".

The system of dating all through is from the first year of the captivity of King Jehoiachin, 599 B.C. (2 Kings 24: 15). That captivity was endured in degradation for thirty-seven years, but was afterwards much alleviated (2 Kings 25:27-30). Ezekiel's visions and revelations covered in all some twenty-five years of this period (ch. 1:1-3).

It is stated in the editorial note of chapter I, verses 2 and 3 "that Ezekiel received his first prophetic communication in the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity", but of this no record has been preserved, though the date should be carefully noted as indicating the data method of the Book.

Chapters 1 to 7 inclusive are dated in chapter 1, verse 1, as containing visions, etc., given "in the thirtieth year".

A somewhat similar expression occurs in chapter 40, verse 1, "the five and twentieth year", but with the notable addition "of our captivity" (i.e., the captivity of those who were carried away with Jehoiachin) and this, of course, is implied in chapter 1, verse 1, where we should read "the thirtieth year (of our, or of Jehoiachin's, captivity)"; and so on throughout the Book, thus making this important system of dates both simple and harmonious.

For the clearing up of the difficulties of this Book too much attention cannot be given to this system of the dating of the prophet's messages.

Actually, the earliest dated set of Ezekiel's extant prophecies is that given in chapters 8-19 ("in the sixth year", etc.), and the subsequent sets go on in rather interrupted sequence up to those given in chapters 32-39, dated "the twelfth year". Then occurs a long interval of silence lasting thirteen years, after which the Temple series of visions, etc., is given in the set dated "the five and twentieth year of our captivity", chapters 40-48.

So actually the last dated set of prophecies and visions is that which is placed at the beginning of the Book, chapters 1 to 7, which bears in chapter 1, verse 1, the very latest date of all, "the thirtieth year" -- that is to say, five years AFTER those in chapters 40-48.

As a result, it cannot be too emphatically stressed that THE CLOSING CHAPTERS OF THE BOOK ANTEDATE THE OPENING CHAPTERS BY FIVE YEARS! This, indeed, is the **KEY** to the puzzle of the last nine chapters with their seemingly complete negation of some chief Christian fundamentals -- and it opens the way to a reasonable, consistent and wonderfully illuminating interpretation of one of the most difficult parts of this great Book.

The Book should be read in its proper historical sequence -- beginning with chapter 8, and continued as a succession of sets of visions and prophecies on to the end of chapter 39 -- when we have reached what is really the LATEST forecast given by Ezekiel of future events.

The remaining two sets, those beginning and ending the Book, should be read as having special and particular relationships to each other, and THE FIRST AS SUPPLEMENTARY TO THE LAST! This is not only justified but actually required, both by the subject matter

and the datings. The set placed last in the Book contains the terms of a **provisional constitution** which Ezekiel was commanded to convey personally to the exiled tribes of Israel as an authoritative Divine offer of conditional national restoration. The set placed first in the Book, but dated five years later than the last, contains Ezekiel's great commission set forth in detail, and indicates how the prophet would faithfully discharge it at terrible cost of suffering and ignominy at the hands of the defiantly apostate House of Israel.

The Historic Identities

The Book deals with both houses, Israel and Judah, separately as well as in common, contemporaneously as well as prophetically -- right up to the time of YEHOVAH God's return and reign as King of kings. The "house of Israel," wherever mentioned as such, is to be taken literally as meaning that house and nothing else; represented there by the Israel settlements in the province of Ecbatana in Media. They were within easy reach of Ezekiel, who lived among the earlier exiles of Judah within the north-eastern borders of Babylonia. He visited them (chs. 2 and 3) and was visited by their deputations (chs. 14 and 20) -- and he prophesied many things concerning them and their chequered but wonderful future.

It would appear that, before allowing the judgment of dispersion to fall on the House of Israel, YEHOVAH God had graciously determined to give them A LAST OPPORTUNITY for repentance and restoration -- and of this purpose He made Ezekiel the missionary ambassador. This final approach of Divine grace to the apostate nation, and their failure to embrace His mercy, stand for ever in this Book as the justification before men of YEHOVAH's determinate counsel and foreknowledge expressed in the many other prophecies relating to Israel's long course of regenerative correction and discipline.

The Divine care and foresight would not allow the prophet to go on such a dangerous expedition and present himself among the rebellious people empty-handed and without credentials. He was therefore furnished with tangible evidences of the validity of his mission in the form of a written scheme, Divinely dictated, of national restoration and reconstruction. This included elaborate and exactly drawn plans for a new Temple, with all its appointed ritual and priestly service -- all of which should come into operation in their own land, but all made definitely CONTINGENT on both houses REPENTING and seeking YEHOVAH's favor.

