

WEEK 47. Ezekiel 36–48 (Hope)

Sunday (Ezekiel 36)

Blessings on the Mountains of Israel

36:1 “As for you, son of man, prophesy to the mountains of Israel, and say: ‘O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord! 36:2 This is what the sovereign Lord says: The enemy has spoken against you, saying “Aha!” and, “The ancient heights have become our property!”’ 36:3 So prophesy and say: “This is what the sovereign Lord says: Surely because they have made you desolate and crushed you from all directions, so that you have become the property of the rest of the nations, and have become the subject of gossip and slander among the people, 36:4 therefore, O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the sovereign Lord: This is what the sovereign Lord says to the mountains and hills, the ravines and valleys, and to the desolate ruins and the abandoned cities that have become prey and an object of derision to the rest of the nations round about – 36:5 therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: Surely I have spoken in the fire of my zeal against the rest of the nations, and against all Edom, who with great joy and utter contempt have made my land their property and prey, because of its pasture.’

36:6 “Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel, and say to the mountains and hills, the ravines and valleys, “This is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I have spoken in my zeal and in my anger, because you have endured the insults of the nations. 36:7 So this is what the sovereign Lord says: I vow that the nations around you will endure insults as well.

36:8 ““But you, mountains of Israel, will grow your branches, and bear your fruit for my people Israel; for they will arrive soon. 36:9 For indeed, I am on your side; I will turn to you, and you will be plowed and planted. 36:10 I will multiply your people – the whole house of Israel, all of it. The cities will be populated and the ruins rebuilt. 36:11 I will increase the number of people and animals on you; they will increase and be fruitful. I will cause you to be inhabited as in ancient times, and will do more good for you than at the beginning of your history. Then you will know that I am the Lord. 36:12 I will lead people, my people Israel, across you; they will possess you and you will become their inheritance. No longer will you bereave them of their children.

36:13 ““This is what the sovereign Lord says: Because they are saying to you, “You are a devourer of men, and bereave your nation of children,” 36:14 therefore you will no longer devour people and no longer bereave your nation of children, declares the sovereign Lord. 36:15 I will no longer subject you to the nations’ insults; no longer will you bear the shame of the peoples, and no longer will you bereave your nation, declares the sovereign Lord.”

36:16 The word of the Lord came to me: 36:17 “Son of man, when the house of Israel was living on their own land, they defiled it by their behavior and their deeds. In my sight their behavior was like the uncleanness of a woman having her monthly period. 36:18 So I poured my anger on them because of the blood they shed on the land and because of the idols with which they defiled it. 36:19 I scattered them among the nations; they were dispersed throughout foreign countries. In accordance with their behavior and their deeds I judged them. 36:20 But when they arrived in the nations where they went, they profaned my holy name. It was said of them, ‘These are the people of the Lord, yet they have departed from his land.’ 36:21 I was concerned for my holy reputation which the house of Israel profaned among the nations where they went.

36:22 “Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says: It is not for your sake that I am about to act, O house of Israel, but for the sake of my holy reputation which you profaned among the nations where you went. 36:23 I will magnify my great name that has been profaned among the nations, that you have profaned among them. The nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the sovereign Lord, when I magnify myself among you in their sight.

36:24 “I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries; then I will bring you to your land. 36:25 I will sprinkle you with pure water and you will be clean from all your impurities. I will purify you from all your idols. 36:26 I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit within you. I will remove the heart of stone from your body and give you a heart of flesh. 36:27 I will put my Spirit within you; I will take the initiative and you will obey my statutes and carefully observe my regulations. 36:28 Then you will live in the land I gave to your fathers; you will be my people, and I will be your God. 36:29 I will save you from all your uncleanness. I will call for the grain and multiply it; I will not bring a famine on you. 36:30 I will multiply the fruit of the trees and the produce of the fields, so that you will never again suffer the disgrace of famine among the nations. 36:31 Then you will remember your evil behavior and your deeds which were not good; you will loathe yourselves on account of your sins and your abominable deeds. 36:32 Understand that it is not for your sake I am about to act, declares the sovereign Lord. Be ashamed and embarrassed by your behavior, O house of Israel.

36:33 “This is what the sovereign Lord says: In the day I cleanse you from all your sins, I will populate the cities and the ruins will be rebuilt. 36:34 The desolate land will be plowed, instead of being desolate in the sight of everyone who passes by. 36:35 They will say, “This desolate land has become like the garden of Eden; the ruined, desolate, and destroyed cities are now fortified and inhabited.” 36:36 Then the nations which remain around you will know that I, the Lord, have rebuilt the ruins and replanted what was desolate. I, the Lord, have spoken – and I will do it!’

36:37 “This is what the sovereign Lord says: I will allow the house of Israel to ask me to do this for them: I will multiply their people like sheep. 36:38 Like the sheep for offerings, like the sheep of

Jerusalem during her appointed feasts, so will the ruined cities be filled with flocks of people. Then they will know that I am the Lord.”

PRAYER

Lord, Your heart has always been inclined toward reconciliation and restoration. May I be found faithful so that the reconciliation that You affirmed in my personal salvation may be worked-out as a continuous incremental restoration of intimacy with You.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Ezekiel was instructed to prophesy “Therefore say to the house of Israel, “This is what the sovereign Lord says: It is not for your sake that I am about to act, O house of Israel, but for the sake of my holy reputation which you profaned among the nations where you went. I will magnify my great name that has been profaned among the nations, that you have profaned among them. The nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the sovereign Lord, when I magnify myself among you in their sight.

“I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries; then I will bring you to your land. I will sprinkle you with pure water and you will be clean from all your impurities. I will purify you from all your idols. I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit within you. I will remove the heart of stone from your body and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my Spirit within you; I will take the initiative and you will obey my statutes and carefully observe my regulations. Then you will live in the land I gave to your fathers; you will be my people, and I will be your God.”

He continued “The desolate land will be plowed, instead of being desolate in the sight of everyone who passes by. They will say, “This desolate land has become like the garden of Eden; the ruined, desolate, and destroyed cities are now fortified and inhabited.” Then the nations which remain around you will know that I, the Lord, have rebuilt the ruins and replanted what was desolate. I, the Lord, have spoken – and I will do it!”

Ezekiel concluded chapter 38 with the words of the Lord God “This is what the sovereign Lord says: I will allow the house of Israel to ask me to do this for them: I will multiply their people like sheep. Like the sheep for offerings, like the sheep of Jerusalem during her appointed feasts, so will the ruined cities be filled with flocks of people. Then they will know that I am the Lord.”

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

The Lord God was clear “It is not for your sake that I am about to act ...” that the people had not earned redemption.

DISCUSS

Given their history was it not clear that they both needed to be cleansed and they needed a much more intimate presence of the Lord God via His Holy Spirit?

REFLECT

There is an implication that the people needed to humble themselves and willingly return to the Lord God “I will allow the house of Israel to ask me to do this for them ...”, and then “I will put my Spirit within you; I will take the initiative and you will obey my statutes and carefully observe my regulations.”

SHARE

When have you been the beneficiary of something good, not because you had earned it, but for the sake of someone else (or some organization)?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you something He wants you to invite Him to do in and through you.

ACT

Today I will humbly and joyfully partner with and surrender to the Holy Spirit as He does His work in and through me.

