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Ezekiel 48

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Ezekiel 48.

Topics.

- The division of land between the twelve tribes.
- The land for the sons of Zadok's (the priests).
- The Levites portion of land and the land for the common area.
- The land alongside the holy portion.
- The land for the Prince and the twelve tribes.
- The north, east, south, and west gates of the city of Jerusalem.
- The glory of the spiritual temple God is building in Christ.
- The theme of the last nine chapters of Ezekiel.

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL

Ezekiel, a prophet and priest, was exiled to Babylon in 597 B.C. His ministry extended over at least twenty-three years. The book opens with his first dramatic vision of the "likeness" of the LORD". Ezekiel was keenly aware of God's presence and power in human affairs. He addressed both the exiles and the people left in Judah with messages of warning and judgment, predicting the fall of Jerusalem. After its fall (586), Ezekiel prophesied of hope and reassurance for the people of Judah, who had then lost the focus of God's covenant and the temple in Jerusalem. His vision of the valley of dry bones (chpt. 37) is a classic picture of God's ability to breathe new life into those who are spiritually dead. Ezekiel is prophesying about the Jews that did not go into captivity to Babylon, but remained against the word of the LORD in Jerusalem. Ezekiel's message is primarily directed to the people in the land of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem (the two tribes), but often it is difficult to separate the message from Judah and Israel (the ten tribes) because much of what the LORD says can be applied to both Judah and Israel because the two are so intertwined and both nations were guilty of the same gross sins. For a greater overview of the entire book, visit the introduction to the book of Ezekiel in chapter one.

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FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

SYMBOLISM AND MEASUREMENTS

Before we begin this final chapter let me say that I do not have knowledge concerning the symbolism that maybe contained in the measurement concerning the cubit in this chapter. I will leave that for those who love to study such things since I am sure they will be rewarded for their efforts as they do their own enjoyable studies. Since this chapter is mostly filled with the dividing of Israel's land into cubit areas and I have done very little concerning this I would encourage the reader to skip to the conclusion at the end before clicking off.

THE PREVIOUS CHAPTER

In chapter forty-seven the focus was upon a river flowing from the altar of the Temple of God that begins as a trickle of water that becomes ankle-deep, then waist-deep, then deep enough to swim in. The river has many trees on both sides and as it flows into the sea it turns it to fresh water and brings life to every living creature that comes to its water. The focus of this final chapter is upon the land being divided up between the twelve tribes of Israel. The last eight chapters of Ezekiel are fully devoted to the rebuilding of God's Holy city Jerusalem and the Temple of God.

THE DIVISION OF LAND BETWEEN THE TWELVE TRIBES

EZEKIEL 48:1

Dan's portion of land.

- **Ezekiel 48:1:** These are the names of the tribes: Beginning at the northern extreme, beside the way of Hethlon to Lebo-hamath, as far as Hazar-enan (which is on the northern border of Damascus over against Hamath), and extending from the east side to the west, Dan, one portion.

There are varying ideas concerning the exact measurement of a cubit this is because it is not an exact measurement. A cubit is the Hebrew measure of length it arose (as did the English foot) from the simple estimating of distance in terms of the body. Farmers today measure the height of horses by hands. The word cubit comes from the Hebrew word ('ammah). Strong's Concordance states that a cubit is a unit of measure of the fore-arm (below the elbow to the hand) (approximately 12 inches (300mm)) while a long cubit is the length of the fore-arm plus the length of the hand (approximately 18 to 20 inches (450 to 500 mm)) and a hand breath is the length of the hand (approximately 8 inches (200mm)).

Hethlon: NE of Tripoli, Syria and just N of Mt. Lebannon, the exact location is unknown today.

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Lebo-hamath: Lebo-hamath a city on top northern boundary of Canaan.

Hazar-enan: NE corner of the land of Canaan 70 miles NE of Damascus (on the northern border of Damascus over against Hamath).

EZEKIEL 48:2

Asher's portion of land.

- **Ezekiel 48:2:** Adjoining the territory of Dan, from the east side to the west, Asher, one portion.

EZEKIEL 48:3

Naphtali's portion of land.

- **Ezekiel 48:3:** Adjoining the territory of Asher, from the east side to the west, Naphtali, one portion.

EZEKIEL 48:4

Manasseh's portion of land.

- **Ezekiel 48:4:** Adjoining the territory of Naphtali, from the east side to the west, Manasseh, one portion.