This was to be an INTERIM CONSTITUTION, etc., designed conditionally to fill up the period between the proffered restoration and the end of the legal dispensation and the coming of the Messiah and YEHOVAH God in "the fullness of time" then, of course, passing or merging into the **better Messianic or Christian era**.

This conditional, INTERIM CONSTITUTION provided for the re-division of the land formerly held, but with somewhat extended borders, in a new manner, among representatives of all the tribes: for a ruling family, not, however, of David's line; for a rebuilt Temple on an entirely new plan; for a reformed ecclesiastical establishment; for a

sacrificial priesthood, Levitical and Aaronic, confined to the sons of Zadok, and for a subordinate Levitical ministry.

All this, worked out in closest detail, was shown to Ezekiel in vision, and in drawn plans handed to him to take with him on his embassy to the House of Israel (ch. 43:10, 11). And this was LONG AFTER the earlier dated sets of prophecies had been given, at a period commencing five years before YEHOVAH God at last gave him his great commission to go to Israel and seek to bring them to repentance (chs. 1-7) -- and with specific commands to show them these plans, and offer them for their study, with a view to shaming them to correct their ways and return to their obedience to YEHOVAH God (ch. 43: 10, 11).

"Thou son of man, shew THE HOUSE [the Temple] to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities: and let them measure the pattern. And if they be ashamed of all that they have done, shew them the form of THE HOUSE [the Temple], 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 laws thereof: and write it in their sight, that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them."

This commission was first of all to the Israel settlements of the Median captivity then in Ecbatana (chs. 2, 3); and he was to discharge it at all costs and whatever risk (ch. 2). When he went he carried with him this **documentary evidence** of YEHOVAH's willingness to forgive and restore.

Therefore, in fact, THE LAST NINE CHAPTERS OF THE BOOK ARE NOT MILLENNIAL, and so do NOT contradict the Gospel of Yeshua the Messiah! They are the record of a Divine scheme of renewal -- tentatively offered for the free choice or rejection of Israel -- but made WHOLLY DEPENDENT on the *subjection of their will and the change of their heart towards YEHOVAH God* -- which, however, was unhappily not realized. Therefore, since the imperative conditions **were not met**, *the offer lapsed*, the scheme became inoperative, and Israel's dispersion inevitably had to be inflicted.

But so interesting and important a document could not be allowed to be lost or destroyed. It had to be preserved as a witness to YEHOVAH's righteous and pitiful dealings with His unworthy people. Accordingly it was duly dated and retained among the other documents left by Ezekiel, and when they were afterwards put into volume form it was relegated to a place at the end of the Book AS AN APPENDIX. But -- since it bears no outward description as an appendix, and was placed in a position immediately following upon chapters which foretell the final tribulation period and its ending at the "Presence" of the LORD -- it has unfortunately been commonly but *wrongly assumed* to foretell a continuation of the historical developments of those chapters and to be therefore Millennial -- which it MOST CERTAINLY IS NOT!

"Will Ezekiel's Temple ever be built," asks Jory Steven Brook, "with or without Old Covenant blood sacrifices? A comparison of Ezekiel's temple in Ezekiel chapters 40-48 with the New Jerusalem edifice in Revelation chapters 21-22, shows that they are NOT

THE SAME. A few of the differences include: No temple (Rev. 21:22) vrs. Ezekiel's temple; gates unlocked (Rev. 21:25) vrs. gates locked six days (Ezk. 46:1); no more death/sacrifices (Rev. 21:4) vrs. continuing sacrifices in Ezekiel's temple; tree of life in a plaza or square is central (Rev. 22:2) vrs. Temple sanctuary is central (Ezk. 48:10); 12 gates (Rev. 21:12-13) vrs. 2 gates (east and west, Ezk. 40); the size, dimensions, priesthood, and many other things **are quite different**. It is clear that Ezekiel's temple IS NOT FOUND IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION. Yet Dispensationalists ignore all of this and more, because they are desperate for something, anything, that can be used to argue for the continuation of Jewish sacrifices in the coming age. Under the New Covenant, however, Christians are that sacred temple (1 Cor. 3:17)" (***Ezekiel's Temple and Sacrifices: When???***).

It cannot be Millennial since it involves a complete abrogation of the New Testament teaching of the sole efficacy of the Messiah's finished Sacrifice -- the One Atonement, perfect, and all-sufficient for all men -- besides the negation of his consecration to an everlasting Priesthood after the order of Melchisedek (Heb. 7-28) and a reversion to the never-ending offering of the blood of animals to take away sin!