Be Specific _____

Monday (**Ezekiel 37**)

The Valley of Dry Bones

37:1 The hand of the Lord was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and placed me in the midst of the valley, and it was full of bones. 37:2 He made me walk all around among them. I realized there were a great many bones in the valley and they were very dry. 37:3 He said to me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” I said to him, “Sovereign Lord, you know.” 37:4 Then he said to me, “Prophesy over these bones, and tell them: ‘Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. 37:5 This is what the sovereign Lord says to these bones: Look, I am about to infuse breath into you and you will live. 37:6 I will put tendons on you and muscles over you and will cover you with skin; I will put breath in you and you will live. Then you will know that I am the Lord.’”

37:7 So I prophesied as I was commanded. There was a sound when I prophesied – I heard a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to bone. 37:8 As I watched, I saw tendons on them, then muscles appeared, and skin covered over them from above, but there was no breath in them.

37:9 He said to me, “Prophesy to the breath, – prophesy, son of man – and say to the breath: ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these corpses so that they may live.’” 37:10 So I prophesied as I was commanded, and the breath came into them; they lived and stood on their feet, an extremely great army.

37:11 Then he said to me, “Son of man, these bones are all the house of Israel. Look, they are saying, ‘Our bones are dry, our hope has perished; we are cut off.’ 37:12 Therefore prophesy, and tell them, ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I am about to open your graves and will raise you from your graves, my people. I will bring you to the land of Israel. 37:13 Then you will know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and raise you from your graves, my people. 37:14 I will place my breath in you and you will live; I will give you rest in your own land. Then you will know that I am the Lord – I have spoken and I will act, declares the Lord.’”

37:15 The word of the Lord came to me: 37:16 “As for you, son of man, take one branch, and write on it, ‘For Judah, and for the Israelites associated with him.’ Then take another branch and write on it, ‘For Joseph, the branch of Ephraim and all the house of Israel associated with him.’ 37:17 Join them as one stick; they will be as one in your hand. 37:18 When your people say to you, ‘Will you not tell us what these things mean?’ 37:19 tell them, ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I am about to take the branch of Joseph which is in the hand of Ephraim and the tribes of Israel associated with him, and I will place them on the stick of Judah, and make them into one stick – they will be one in my hand.’ 37:20 The sticks you write on will be in your hand in front of them. 37:21 Then tell them, ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I am about to take the Israelites from among the nations where they have gone. I will gather them from round about and bring them to their land. 37:22 I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel, and one king will rule over them all. They will never again be two nations and never again be divided into two kingdoms. 37:23 They will not defile themselves with their idols, their detestable things, and all their rebellious deeds. I will save them from all their unfaithfulness by which they sinned. I will purify them; they will become my people and I will become their God.

37:24 “My servant David will be king over them; there will be one shepherd for all of them. They will follow my regulations and carefully observe my statutes. 37:25 They will live in the land I gave to my servant Jacob, in which your fathers lived; they will live in it – they and their children and their grandchildren forever. David my servant will be prince over them forever. 37:26 I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be a perpetual covenant with them. I will establish them, increase their numbers, and place my sanctuary among them forever. 37:27 My dwelling place will be with

them; I will be their God, and they will be my people. 37:28 Then, when my sanctuary is among them forever, the nations will know that I, the Lord, sanctify Israel.”

PRAYER

Lord, You command life and death and Your desire is that we will live in and through You. May I remember to praise You for Your love and for the gift of eternal life.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Ezekiel was shown a vision and instructed to prophesy as a valley of dead and dry bones was assembled, covered, and animated such as to appear as a great army.

He was told by the Lord “Son of man, these bones are all the house of Israel. Look, they are saying, ‘Our bones are dry, our hope has perished; we are cut off.’ Therefore prophesy, and tell them, ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I am about to open your graves and will raise you from your graves, my people. I will bring you to the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the Lord ...”

Ezekiel was given another symbolic prophesy that Israel would be reassembled from similarly dead and dry bones into a permanently unified people.

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

Without the Lord God all humankind may as well be dead bones scattered in a valley.

DISCUSS

Perhaps the Lord used the word-pictures of the valley of bones and the joined-sticks because the people otherwise dismissed Ezekiel’s prophesies as fancy words?

REFLECT

Ezekiel was humble and did not even try to guess a clever answer to the Lord when quizzed about the bones but rather immediately submitted to the Lord’s perfect knowledge.

SHARE

When have you discovered that some part of your life had been like dry bones but then the Lord brought life?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you someone who is apart from the Lord's salvation, much like the symbolic dry bones, for whom He desires you to pray.

ACT

Today I will commit the one whom He has directed me to earnest daily prayer for as long as He asks me to do so. I will also ask Him to show me if there is any way I may be His instrument, perhaps by serving the person in a caring way, or in sharing my testimony and/or His word.

Be Specific _____

Tuesday (Ezekiel 38-39)

A Prophecy Against Gog

38:1 The word of the Lord came to me: 38:2 "Son of man, turn toward Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. Prophecy against him 38:3 and say: "This is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I am against you, Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. 38:4 I will turn you around, put hooks into your jaws, and bring you out with all your army, horses and horsemen, all of them fully armed, a great company with shields of different types, all of them armed with swords. 38:5 Persia, Ethiopia, and Put are with them, all of them with shields and helmets. 38:6 They are joined by Gomer with all its troops, and by Beth Togarmah from the remote parts of the north with all its troops – many peoples are with you.

38:7 "Be ready and stay ready, you and all your companies assembled around you, and be a guard for them. 38:8 After many days you will be summoned; in the latter years you will come to a land restored from the ravages of war, with many peoples gathered on the mountains of Israel that had long been in ruins. Its people were brought out from the peoples, and all of them will be living securely. 38:9 You will advance; you will come like a storm. You will be like a cloud covering the earth, you, all your troops, and the many other peoples with you.

38:10 "This is what the sovereign Lord says: On that day thoughts will come into your mind, and you will devise an evil plan. 38:11 You will say, "I will invade a land of unwalled towns; I will advance against those living quietly in security – all of them living without walls and barred gates – 38:12 to loot and plunder, to attack the inhabited ruins and the people gathered from the nations, who are acquiring cattle and goods, who live at the center of the earth." 38:13 Sheba and Dedan and the traders of Tarshish with all its young warriors will say to you, "Have you come to loot? Have you assembled your armies to plunder, to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to haul away a great amount of spoils?"

38:14 “Therefore, prophesy, son of man, and say to Gog: ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says: On that day when my people Israel are living securely, you will take notice 38:15 and come from your place, from the remote parts of the north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great company and a vast army. 38:16 You will advance against my people Israel like a cloud covering the earth. In the latter days I will bring you against my land so that the nations may acknowledge me, when before their eyes I magnify myself through you, O Gog.

38:17 “‘This is what the sovereign Lord says: Are you the one of whom I spoke in former days by my servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied in those days that I would bring you against them? 38:18 On that day, when Gog invades the land of Israel, declares the sovereign Lord, my rage will mount up in my anger. 38:19 In my zeal, in the fire of my fury, I declare that on that day there will be a great earthquake in the land of Israel. 38:20 The fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the wild beasts, all the things that creep on the ground, and all people who live on the face of the earth will shake at my presence. The mountains will topple, the cliffs will fall, and every wall will fall to the ground. 38:21 I will call for a sword to attack Gog on all my mountains, declares the sovereign Lord; every man’s sword will be against his brother. 38:22 I will judge him with plague and bloodshed. I will rain down on him, his troops and the many peoples who are with him a torrential downpour, hailstones, fire, and brimstone. 38:23 I will exalt and magnify myself; I will reveal myself before many nations. Then they will know that I am the Lord.’