EZEKIEL 48:5

Ephraim's portion of land.

- **Ezekiel 48:5:** Adjoining the territory of Manasseh, from the east side to the west, Ephraim, one portion.

EZEKIEL 48:6

Reuben's portion of land.

- **Ezekiel 48:6:** Adjoining the territory of Ephraim, from the east side to the west, Reuben, one portion.

EZEKIEL 48:7

Judah's portion of land.

- **Ezekiel 48:7:** Adjoining the territory of Reuben, from the east side to the west, Judah, one portion.

EZEKIEL 48:8-9

The LORD'S portion of land.

- **Ezekiel 48:8-9:** Adjoining the territory of Judah, from the east side to the west, shall be the portion which you shall set apart, 25,000 cubits in breadth, and in length equal to one of the tribal portions, from the east side to the west, with the sanctuary in the midst of it.
⁹The portion that you shall set apart for the LORD shall be 25,000 cubits in length, and 20,000 in breadth.

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God's portion of land was to be:

- 25,000 cubits long.
- 25,000 cubits wide.

The sanctuary was to be built in the middle of the land. This is called the LORD'S portion of land because it is where the Temple is to be built. It would be right and proper today to say that the land a church is built upon is God's portion of land.

EZEKIEL 48:10

The Land for the Sons of Zadok's (the priests).

- **Ezekiel 48:10:** These shall be the allotments of the holy portion: the priests shall have an allotment measuring 25,000 cubits on the northern side, 10,000 cubits in breadth on the western side, 10,000 in breadth on the eastern side, and 25,000 in length on the southern side, with the sanctuary of the LORD in the midst of it.

The Holy Portion of Land for the Priests was to be:

- 25, 000 cubits long on the northern side.
- 10,000 cubits wide on the western side.
- 10, 000 cubits wide on the eastern side.

- 25, 000 cubits long on the southern side.
- The sanctuary was to be in the middle of this land.

EZEKIEL 48:11-12

The Priests the Sons of Zadok.

- **Ezekiel 48:11-12:** This shall be for the consecrated priests, the sons of Zadok, who kept my charge, who did not go astray when the people of Israel went astray, as the Levites did. ¹²And it shall belong to them as a special portion from the holy portion of the land, a most holy place, adjoining the territory of the Levites.

The sons of Zadok: after the seventy year Babylonian captivity and the re-building of Jerusalem and the Temple of God, the LORD appointed the Levites to be ministers of the Temple and do all its service and bear the oversight of the gates, the burnt offerings and the sacrifices, but because they ministered to idols, prior to the Babylonian captivity and stumbled Israel, the LORD said they cannot come near to Him or serve Him as priests or come near the things that are Most Holy.

Only the Levitical sons of Zadok were to enter the inner court and minister to the LORD and stand before Him to offer the sacrifices, because they kept charge of His sanctuary when the people of Israel turned to idols and went astray (Ezekiel 44:9-17).

EZEKIEL 48:13-14

The Levites Portion of Land.

- **Ezekiel 48:13-14:** And alongside the territory of the priests, the Levites shall have an allotment 25,000 cubits in length and 10,000 in breadth. The whole length shall be 25,000 cubits and the breadth 20,000. ¹⁴They shall not sell or exchange any of it. They shall not alienate this choice portion of the land, for it is holy to the LORD.

Alongside the land of the sons of Zadok (the priests) the Levites were to have land that was:

- 25,000 cubits long and 20,000 cubits wide.

The Levites were not to sell or exchange any of their land because it is holy to the LORD.

EZEKIEL 48:15-17

The Land for the Common Area.

- **Ezekiel 48:15-17:** The remainder, 5,000 cubits in breadth and 25,000 in length, shall be for common use for the city, for dwellings and for open country. In the midst of it shall be the city, ¹⁶and these shall be its measurements: the north side 4,500 cubits, the south side 4,500, the east side 4,500, and the west side 4,500. ¹⁷And the city shall have open land: on the north 250 cubits, on the south 250, on the east 250, and on the west 250.

The city is to have an open area all around it that is available for all the people, today we would call it a public area or parkland. The total area remaining for the city and common or open area is:

- 5,000 cubits wide.
- 25,000 cubits long.

The city area is:

- 4,500 cubits on the north side.
- 4,500 cubits on the south side.
- 4,500 cubits on the east side.
- 4,500 cubits on the west side.