Only by a recognition of the fact that **the prophetic value of the Book closes at the end of chapter 39**, and that the following chapters are NOT Millennial, and have now *no prophetic message whatever* -- but are merely a witnessing appendix relating to a past contingency which passed historically without fruition -- can we reconcile the otherwise obvious contradictions between the last nine chapters of this Book and the New Testament -- more especially Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews.

Merely to glance at the provisions laid down in the last nine chapters regarding the Congregation, the Priesthood, the Sacrifices, the Government and the Land, and to make comparison between them and what is elsewhere revealed as the gospel fundamentals, will be sufficient to establish the foregoing contentions:

The Congregation

Circumcision is the ESSENTIAL -- even strangers must be circumcised in the "flesh" (see chap. 44:6-9).

"No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into My sanctuary." Pretty definite! But Paul teaches in Galatians 5, verse 2: "If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing."

Again, in verse: "Every man that is circumcised...is a debtor to do the whole law." Which according to verse 4 makes the Messiah "of no effect".

Also, in Galatians 6, verse 15, we read: "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but **a new creature**."

Therefore, if these last nine chapters of Ezekiel are Millennial, the rite of circumcision will be imperative, though the restoration of circumcision will render the Messiah ineffective as Savior.

The Priesthood

This is both Levitical and Aaronic; for service and for sacrifice. The subordinate order of Levites were ministers (? attendants) in the Sanctuary, to discharge the lesser offices, but not to offer sacrifices (ch. 44:10-15):

"The Levites...shall be ministers in My sanctuary, having charge at the gates of the house, they shall slay the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people...they shall not come near unto Me, to do the office of a priest unto Me...but I will make them keepers of the charge of the house."

Those of higher office, the priests, were to be also from among the sons of Levi, but entirely of the sons of Zadok (ch. 40: 46). Zadok was High Priest in David's time, eleventh in descent from Aaron:

"...the priests, the keepers of the charge of the altar: these are the sons of Zadok among the sons of Levi, which come near to the Lord to minister unto Him."

Their ministry was to be that of a sacrificing priesthood, making offerings at the altar continually, both for the people and for themselves (ch. 44:11

Verse 11, "they [the Levites] shall slay the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people."

Verse 15, "But the priests...the sons of Zadok shall stand before Me to offer unto Me the fat and the blood, saith the Lord God."

Verse 27, "in the day that he [the priest] goeth...to minister in the sanctuary, he shall offer his sin offering, saith the Lord God."

See also chapter 43, verse 18 to end.

If this is a prophecy of the Millennial Age IT MAKES VOID THE SOLE PRIESTHOOD OF THE MESSIAH (Heb. 5), and foretells the resumption of an earthly priesthood and an endless succession of blood sacrifices for all manner of purposes and occasions, to effect what the Messiah as High Priest offering himself must therefore have *failed to effect*.

Further, these priestly ministrations at the altar, with continual offerings of animal sacrifices, were "to make reconciliation" for the people (ch. 45, verses 15 and 17) whereas we read, in Hebrews 2, verse 17, that it is the Messiah who is the "merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people".

If this is true, why in the Millennial Age should the Priesthood of Zadok be revived, unless it could do what the Messiah must therefore have failed to do?

Moreover, we read in 2 Corinthians 5, verses 18 and 19 that YEHOVAH God "hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself...and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

If there is to be indeed a restored Levitical Aaronic-Zadok priesthood in the Millennium -- to set flowing again constant streams of animal blood for the reconciliation of man with YEHOVAH God -- what becomes of the ministry and word of reconciliation once committed to the Apostolic Ministry? Can anything be more certain than that the Temple prophecy of Ezekiel RELATES SOLELY TO THE LAPSED POSSIBILITIES OF PRE-CHRISTIAN TIMES? In this connection study Hebrews 7 for the passing of the Levitical-Aaronic priesthood when the Messiah entered effectively upon his Melchizedek Priesthood.

The Sacrifices

They were to be burnt offerings, sin offerings, meat offerings, trespass offerings and peace offerings. Read the full list and mark the details of the ordinances in chapters 40: 39; 42: 13; 43: 18 to end; 44: 27-29; 45:17 to end; 46. In the two latter chapters the sacrificial observances of Sabbaths and new moons, as well as the daily sacrifices, were to be resumed. If the Millennial Age is to be a period during which the worship of YEHOVAH God is to be compulsorily accompanied by the unceasing flow of animal blood -- it will be very **UNLIKE** the glorious time foretold by the prophet Isaiah (ch. 11:6-9):

"The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox....they shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

Further, chapter 45:21 ordains the restoration of the Passover, to be observed with seven days' eating of unleavened bread, and sin offerings of bullocks, rams and kids.