39:1 “As for you, son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say: ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I am against you, O Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal! 39:2 I will turn you around and drag you along; I will lead you up from the remotest parts of the north and bring you against the mountains of Israel. 39:3 I will knock your bow out of your left hand and make your arrows fall from your right hand. 39:4 You will fall dead on the mountains of Israel, you and all your troops and the people who are with you. I give you as food to every kind of bird and every wild beast. 39:5 You will fall dead in the open field; for I have spoken, declares the sovereign Lord. 39:6 I will send fire on Magog and those who live securely in the coastlands; then they will know that I am the Lord.

39:7 “‘I will make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; I will not let my holy name be profaned anymore. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord, the Holy One of Israel. 39:8 Realize that it is coming and it will be done, declares the sovereign Lord. It is the day I have spoken about.

39:9 “‘Then those who live in the cities of Israel will go out and use the weapons for kindling – the shields, bows and arrows, war clubs and spears – they will burn them for seven years. 39:10 They will not need to take wood from the field or cut down trees from the forests, because they will make fires with the weapons. They will take the loot from those who looted them and seize the plunder of those who plundered them, declares the sovereign Lord.

39:11 “On that day I will assign Gog a grave in Israel. It will be the valley of those who travel east of the sea; it will block the way of the travelers. There they will bury Gog and all his horde; they will call it the valley of Hamon-Gog. 39:12 For seven months Israel will bury them, in order to cleanse the land. 39:13 All the people of the land will bury them, and it will be a memorial for them on the day I magnify myself, declares the sovereign Lord. 39:14 They will designate men to scout continually through the land, burying those who remain on the surface of the ground, in order to cleanse it. They will search for seven full months. 39:15 When the scouts survey the land and see a human bone, they will place a sign by it, until those assigned to burial duty have buried it in the valley of Hamon-Gog. 39:16 (A city by the name of Hamonah will also be there.) They will cleanse the land.’

39:17 “As for you, son of man, this is what the sovereign Lord says: Tell every kind of bird and every wild beast: ‘Assemble and come! Gather from all around to my slaughter which I am going to make for you, a great slaughter on the mountains of Israel! You will eat flesh and drink blood. 39:18 You will eat the flesh of warriors and drink the blood of the princes of the earth – the rams, lambs, goats, and bulls, all of them fattened animals of Bashan. 39:19 You will eat fat until you are full, and drink blood until you are drunk, at my slaughter which I have made for you. 39:20 You will fill up at my table with horses and charioteers, with warriors and all the soldiers,’ declares the sovereign Lord.

39:21 “I will display my majesty among the nations. All the nations will witness the judgment I have executed, and the power I have exhibited among them. 39:22 Then the house of Israel will know that I am the Lord their God, from that day forward. 39:23 The nations will know that the house of Israel went into exile due to their iniquity, for they were unfaithful to me. So I hid my face from them and handed them over to their enemies; all of them died by the sword. 39:24 According to their uncleanness and rebellion I have dealt with them, and I hid my face from them.

39:25 “Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: Now I will restore the fortunes of Jacob, and I will have mercy on the entire house of Israel. I will be zealous for my holy name. 39:26 They will bear their shame for all their unfaithful acts against me, when they live securely on their land with no one to make them afraid. 39:27 When I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them from the countries of their enemies, I will magnify myself among them in the sight of many nations. 39:28 Then they will know that I am the Lord their God, because I sent them into exile among the nations, and then gathered them into their own land. I will not leave any of them in exile any longer. 39:29 I will no longer hide my face from them, when I pour out my Spirit on the house of Israel, declares the sovereign Lord.”

PRAYER

Lord, You destroy those who reject You, and you preserve Your children. You my Lord are the one and only true and awesome God.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Ezekiel prophesied an image of the last days of the end times when a massive army marches against “Israel”. At that time those whom the Lord God has gathered are faithful and living in peace, without gates and walls and defenses, trusting Him.

Gog of Magog, along with other pagan kingdoms would be watched as they swept south, only to be turned one against the other by the Lord in a great rout – testifying to the overwhelming power of the Lord God. Their destruction will be His judgment of their rebellion, just as He had judged Israel before them, though He had preserved a remnant of Israel.

He concluded the prophesy from the Lord “I will no longer hide my face from them, when I pour out my Spirit on the house of Israel, declares the sovereign Lord.”

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

Israel (Israel and Judah) have been destroyed and exiled, but a remnant preserved and gathered together in a new individual covenant of faith, and then threatened by a pagan horde.

DISCUSS

Imagine the powerful witness of the massive army, driven by the ancient sins of greed and pride, smashed to bits before they could obliterate and plunder the Lord's people?

REFLECT

The people will be living in faith and their faith would be justified as the Lord fights for them as He had in the time of the early Old Testament history.

SHARE

When have you been defenseless but protected in a powerful way?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a threat which He has swept away in the past.

ACT

Today I will give praise to the Lord, my God.

Wednesday (Ezekiel 40-42)

Vision of the New Temple

40:1 In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was struck down, on this very day, the hand of the Lord was on me, and he brought me there. 40:2 By means of divine visions he brought me to the land of Israel and placed me on a very high mountain, and on it was a structure like a city, to the south. 40:3 When he brought me there, I saw a man whose appearance was like bronze, with a linen cord and a measuring stick in his hand. He was standing in the gateway. 40:4 The man said to me, "Son of man, watch closely, listen carefully, and pay attention to everything I show you, for you have been brought here so that I can show it to you. Tell the house of Israel everything you see."

40:5 I saw a wall all around the outside of the temple. In the man's hand was a measuring stick $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet long. He measured the thickness of the wall as $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet, and its height as $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet. 40:6 Then he went to the gate facing east. He climbed its steps and measured the threshold of the gate as $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet deep. 40:7 The alcoves were $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet long and $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide; between the alcoves were $8\frac{3}{4}$ feet. The threshold of the gate by the porch of the gate facing inward was $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet. 40:8 Then he measured the porch of the gate facing inward as $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet. 40:9 He measured the porch of the gate as 14 feet, and its jambs as $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet; the porch of the gate faced inward. 40:10 There were three alcoves on each side of the east gate; the three had the same measurement, and the jambs on either side had the same measurement. 40:11 He measured the width of the entrance of the gateway as $17\frac{1}{2}$ feet, and the length of the gateway as $22\frac{3}{4}$ feet. 40:12 There was a barrier in front of the alcoves, $1\frac{3}{4}$ feet on either side; the alcoves were $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet on either side. 40:13 He measured the gateway from the roof of one alcove to the roof of the other, a width of $43\frac{3}{4}$ feet from one entrance to the opposite one. 40:14 He measured the porch at 105 feet high; the gateway went all around to the jamb of the courtyard. 40:15 From the front of the entrance gate to the porch of the inner gate was $87\frac{1}{2}$ feet. 40:16 There were closed windows toward the alcoves and toward their jambs within the gate all around, and likewise for the porches. There were windows all around the inside, and on each jamb were decorative palm trees.

40:17 Then he brought me to the outer court. I saw chambers there, and a pavement made for the court all around; thirty chambers faced the pavement. 40:18 The pavement was beside the gates, corresponding to the length of the gates; this was the lower pavement. 40:19 Then he measured the width from before the lower gate to the front of the exterior of the inner court as 175 feet on the east and on the north.

40:20 He measured the length and width of the gate of the outer court which faces north. 40:21 Its alcoves, three on each side, and its jambs and porches had the same measurement as the first gate;

87½ feet long and 43¾ feet wide. 40:22 Its windows, its porches, and its decorative palm trees had the same measurement as the gate which faced east. Seven steps led up to it, and its porch was in front of them. 40:23 Opposite the gate on the north and the east was a gate of the inner court; he measured the distance from gate to gate at 175 feet.