The common or open is:

- 250 cubits on the north side.
- 250 cubits on the south side.
- 250 cubits on the east side.
- 250 cubits on the west side.

EZEKIEL 48:18-20

The Land alongside the Holy Portion.

- **Ezekiel 48:18-20:** The remainder of the length alongside the holy portion shall be 10,000 cubits to the east, and 10,000 to the west, and it shall be alongside the holy portion. Its produce shall be food for the workers of the city. ¹⁹And the workers of the city, from all the tribes of Israel, shall till it. ²⁰The whole portion that you shall set apart shall be 25,000 cubits square, that is, the holy portion together with the property of the city.

An area alongside the holy land was to be set aside for producing food for the workers of the city and they were to till it.

The total area of this land is:

- 25,000 cubits square.
- 10,000 cubits on the east side.
- 10,000 cubits on the west side.

EZEKIEL 48:21-22

The Land for the Prince.

- **Ezekiel 48:21-22:** What remains on both sides of the holy portion and of the property of the city shall belong to the prince. Extending from the 25,000 cubits of the holy portion to the east border, and westward from the 25,000 cubits to the west border, parallel to the tribal portions, it shall belong to the prince. The holy portion with the sanctuary of the temple shall be in its midst. ²²It shall be separate from the property of the Levites and the property of the city, which are in the midst of that which belongs to the prince. The portion of the prince shall lie between the territory of Judah and the territory of Benjamin.

The land on both sides of the holy land and the property of the city belongs to the Prince it extends:

- 25,000 cubits from the holy portion to the east border.
- 25,000 cubits from the holy portion to the west border parallel to the tribal portions of land.

The holy portion of land with the Temple in the middle of it is to be separate from the land of the Levites and the land of the city, which are both in the middle of the land that belongs to the prince. The land of the prince is to be between the land of Judah and the land of Benjamin.

EZEKIEL 48:23

Benjamin's portion of land.

- **Ezekiel 48:23:** As for the rest of the tribes: from the east side to the west, Benjamin, one portion.

EZEKIEL 48:24

Simeon's portion of land.

- **Ezekiel 48:24:** Adjoining the territory of Benjamin, from the east side to the west, Simeon, one portion.

EZEKIEL 48:25

Issachar's portion of land.

- **Ezekiel 48:25:** Adjoining the territory of Simeon, from the east side to the west, Issachar, one portion.

EZEKIEL 48:26

Zebulun's portion of land.

- **Ezekiel 48:26:** Adjoining the territory of Issachar, from the east side to the west, Zebulun, one portion.

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EZEKIEL 48:27

Gad's portion of land.

- **Ezekiel 48:27:** Adjoining the territory of Zebulun, from the east side to the west, Gad, one portion.

EZEKIEL 48:28-29

Borders of Israel.

- **Ezekiel 48:28-29:** And adjoining the territory of Gad to the south, the boundary shall run from Tamar to the waters of Meribah-kadesh, from there along the Brook of Egypt to the Great Sea. ²⁹This is the land that you shall allot as an inheritance among the tribes of Israel, and these are their portions, declares the Lord GOD.
- Tamah is on the south east corner of the boundary of the Land of Israel.
- Meribah-kadesh is a place near Kadesh-barnea and to the NW of Sinai.
- Brook of Egypt is the Nile and its irrigating streams.
- The Great Sea refers to the Mediterranean Sea or the Western Sea.

EZEKIEL 48:30-31

The three North Gates of the City of Jerusalem.

- **Ezekiel 48:30-31:** These shall be the exits of the city: On the north side, which is to be 4,500 cubits by measure, ³¹three gates, the gate of Reuben, the gate of Judah, and the gate of Levi, the gates of the city being named after the tribes of Israel.

The three exit gates in the north wall of the city are named after the following three tribes of Israel:

1. Reuben.
2. Judah.
3. Levi.

EZEKIEL 48:32

The three East Gates of the City of Jerusalem.

- **Ezekiel 48:32:** On the east side, which is to be 4,500 cubits, three gates, the gate of Joseph, the gate of Benjamin, and the gate of Dan.

The three exit gates in the east wall of the city are named after the following three tribes of Israel:

1. Joseph.
2. Benjamin.
3. Dan.

EZEKIEL 48:33

The three South Gates of the City of Jerusalem.

- **Ezekiel 48:33:** On the south side, which is to be 4,500 cubits by measure, three gates, the gate of Simeon, the gate of Issachar, and the gate of Zebulun.