Now, if this refers to Millennial times, was not Paul sadly mistaken when he declared in 1 Corinthians 5:7, that "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us"?

If Paul was right, they are wrong who regard Ezekiel's restored Passover as Millennial. If the Messiah is indeed the very "Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world", if John truly envisioned him ascending the throne in heaven "a Lamb as it had been slain", then surely Ezekiel's vision related only to the possibilities of PRE-CHRISTIAN TIMES.

On this question of the resumption of blood sacrifices in the future, study Hebrews 10 -- especially verses 1-14. In verses 5-9 the Messiah's time on this earth is expressly stated to have been in order that -- by the taking away of the legal sacrifices through the offering of his own body -- he might establish the will of YEHOVAH God, and so we are sanctified through the offering of the body of the Messiah "once for all" (v. 10).

Why should it be supposed to be necessary, by the restoration of sacrifices, to establish the will of YEHOVAH God in the Millennial era if that has already been done by the Messiah "**once for all**"?

Moreover, from Hebrews 10:16-18 we learn that since the New Covenant is now in operation there is no further need of sacrifices.

Verse 18, "there is no more offering for sin."

Verse 14, "By one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."

So then the all-sufficient Sacrifice -- and the last ever to be offered -- was that of Golgotha! Is it conceivable that, in the better days to come, we shall RENOUNCE that blessed substance of final redemptive achievement for the renewal of **vain type and shadow**?

The Government

These last nine chapters of Ezekiel refer to an order of rulers of the restored Israel nation called "princes" -- a term often used in the Bible signifying rulers from among the people who are not necessarily royal or kingly. Frequent mention of "the prince", "my princes", etc., is made in chapters 44, 45, 46 and 47. The prince has sons, and must make provision for them out of his own resources ("possessions"). There is NOT A SINGLE REFERENCE in these chapters to their being of David's line. The title "king" is never once used and nothing can be more certain than that the term "prince" -- or the office it covers -- has here no Messianic significance. This is because not only has he sons and the obligation of providing for them, but as prince he has the further obligation of making such numerous offerings of animal sacrifices for Israel and for himself that a special tax of ½ per cent is to be levied on the people to provide these offerings (ch. 45:15-22). The not uncommon supposition that this prince is the Messiah in his Millennial reign is too far out in left field for any serious consideration.

Therefore, it may be concluded that in Ezekiel's day -- the House of David having passed over to another branch of the House of Israel as indicated in other prophecies (e.g. Ezek. 17, esp. vv. 22-24) -- provision was included in the INTERIM SCHEME of national restoration, committed to Ezekiel as ambassador to Israel, for a kind of hereditary presidency or principedom to fill up the interval until that dispensation expired.

The Land

Chapters 47 and 48 provide for a redistribution of the land formerly occupied by the tribes, but of a rather larger area -- though not at all approximating the vaster dimensions of that great territory lying between the Nile and the Euphrates promised to Abraham (Gen. 15:18). The vast territory promised to Abraham is certainly what we have to look for -- in its fullest sense -- in the Millennial era, when the Messiah will reign on the throne of his father David. No doubt the area prescribed for occupation in **the interim scheme given to Ezekiel** would have amply sufficed for the needs of the restored people in that day --

and for a long time afterwards -- but can have NO REFERENCE to the period of the Messiah's reigning "over the house of Jacob for ever".

The supposition that Ezekiel may have foretold a Zionist reconstruction of Palestine and the building of a new Temple, and that at the present time we are witnessing the early processes of fulfillment, need scarcely command a moment's serious thought.

In the world today there are more than one billion adherents to Islam. To all of them Jerusalem, with its holy places and associations and chiefly the Mosque of Omar -- is their second most holy place. What terrible religious strife (and possibly war) would ensue if Zionist Jews, encouraged by mistaken Christians, were permitted to demolish the Mosque of Omar and build instead a Jewish Temple. Surely the whole idea of this rebuilding of the Temple and the re-establishment of its sacrificial ritual is a VAIN DREAM, evolved from undiscerning reading of the Book of Ezekiel leading to a MISTAKEN interpretation.

But the really sinister feature of this too popular misconception is its tremendous underlying danger of endeavoring to force a fulfillment of prophecy by political action -- and there are powerful influences at work in this direction.

Even supposing it was feasible that a new Temple -- with all its accompaniments -- could be peacefully substituted for the Mosque of Omar and the faith for which it stands, what would the world, humanity or the cause of true Christianity gain by a great Jewish Temple and the reversion to its system of endless blood sacrifices?