40:24 Then he led me toward the south. I saw a gate on the south. He measured its jambs and its porches; they had the same dimensions as the others. 40:25 There were windows all around it and its porches, like the windows of the others; 87½ feet long and 43¾ feet wide. 40:26 There were seven steps going up to it; its porches were in front of them. It had decorative palm trees on its jambs, one on either side. 40:27 The inner court had a gate toward the south; he measured it from gate to gate toward the south as 175 feet.

40:28 Then he brought me to the inner court by the south gate. He measured the south gate; it had the same dimensions as the others. 40:29 Its alcoves, its jambs, and its porches had the same dimensions as the others, and there were windows all around it and its porches; its length was 87½ feet and its width 43¾ feet. 40:30 There were porches all around, 43¾ feet long and 8¾ feet wide. 40:31 Its porches faced the outer court, and decorative palm trees were on its jambs, and its stairway had eight steps.

40:32 Then he brought me to the inner court on the east side. He measured the gate; it had the same dimensions as the others. 40:33 Its alcoves, its jambs, and its porches had the same dimensions as the others, and there were windows all around it and its porches; its length was 87½ feet and its width 43¾ feet. 40:34 Its porches faced the outer court, it had decorative palm trees on its jambs, and its stairway had eight steps.

40:35 Then he brought me to the north gate, and he measured it; it had the same dimensions as the others – 40:36 its alcoves, its jambs, and its porches. It had windows all around it; its length was 87½ feet and its width 43¾ feet. 40:37 Its jambs faced the outer court, and it had decorative palm trees on its jambs, on either side, and its stairway had eight steps.

40:38 There was a chamber with its door by the porch of the gate; there they washed the burnt offering. 40:39 In the porch of the gate were two tables on either side on which to slaughter the burnt offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering. 40:40 On the outside of the porch as one goes up at the entrance of the north gate were two tables, and on the other side of the porch of the gate were two tables. 40:41 Four tables were on each side of the gate, eight tables on which the sacrifices were to be slaughtered. 40:42 The four tables for the burnt offering were of carved stone, 32 inches long, 32 inches wide, and 21 inches high. They would put the instruments which they used to slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice on them. 40:43 There were hooks three inches long, fastened in the house all around, and on the tables was the flesh of the offering.

40:44 On the outside of the inner gate were chambers for the singers of the inner court, one at the side of the north gate facing south, and the other at the side of the south gate facing north. 40:45 He said to me, "This chamber which faces south is for the priests who keep charge of the temple, 40:46 and the chamber which faces north is for the priests who keep charge of the altar. These are the descendants of Zadok, from the descendants of Levi, who may approach the Lord to minister to him." 40:47 He measured the court as a square 175 feet long and 175 feet wide; the altar was in front of the temple.

40:48 Then he brought me to the porch of the temple and measured the jambs of the porch as $8\frac{3}{4}$ feet on either side, and the width of the gate was $24\frac{1}{2}$ feet and the sides were $5\frac{1}{4}$ feet on each side. 40:49 The length of the porch was 35 feet and the width $19\frac{1}{4}$ feet; steps led up to it, and there were pillars beside the jambs on either side.

The Inner Temple

41:1 Then he brought me to the outer sanctuary, and measured the jambs; the jambs were $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide on each side. 41:2 The width of the entrance was $17\frac{1}{2}$ feet, and the sides of the entrance were $8\frac{3}{4}$ feet on each side. He measured the length of the outer sanctuary as 70 feet, and its width as 35 feet.

41:3 Then he went into the inner sanctuary and measured the jambs of the entrance as $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet, the entrance as $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet, and the width of the entrance as $12\frac{1}{4}$ feet 41:4 Then he measured its length as 35 feet, and its width as 35 feet, before the outer sanctuary. He said to me, "This is the most holy place."

41:5 Then he measured the wall of the temple as $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet, and the width of the side chambers as 7 feet, all around the temple. 41:6 The side chambers were in three stories, one above the other, thirty in each story. There were offsets in the wall all around to serve as supports for the side chambers, so that the supports were not in the wall of the temple. 41:7 The side chambers surrounding the temple were wider at each successive story; for the structure surrounding the temple went up story by story all around the temple. For this reason the width of the temple increased as it went up, and one went up from the lowest story to the highest by the way of the middle story.

41:8 I saw that the temple had a raised platform all around; the foundations of the side chambers were a full measuring stick of $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet high. 41:9 The width of the outer wall of the side chambers was $8\frac{3}{4}$ feet, and the open area between the side chambers of the temple 41:10 and the chambers of the court was 35 feet in width all around the temple on every side. 41:11 There were entrances from the side chambers toward the open area, one entrance toward the north, and another entrance toward the south; the width of the open area was $8\frac{3}{4}$ feet all around.

41:12 The building that was facing the temple courtyard at the west side was $122\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide; the wall of the building was $8\frac{3}{4}$ feet all around, and its length $157\frac{1}{2}$ feet.

41:13 Then he measured the temple as 175 feet long, the courtyard of the temple and the building and its walls as 175 feet long, 41:14 and also the width of the front of the temple and the courtyard on the east as 175 feet.

41:15 Then he measured the length of the building facing the courtyard at the rear of the temple, with its galleries on either side as 175 feet.

The interior of the outer sanctuary and the porch of the court, 41:16 as well as the thresholds, narrow windows and galleries all around on three sides facing the threshold were paneled with wood all around, from the ground up to the windows (now the windows were covered), 41:17 to the space above the entrance, to the inner room, and on the outside, and on all the walls in the inner room and outside, by measurement. 41:18 It was made with cherubim and decorative palm trees, with a palm tree between each cherub. Each cherub had two faces: 41:19 a human face toward the palm tree on one side and a lion's face toward the palm tree on the other side. They were carved on the whole temple all around; 41:20 from the ground to the area above the entrance, cherubim and decorative palm trees were carved on the wall of the outer sanctuary. 41:21 The doorposts of the outer sanctuary were square. In front of the sanctuary one doorpost looked just like the other. 41:22 The altar was of wood, $5\frac{1}{4}$ feet high, with its length $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet; its corners, its length, and its walls were of wood. He said to me, "This is the table that is before the Lord." 41:23 The outer sanctuary and the inner sanctuary each had a double door. 41:24 Each of the doors had two leaves, two swinging leaves; two leaves for one door and two leaves for the other. 41:25 On the doors of the outer sanctuary were carved cherubim and palm trees, like those carved on the walls, and there was a canopy of wood on the front of the outside porch. 41:26 There were narrow windows and decorative palm trees on either side of the side walls of the porch; this is what the side chambers of the temple and the canopies were like.

Chambers for the Temple

42:1 Then he led me out to the outer court, toward the north, and brought me to the chamber which was opposite the courtyard and opposite the building on the north. 42:2 Its length was 175 feet on the north side, and its width $87\frac{1}{2}$ feet. 42:3 Opposite the 35 feet that belonged to the inner court, and opposite the pavement which belonged to the outer court, gallery faced gallery in the three stories. 42:4 In front of the chambers was a walkway on the inner side, $17\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide at a distance of $1\frac{3}{4}$ feet, and their entrances were on the north. 42:5 Now the upper chambers were narrower, because the galleries took more space from them than from the lower and middle chambers of the building. 42:6 For they were in three stories and had no pillars like the pillars of the courts; therefore the upper chambers were set back from the ground more than the lower and upper ones. 42:7 As for the outer wall by the side of the chambers, toward the outer court facing the chambers, it was $87\frac{1}{2}$ feet long. 42:8 For the chambers on the outer court were $87\frac{1}{2}$ feet long, while those facing the temple were 175

feet long. 42:9 Below these chambers was a passage on the east side as one enters from the outer court.