The three exit gates in the south wall of the city are named after the following three tribes of Israel:

1. Simon.
2. Issachar.
3. Zebulun.

EZEKIEL 48:34

The three West Gates of the City of Jerusalem.

- **Ezekiel 48:34:** On the west side, which is to be 4,500 cubits, three gates, the gate of Gad, the gate of Asher, and the gate of Naphtali.

The three exit gates in the west wall of the city are named after the following three tribes of Israel:

1. Gad.
2. Asher.
3. Naphtali.

The Circumference of the City of Jerusalem.

- **Ezekiel 48:35:** The circumference of the city shall be 18,000 cubits. And the name of the city from that time on shall be, The LORD is there."
- The circumference of the city is 18,000 cubits.
- The name of the city is, "The LORD is there."

CONCLUSION

The glory of God seen in the visions of Ezekiel's from chapter one to the final chapter is God working through the nations and using them to bring about His judgment on Jerusalem and upon the nations and of God using the kings and their kingdoms to bring about His purposes on earth. With the chapters climaxing in the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem and the Temple of God and the Gods Spirit going out from the throne of the Temple and bringing life to all that it touches throughout the earth.

THE THEME OF THE LAST NINE CHAPTERS OF EZEKIEL

1. The theme of chapter forty is the rebuilding of the Temple of God starting from the wall of the outer court.
2. The theme of chapter forty-one is the rebuilding of central part of the Temple of God.
3. The theme of chapter forty-two is the rebuilding of the priest quarters in the outer court of the Temple of God.
4. The theme of chapter forty-three is cleansing the altar and preparing yourself for the glory of the LORD is coming to the Temple.
5. The theme of chapter forty-four is the ministry of the priests when the glory of the LORD fills the temple.
6. The theme of chapter forty-five is the land allotted to the LORD and the land allotted to the Sanctuary, the Prince of Israel and the priests.
7. The theme of chapter forty-six is the Prince entering the Most Holy Place and the people of the land bowing down in peace and entering the Temple with the Prince from their freewill and upon the prince providing a freewill offering and giving an everlasting inheritance to his sons forever.
8. The theme of chapter forty-seven is a river flowing from the threshold of the Temple of the LORD that begins as a trickle then becomes ankle-deep, then waist-deep, then deep enough to swim in. The river has trees on both sides and as it flows into the sea it turns the salt water to fresh water and brings life to every living creature that comes to its water.
9. The theme of chapter forty-eight is the land being divided up between the twelve tribes of Israel.

Jews and Gentiles are being united together as one body in Christ to be a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Believing Jews and Gentiles are being prepared by the prophets and apostles' teachings and by the influence of Christ and the Holy Spirit to become a majestic and glorious sacred temple in which God dwells for all eternity. When this majestic building is completed there will be nothing so worthy of reverence since God dwells in it; so ancient since the patriarchs and prophets laboured in building it; so solid since love cements it together; so closely united and indivisible since Christ is the corner stone; so exalted since it reaches as high as heaven and to God himself; so full of wisdom since its specifications are the word of God; so full of light since the Holy Spirit dispels every dark corner; so spacious since it is spread over the whole earth; so invincible and indestructible since it is being built by God, by Christ, by the Holy Spirit and by the influence of God's eternal word; so divine since it is a living, vibrant, dynamic temple inhabited by the Holy Spirit and so universal since all its unique stones though spread throughout the world are compacted together in Christ.

God is the master builder of this majestic and glorious temple; Christ is the corner stone; faithful believers are the proper materials; the prophets and apostles are its foundation and the Gospel and love its pillars. Christ is the door and faith is the entrance into it. It is a spiritual building and through, faith and grace this living building is growing into an eternal house fit for the most Holy God to dwell in. It's beauty and radiance will surpass all temples that have ever gone before it since it will be adorned with a vast variety of rich colour made up of Jews and Gentiles of every age, country, sex, and condition: the mightiest of kings, the most renowned lawgivers, the most profound philosophers, the most eminent scholars and all those of whom the world was not worthy have formed this building.

Peter wrote:

- Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him Will not be put to shame (1 Pet. 2:6).

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Every faithful brother and sister in Christ are represented as living stones that God is using to build this spiritual, majestic temple of eternal glory which will be manifested in splendour for all to see when:

- The Lord himself descends from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ are raised then we who are alive are caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. 4:15-18).

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.

Bible House of Grace