Besides all these considerations lies one stubborn fact -- fatal to Zionist claims and aspirations and no less so to the dreams of many devout but mistaken Christian people. They think they see in present-day developments in the state of Israel the beginnings of the Millennial fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecies culminating in the rebuilding of the Temple as the world center of the religion of the New Age. This stubborn fact is that Ezekiel's reconstituted nation was to INCLUDE ALL THE TWELVE TRIBES -- whereas the Jews are only "the remnant of Judah" (i.e., a mere fragment of one of the tribes only, with possibly a few of Benjamin and Levi). From whatever point of view it may be regarded, a Zionist rebuilding of the Temple, even if possible, would fail to meet the above requirements.

From all the foregoing it may safely be concluded that the LAST NINE CHAPTERS of Ezekiel are NOT to be regarded as a forecast of what is to be -- but only as a conditional outline of *WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN*.

Explains Jory Steven Brooks --

"Scholars believe that Ezekiel's temple and sacrifices will never actually be realized; it was an offer from heaven during the captivities of Israel and Judah (6th century, B.C.) of what God WOULD HAVE DONE for His people at that time if they had immediately repented and turned back to Him. God WOULD HAVE cut short their captivity, brought all of dispersed Israel and Judah back to Canaan, allowed the building of a wonderful and truly unique post-exile temple (unlike anything before or since), and all 12 tribes WOULD HAVE

been re-established in Canaan in newly redesignated tribal lands. But God's people DID NOT REPENT AND ACCEPT THE OFFER. It was refused! We read these wondrous chapters of Ezekiel today and ponder what COULD HAVE BEEN...." (***Ezekiel's Temple and Sacrifices: When???***).

While chapters 40 through 48 of Ezekiel do NOT refer to a Millennial Temple but to a Temple that MIGHT HAVE BEEN if the House of Israel had repented of their national sins and returned to YEHOVAH God after they were taken into Assyrian captivity, the FACT remains that there WILL BE a Temple in Jerusalem during the Millennium! This Temple -- WITHOUT the sacrificial system and ritual -- will be erected, AFTER the Messiah's appearance, to house the Shekinah Glory of YEHOVAH God and the throne of the Messiah.

This we find mentioned in Revelation 11:1-2 and in various places throughout the Old Testament -- notice!

"Sing, Jerusalem, and rejoice! For I HAVE COME TO LIVE AMONG YOU, says the LORD [YEHOVAH]. At that time [of the end] many nations will be converted to the LORD, and they too shall be My people; I WILL LIVE AMONG THEM ALL. Then you will know it was the LORD of Hosts [YEHOVAH] who sent me [Zechariah] to you....Be silent, all mankind before the LORD; FOR HE HAS COME TO EARTH FROM HEAVEN, FROM HIS HOLY HOME" (Zechariah 2:10-13).

So if YEHOVAH God is returning to Jerusalem at the beginning of the Millennium -- WHERE will He reside? "'I am returning to Jerusalem with mercy; My house [Temple] shall be built in it,' says the LORD of hosts" (Zechariah 1:16). The Millennial Temple is to be built and engineered by YESHUA THE MESSIAH --

"Thus says the LORD of hosts, saying: Behold, the man whose name is the BRANCH! From his place he shall branch out, and he shall BUILD THE TEMPLE OF THE LORD [YEHOVAH]; yes, he shall BUILD THE TEMPLE OF THE LORD. He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and RULE ON HIS [the Messiah's] THRONE, so he shall be a PRIEST on his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be BETWEEN THEM BOTH [YEHOVAH God and the Messiah]" (Zechariah 6:12-13, NKJV).

Who is the "Branch" that Zechariah refers to here? In Jeremiah 23:5 we read the following:

"Behold, the days are coming,' says the LORD, that I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness..."

This clearly a reference to the Messiah -- notice, now, what Isaiah says:

"There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a BRANCH shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD" (Isaiah 11:1-2)"

The Kingdom of YEHOVAH God can only be established when the Shekinah Glory of YEHOVAH God fills the Holy Place in the Millennial Temple. The Millennium will witness the reception of the Messiah by the united nation of Israel, and it will also witness the RETURN of the Shekinah Glory to the Holy of holies!

Let us therefore rejoice that we shall not be called upon to witness the revival of ancient sacrificial mysteries, or the renewal of rites which will ever take away -- in the smallest degree -- from the sole Saviorhood and merciful kingship over all of Israel of our elder brother and redeemer Yeshua the Messiah, "who has freed us from our sins at the cost of his blood, who has caused us to be a kingdom, that is, *cohanim* for God, his Father -- to him be the glory and the rulership forever and ever. Amen."