42:10 At the beginning of the wall of the court toward the south, facing the courtyard and the building, were chambers 42:11 with a passage in front of them. They looked like the chambers on the north. Of the same length and width, and all their exits according to their arrangements and entrances 42:12 were the chambers which were toward the south. There was an opening at the head of the passage, the passage in front of the corresponding wall toward the east when one enters.

42:13 Then he said to me, “The north chambers and the south chambers which face the courtyard are holy chambers where the priests who approach the Lord will eat the most holy offerings. There they will place the most holy offerings – the grain offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering, because the place is holy. 42:14 When the priests enter, then they will not go out from the sanctuary to the outer court without taking off their garments in which they minister, for these are holy; they will put on other garments, then they will go near the places where the people are.”

42:15 Now when he had finished measuring the interior of the temple, he led me out by the gate which faces east and measured all around. 42:16 He measured the east side with the measuring stick as 875 feet by the measuring stick. 42:17 He measured the north side as 875 feet by the measuring stick. 42:18 He measured the south side as 875 feet by the measuring stick. 42:19 He turned to the west side and measured 875 feet by the measuring stick. 42:20 He measured it on all four sides. It had a wall around it, 875 feet long and 875 feet wide, to separate the holy and common places.

PRAYER

Lord, You provided Ezekiel – and through him the people – a visual representation of the new temple You desired to create for them. May I rest in the assurance that Your words in [Jeremiah 29:11](#) remain forever-true, “... plans to give you hope and a future ...”

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Ezekiel was taken to a mountain, in a vision, and told “Son of man, watch closely, listen carefully, and pay attention to everything I show you, for you have been brought here so that I can show it to you. Tell the house of Israel everything you see.”

Then he was brought into “... the inner sanctuary and ... He said to me, “This is the most holy place.”

Ezekiel was shown more “This chamber which faces south is for the priests who keep charge of the temple, and the chamber which faces north is for the priests who keep charge of the altar. These are the descendants of Zadok, from the descendants of Levi, who may approach the Lord to minister to him.”

And more “The north chambers and the south chambers which face the courtyard are holy chambers where the priests who approach the Lord will eat the most holy offerings. There they will place the most holy offerings – the grain offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering, because the place is holy. When the priests enter, then they will not go out from the sanctuary to the outer court without taking off their garments in which they minister, for these are holy; they will put on other garments, then they will go near the places where the people are.”

The level of detail matched that He had given to Moses and to David.

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

The Levitical priesthood was to be reinstated “... the descendants of Zadok, from the descendants of Levi ...”

DISCUSS

Was the description of the priests and sacrifices merely rhetorical, given that the people would never truly repent and surrender to the God as required, and because the Lord had already declared that the time of Him dealing with tribes and nations was over and the new covenant was with each individual?

REFLECT

The reality of a literal restored temple and restored sacrificial system was, of course, conditioned on a right-response from the people; otherwise it was merely symbolic, to later be replaced – through the work of Christ – by the practices of an entirely different covenant.

SHARE

When have you contemplated the differences in your life between living under the ancient system of literal sacrifice versus under the new covenant of Christ?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you something He has shown you, about Himself, that He now wants you to share with others.

ACT

Today I will joyfully, prayerfully, and respectfully seek and share His promise of hope and purpose with the person to whom He leads me. It may be a time of encouragement and edification with a fellow believer or a time of outreach to someone considering-Christ.

Be Specific _____

Thursday (Ezekiel 43–44:14)

The Glory Returns to the Temple

43:1 Then he brought me to the gate that faced toward the east. 43:2 I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east; the sound was like that of rushing water; and the earth radiated his glory. 43:3 It was like the vision I saw when he came to destroy the city, and the vision I saw by the Kebar River. I threw myself face down. 43:4 The glory of the Lord came into the temple by way of the gate that faces east. 43:5 Then a wind lifted me up and brought me to the inner court; I watched the glory of the Lord filling the temple.

43:6 I heard someone speaking to me from the temple, while the man was standing beside me. 43:7 He said to me: “Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place for the soles of my feet, where I will live among the people of Israel forever. The house of Israel will no longer profane my holy name, neither they nor their kings, by their spiritual prostitution or by the pillars of their kings set up when they die. 43:8 When they placed their threshold by my threshold and their doorpost by my doorpost, with only the wall between me and them, they profaned my holy name by the abominable deeds they committed. So I consumed them in my anger. 43:9 Now they must put away their spiritual prostitution and the pillars of their kings far from me, and then I will live among them forever.

43:10 “As for you, son of man, describe the temple to the house of Israel, so that they will be ashamed of their sins and measure the pattern. 43:11 When they are ashamed of all that they have done, make known to them the design of the temple, its pattern, its exits and entrances, and its whole design – all its statutes, its entire design, and all its laws; write it all down in their sight, so that they may observe its entire design and all its statutes and do them.

43:12 “This is the law of the temple: The entire area on top of the mountain all around will be most holy. Indeed, this is the law of the temple.

The Altar

43:13 “And these are the measurements of the altar: Its base is $1\frac{3}{4}$ feet high, and $1\frac{3}{4}$ feet wide, and its border nine inches on its edge. This is to be the height of the altar. 43:14 From the base of the ground to the lower edge is $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet, and the width $1\frac{3}{4}$ feet; and from the smaller ledge to the larger edge, 7 feet, and the width $1\frac{3}{4}$ feet; 43:15 and the altar hearth, 7 feet, and from the altar hearth four horns

projecting upward. 43:16 Now the altar hearth is a perfect square, 21 feet long and 21 feet wide. 43:17 The ledge is 24½ feet long and 24½ feet wide on four sides; the border around it is 10½ inches, and its surrounding base 1¾ feet. Its steps face east.”

43:18 Then he said to me: “Son of man, this is what the sovereign Lord says: These are the statutes of the altar: On the day it is built to offer up burnt offerings on it and to sprinkle blood on it, 43:19 you will give a young bull for a sin offering to the Levitical priests who are descended from Zadok, who approach me to minister to me, declares the sovereign Lord. 43:20 You will take some of its blood, and place it on the four horns of the altar, on the four corners of the ledge, and on the border all around; you will cleanse it and make atonement for it. 43:21 You will also take the bull for the sin offering, and it will be burned in the appointed place in the temple, outside the sanctuary.

43:22 “On the second day, you will offer a male goat without blemish for a sin offering. They will purify the altar just as they purified it with the bull. 43:23 When you have finished purifying it, you will offer an unblemished young bull and an unblemished ram from the flock. 43:24 You will present them before the Lord, and the priests will scatter salt on them and offer them up as a burnt offering to the Lord.

43:25 “For seven days you will provide every day a goat for a sin offering; a young bull and a ram from the flock, both without blemish, will be provided. 43:26 For seven days they will make atonement for the altar and cleanse it, so they will consecrate it. 43:27 When the prescribed period is over, on the eighth day and thereafter the priests will offer up on the altar your burnt offerings and your peace offerings; I will accept you, declares the sovereign Lord.”

The Closed Gate

44:1 Then he brought me back by way of the outer gate of the sanctuary which faces east, but it was shut. 44:2 The Lord said to me: “This gate will be shut; it will not be opened, and no one will enter by it. For the Lord, the God of Israel, has entered by it; therefore it will remain shut. 44:3 Only the prince may sit in it to eat a sacrificial meal before the Lord; he will enter by way of the porch of the gate and will go out by the same way.”

44:4 Then he brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the temple. As I watched, I noticed the glory of the Lord filling the Lord’s temple, and I threw myself face down. 44:5 The Lord said to me: “Son of man, pay attention, watch closely and listen carefully to everything I tell you concerning all the statutes of the Lord’s house and all its laws. Pay attention to the entrances to the temple with all the exits of the sanctuary. 44:6 Say to the rebellious, to the house of Israel, ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says: Enough of all your abominable practices, O house of Israel! 44:7 When you bring foreigners, those uncircumcised in heart and in flesh, into my sanctuary, you desecrate it – even my house – when you offer my food, the fat and the blood. You have broken my covenant by all your abominable

practices. 44:8 You have not kept charge of my holy things, but you have assigned foreigners to keep charge of my sanctuary for you. 44:9 This is what the sovereign Lord says: No foreigner, who is uncircumcised in heart and flesh among all the foreigners who are among the people of Israel, will enter into my sanctuary.

44:10 “But the Levites who went far from me, straying off from me after their idols when Israel went astray, will be responsible for their sin. 44:11 Yet they will be ministers in my sanctuary, having oversight at the gates of the temple, and serving the temple. They will slaughter the burnt offerings and the sacrifices for the people, and they will stand before them to minister to them. 44:12 Because they used to minister to them before their idols, and became a sinful obstacle to the house of Israel, consequently I have made a vow concerning them, declares the sovereign Lord, that they will be responsible for their sin. 44:13 They will not come near me to serve me as priest, nor will they come near any of my holy things, the things which are most sacred. They will bear the shame of the abominable deeds they have committed. 44:14 Yet I will appoint them to keep charge of the temple, all of its service and all that will be done in it.

PRAYER

Lord, You wish to restore Your relationship with humankind, but sins committed by those to whom You entrusted spiritually-important responsibilities in the past leave scars and have consequences. May I remember that my choices have consequences, even though I am forgiven, so the closer I walk with You now the fewer regrets I will have later.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Ezekiel received another vision “I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east; the sound was like that of rushing water; and the earth radiated his glory ... I watched the glory of the Lord filling the temple.”

He was informed “Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place for the soles of my feet, where I will live among the people of Israel forever. The house of Israel will no longer profane my holy name, neither they nor their kings, by their spiritual prostitution or by the pillars of their kings set up when they die.”

Ezekiel was to use the temple and its statutes as a tool for the Lord’s chastising and discipling of the people “... describe the temple to the house of Israel, so that they will be ashamed of their sins and measure the pattern. 43:11 When they are ashamed of all that they have done, make known to them the design of the temple, its pattern, its exits and entrances, and its whole design – all its statutes, its entire design, and all its laws; write it all down in their sight, so that they may observe its entire design and all its statutes and do them.”

He also was told that choices have consequences, and sometimes they limited the fullness of restoration following reconciliation “But the Levites who went far from me, straying off from me after their idols when Israel went astray, will be responsible for their sin. 44:11 Yet they will be ministers in my sanctuary, having oversight at the gates of the temple, and serving the temple. They will slaughter the burnt offerings and the sacrifices for the people, and they will stand before them to minister to them. 44:12 Because they used to minister to them before their idols, and became a sinful obstacle to the house of Israel, consequently I have made a vow concerning them, declares the sovereign Lord, that they will be responsible for their sin. 44:13 They will not come near me to serve me as priest, nor will they come near any of my holy things, the things which are most sacred. They will bear the shame of the abominable deeds they have committed. 44:14 Yet I will appoint them to keep charge of the temple, all of its service and all that will be done in it.

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

The vision of the Lord God filling a new temple was powerful, yet it was an as-yet unfulfilled event because it was conditioned upon a repentant people.

DISCUSS

How might the details of the temple have been convicting to the people?

REFLECT

The choice that the Levitical priests made in the past to sacrifice to false gods while in the Lord God’s temple meant that their options were to be limited in the new temple – they would not be allowed near to the “Holy of Holies”.

SHARE

When have you observed a situation where someone was reconciled but not fully restored as the result of something that they had done which prevented that restoration?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a situation in your life where a test to build you up is, due to your weaknesses, a potential temptation to sin in a way that could create some non-restorable losses for you.

ACT

Today I will humbly accept the warning of the Holy Spirit, I will ask a fellow believer to be my accountability and prayer partner, and I will take steps to remove myself as much as possible from the place that I have learned is a danger to my right-living.

Be Specific _____

Friday (Ezekiel 44:15-46)

The Levitical Priests

44:15 “But the Levitical priests, the descendants of Zadok who kept the charge of my sanctuary when the people of Israel went astray from me, will approach me to minister to me; they will stand before me to offer me the fat and the blood, declares the sovereign Lord. 44:16 They will enter my sanctuary, and approach my table to minister to me; they will keep my charge.

44:17 “When they enter the gates of the inner court, they must wear linen garments; they must not have any wool on them when they minister in the inner gates of the court and in the temple. 44:18 Linen turbans will be on their heads and linen undergarments will be around their waists; they must not bind themselves with anything that causes sweat. 44:19 When they go out to the outer court to the people, they must remove the garments they were ministering in, and place them in the holy chambers; they must put on other garments so that they will not transmit holiness to the people with their garments.

44:20 “They must not shave their heads nor let their hair grow long; they must only trim their heads. 44:21 No priest may drink wine when he enters the inner court. 44:22 They must not marry a widow or a divorcee, but they may marry a virgin from the house of Israel or a widow who is a priest’s widow. 44:23 Moreover, they will teach my people the difference between the holy and the common, and show them how to distinguish between the ceremonially unclean and the clean.

44:24 “In a controversy they will act as judges; they will judge according to my ordinances. They will keep my laws and my statutes regarding all my appointed festivals and will observe my Sabbaths.

44:25 “They must not come near a dead person or they will be defiled; however, for father, mother, son, daughter, brother or sister, they may defile themselves. 44:26 After a priest has become ceremonially clean, they must count off a period of seven days for him. 44:27 On the day he enters the sanctuary, into the inner court to serve in the sanctuary, he must offer his sin offering, declares the sovereign Lord.

44:28 “This will be their inheritance: I am their inheritance, and you must give them no property in Israel; I am their property. 44:29 They may eat the grain offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering, and every devoted thing in Israel will be theirs. 44:30 The first of all the first fruits and all

contributions of any kind will be for the priests; you will also give to the priest the first portion of your dough, so that a blessing may rest on your house. 44:31 The priests will not eat any bird or animal that has died a natural death or was torn to pieces by a wild animal.

The Lord's Portion of the Land

45:1 "When you allot the land as an inheritance, you will offer an allotment to the Lord, a holy portion from the land; the length will be eight and a quarter miles and the width three and one-third miles. This entire area will be holy. 45:2 Of this area a square 875 feet by 875 feet will be designated for the sanctuary, with 87½ feet set aside for its open space round about. 45:3 From this measured area you will measure a length of eight and a quarter miles and a width of three and one-third miles; in it will be the sanctuary, the most holy place. 45:4 It will be a holy portion of the land; it will be for the priests, the ministers of the sanctuary who approach the Lord to minister to him. It will be a place for their houses and a holy place for the sanctuary. 45:5 An area eight and a quarter miles in length and three and one-third miles in width will be for the Levites, who minister at the temple, as the place for the cities in which they will live.

45:6 "Alongside the portion set apart as the holy allotment, you will allot for the city an area one and two-thirds miles wide and eight and a quarter miles long; it will be for the whole house of Israel.

45:7 "For the prince there will be land on both sides of the holy allotment and the allotted city, alongside the holy allotment and the allotted city, on the west side and on the east side; it will be comparable in length to one of the portions, from the west border to the east border 45:8 of the land. This will be his property in Israel. My princes will no longer oppress my people, but the land will be allotted to the house of Israel according to their tribes.

45:9 "This is what the sovereign Lord says: Enough, you princes of Israel! Put away violence and destruction, and do what is just and right. Put an end to your evictions of my people, declares the sovereign Lord. 45:10 You must use just balances, a just dry measure (an ephah), and a just liquid measure (a bath). 45:11 The dry and liquid measures will be the same, the bath will contain a tenth of a homer, and the ephah a tenth of a homer; the homer will be the standard measure. 45:12 The shekel will be twenty gerahs. Sixty shekels will be a mina for you.

45:13 "This is the offering you must offer: a sixth of an ephah from a homer of wheat; a sixth of an ephah from a homer of barley, 45:14 and as the prescribed portion of olive oil, one tenth of a bath from each kor (which is ten baths or a homer, for ten baths make a homer); 45:15 and one sheep from each flock of two hundred, from the watered places of Israel, for a grain offering, burnt offering, and peace offering, to make atonement for them, declares the sovereign Lord. 45:16 All the people of the land will contribute to this offering for the prince of Israel. 45:17 It will be the duty of the prince to provide the burnt offerings, the grain offering, and the drink offering at festivals, on the new moons and Sabbaths,

at all the appointed feasts of the house of Israel; he will provide the sin offering, the grain offering, the burnt offering, and the peace offerings to make atonement for the house of Israel.

45:18 “This is what the sovereign Lord says: In the first month, on the first day of the month, you must take an unblemished young bull and purify the sanctuary. 45:19 The priest will take some of the blood of the sin offering and place it on the doorpost of the temple, on the four corners of the ledge of the altar, and on the doorpost of the gate of the inner court. 45:20 This is what you must do on the seventh day of the month for anyone who sins inadvertently or through ignorance; so you will make atonement for the temple.

45:21 “In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, you will celebrate the Passover, and for seven days bread made without yeast will be eaten. 45:22 On that day the prince will provide for himself and for all the people of the land a bull for a sin offering. 45:23 And during the seven days of the feast he will provide as a burnt offering to the Lord seven bulls and seven rams, all without blemish, on each of the seven days, and a male goat daily for a sin offering. 45:24 He will provide as a grain offering an ephah for each bull, an ephah for each ram, and a gallon of olive oil for each ephah of grain. 45:25 In the seventh month, on the fifteenth day of the month, at the feast, he will make the same provisions for the sin offering, burnt offering, and grain offering, and for the olive oil, for the seven days.

The Prince's Offerings

46:1 “This is what the sovereign Lord says: The gate of the inner court that faces east will be closed six working days, but on the Sabbath day it will be opened and on the day of the new moon it will be opened. 46:2 The prince will enter by way of the porch of the gate from the outside, and will stand by the doorpost of the gate. The priests will provide his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and he will bow down at the threshold of the gate and then go out. But the gate will not be closed until evening. 46:3 The people of the land will bow down at the entrance of that gate before the Lord on the Sabbaths and on the new moons. 46:4 The burnt offering which the prince will offer to the Lord on the Sabbath day will be six unblemished lambs and one unblemished ram. 46:5 The grain offering will be an ephah with the ram, and the grain offering with the lambs will be as much as he is able to give, and a gallon of olive oil with an ephah. 46:6 On the day of the new moon he will offer an unblemished young bull, and six lambs and a ram, all without blemish. 46:7 He will provide a grain offering: an ephah with the bull and an ephah with the ram, and with the lambs as much as he wishes, and a gallon of olive oil with each ephah of grain. 46:8 When the prince enters, he will come by way of the porch of the gate and will go out the same way.

46:9 “When the people of the land come before the Lord at the appointed feasts, whoever enters by way of the north gate to worship will go out by way of the south gate; whoever enters by way of the south gate will go out by way of the north gate. No one will return by way of the gate they entered but

will go out straight ahead. 46:10 When they come in, the prince will come in with them, and when they go out, he will go out.

46:11 “At the festivals and at the appointed feasts the grain offering will be an ephah with the bull and an ephah with the ram, and with the lambs as much as one is able, and a gallon of olive oil with each ephah of grain. 46:12 When the prince provides a freewill offering, a burnt offering, or peace offerings as a voluntary offering to the Lord, the gate facing east will be opened for him, and he will provide his burnt offering and his peace offerings just as he did on the Sabbath. Then he will go out, and the gate will be closed after he goes out.

46:13 “You will provide a lamb a year old without blemish for a burnt offering daily to the Lord; morning by morning he will provide it. 46:14 And you will provide a grain offering with it morning by morning, a sixth of an ephah, and a third of a gallon of olive oil to moisten the choice flour, as a grain offering to the Lord; this is a perpetual statute. 46:15 Thus they will provide the lamb, the grain offering, and the olive oil morning by morning, as a perpetual burnt offering.

46:16 “This is what the sovereign Lord says: If the prince should give a gift to one of his sons as his inheritance, it will belong to his sons, it is their property by inheritance. 46:17 But if he gives a gift from his inheritance to one of his servants, it will be his until the year of liberty; then it will revert to the prince. His inheritance will only remain with his sons. 46:18 The prince will not take away any of the people’s inheritance by oppressively removing them from their property. He will give his sons an inheritance from his own possessions so that my people will not be scattered, each from his own property.”

46:19 Then he brought me through the entrance, which was at the side of the gate, into the holy chambers for the priests which faced north. There I saw a place at the extreme western end. 46:20 He said to me, “This is the place where the priests will boil the guilt offering and the sin offering, and where they will bake the grain offering, so that they do not bring them out to the outer court to transmit holiness to the people.”

46:21 Then he brought me out to the outer court and led me past the four corners of the court, and I noticed that in every corner of the court there was a court. 46:22 In the four corners of the court were small courts, 70 feet in length and 52½ feet in width; the four were all the same size. 46:23 There was a row of masonry around each of the four courts, and places for boiling offerings were made under the rows all around. 46:24 Then he said to me, “These are the houses for boiling, where the ministers of the temple boil the sacrifices of the people.”

PRAYER

Lord, Your new order provided for a higher level of boundaries so as to cause priests and leaders and all of the people to rely upon You and to be humble and just before one-another. May I recognize this as Your desire for Your children even today.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Ezekiel delivered the Lord God's teaching for the care of the Levitical priests "This will be their inheritance: I am their inheritance, and you must give them no property in Israel; I am their property. They may eat the grain offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering, and every devoted thing in Israel will be theirs. The first of all the first fruits and all contributions of any kind will be for the priests; you will also give to the priest the first portion of your dough, so that a blessing may rest on your house ... "When you allot the land as an inheritance, you will offer an allotment to the Lord, a holy portion from the land; the length will be eight and a quarter miles and the width three and one-third miles. This entire area will be holy ... you will measure a length of eight and a quarter miles and a width of three and one-third miles; in it will be the sanctuary, the most holy place. It will be a holy portion of the land; it will be for the priests, the ministers of the sanctuary who approach the Lord to minister to him. It will be a place for their houses and a holy place for the sanctuary. An area eight and a quarter miles in length and three and one-third miles in width will be for the Levites, who minister at the temple, as the place for the cities in which they will live.

He then was show the area for the people "Alongside the portion set apart as the holy allotment, you will allot for the city an area one and two-thirds miles wide and eight and a quarter miles long; it will be for the whole house of Israel."

Ezekiel was shown that "the prince" would receive a fixed allotment of land "For the prince there will be land on both sides of the holy allotment and the allotted city, alongside the holy allotment and the allotted city, on the west side and on the east side; it will be comparable in length to one of the portions, from the west border to the east border of the land. This will be his property in Israel. My princes will no longer oppress my people, but the land will be allotted to the house of Israel according to their tribes."

He then was shown that the prince would travel to and from gatherings with the people, all together in one gate and out another, without separation or reversed direction "When the people of the land come before the Lord at the appointed feasts, whoever enters by way of the north gate to worship will go out by way of the south gate; whoever enters by way of the south gate will go out by way of the north gate. No one will return by way of the gate they entered but will go out straight ahead. When they come in, the prince will come in with them, and when they go out, he will go out."

Just as the Levites had a God-ordained and provided inheritance and provision, so did the prince and his family, and it was to be preserved generation to generation "This is what the sovereign Lord says:

If the prince should give a gift to one of his sons as his inheritance, it will belong to his sons, it is their property by inheritance. But if he gives a gift from his inheritance to one of his servants, it will be his until the year of liberty; then it will revert to the prince. His inheritance will only remain with his sons. The prince will not take away any of the people's inheritance by oppressively removing them from their property. He will give his sons an inheritance from his own possessions so that my people will not be scattered, each from his own property.”

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

Because the Levitical priests had, in the past, made greedy and pagan choices the new statutes for them created a much more God-dependent environment.

DISCUSS

Why would it be important that a prince be allowed to temporarily share his inheritance with a non-member of his family but that said gift would have to return to the family after a time?

REFLECT

“The prince” received a fixed allotment of land and no more as a way to keep him from greedily taking more and more for himself.

SHARE

When have you found yourself completely dependent on the Lord God?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a boundary He has created in your life in order to protect both you and others.

ACT

Today I will prayerfully discern from the Holy Spirit where He has established a boundary in my life and I will be intentional about honoring it. The boundary may be in incurring debt or risk-taking behavior, it may be listening to secular music or watching certain types of movies, it may be too much concern for the approval by others due to my physical appearance or about my possessions or titles, or it may be an unteachable spirit.

Saturday (Ezekiel 47-48)

Water from the Temple

47:1 Then he brought me back to the entrance of the temple. I noticed that water was flowing from under the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east). The water was flowing down from under the right side of the temple, from south of the altar. 47:2 He led me out by way of the north gate and brought me around the outside of the outer gate that faces toward the east; I noticed that the water was trickling out from the south side.

47:3 When the man went out toward the east with a measuring line in his hand, he measured 1,750 feet, and then he led me through water, which was ankle deep. 47:4 Again he measured 1,750 feet and led me through the water, which was now knee deep. Once more he measured 1,750 feet and led me through the water, which was waist deep. 47:5 Again he measured 1,750 feet and it was a river I could not cross, for the water had risen; it was deep enough to swim in, a river that could not be crossed. 47:6 He said to me, "Son of man, have you seen this?"

Then he led me back to the bank of the river. 47:7 When I had returned, I noticed a vast number of trees on the banks of the river, on both sides. 47:8 He said to me, "These waters go out toward the eastern region and flow down into the Arabah; when they enter the Dead Sea, where the sea is stagnant, the waters become fresh. 47:9 Every living creature which swarms where the river flows will live; there will be many fish, for these waters flow there. It will become fresh and everything will live where the river flows. 47:10 Fishermen will stand beside it; from Engedi to En-eglaim they will spread nets. They will catch many kinds of fish, like the fish of the Great Sea. 47:11 But its swamps and its marshes will not become fresh; they will remain salty. 47:12 On both sides of the river's banks, every kind of tree will grow for food. Their leaves will not wither nor will their fruit fail, but they will bear fruit every month, because their water source flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing."

Boundaries for the Land

47:13 This is what the sovereign Lord says: "Here are the borders you will observe as you allot the land to the twelve tribes of Israel. (Joseph will have two portions.) 47:14 You must divide it equally just as I vowed to give it to your forefathers; this land will be assigned as your inheritance.

47:15 "This will be the border of the land: On the north side, from the Great Sea by way of Hethlon to the entrance of Zedad; 47:16 Hamath, Berothah, Sibraim, which is between the border of Damascus and the border of Hamath, as far as Hazer-hattikon, which is on the border of Hauran. 47:17 The border will run from the sea to Hazar-enan, at the border of Damascus, and on the north is the border

of Hamath. This is the north side. 47:18 On the east side, between Hauran and Damascus, and between Gilead and the land of Israel, will be the Jordan. You will measure from the border to the eastern sea. This is the east side. 47:19 On the south side it will run from Tamar to the waters of Meribath Kadesh, the river, to the Great Sea. This is the south side. 47:20 On the west side the Great Sea will be the boundary to a point opposite Lebo-hamath. This is the west side.

47:21 “This is how you will divide this land for yourselves among the tribes of Israel. 47:22 You must allot it as an inheritance among yourselves and for the foreigners who reside among you, who have fathered sons among you. You must treat them as native-born among the people of Israel; they will be allotted an inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel. 47:23 In whatever tribe the foreigner resides, there you will give him his inheritance,” declares the sovereign Lord.

The Tribal Portions

48:1 “These are the names of the tribes: From the northern end beside the road of Hethlon to Lebo-hamath, as far as Hazar-enan (which is on the border of Damascus, toward the north beside Hamath), extending from the east side to the west, Dan will have one portion. 48:2 Next to the border of Dan, from the east side to the west, Asher will have one portion. 48:3 Next to the border of Asher from the east side to the west, Naphtali will have one portion. 48:4 Next to the border of Naphtali from the east side to the west, Manasseh will have one portion. 48:5 Next to the border of Manasseh from the east side to the west, Ephraim will have one portion. 48:6 Next to the border of Ephraim from the east side to the west, Reuben will have one portion. 48:7 Next to the border of Reuben from the east side to the west, Judah will have one portion.

48:8 “Next to the border of Judah from the east side to the west will be the allotment you must set apart. It is to be eight and a quarter miles wide, and the same length as one of the tribal portions, from the east side to the west; the sanctuary will be in the middle of it. 48:9 The allotment you set apart to the Lord will be eight and a quarter miles in length and three and one-third miles in width. 48:10 These will be the allotments for the holy portion: for the priests, toward the north eight and a quarter miles in length, toward the west three and one-third miles in width, toward the east three and one-third miles in width, and toward the south eight and a quarter miles in length; the sanctuary of the Lord will be in the middle. 48:11 This will be for the priests who are set apart from the descendants of Zadok who kept my charge and did not go astray when the people of Israel strayed off, like the Levites did. 48:12 It will be their portion from the allotment of the land, a most holy place, next to the border of the Levites.

48:13 “Alongside the border of the priests, the Levites will have an allotment eight and a quarter miles in length and three and one-third miles in width. The whole length will be eight and a quarter miles and the width three and one-third miles. 48:14 They must not sell or exchange any of it; they must not transfer this choice portion of land, for it is set apart to the Lord.

48:15 “The remainder, one and two-thirds miles in width and eight and a quarter miles in length, will be for common use by the city, for houses and for open space. The city will be in the middle of it; 48:16 these will be its measurements: The north side will be one and one-half miles, the south side one and one-half miles, the east side one and one-half miles, and the west side one and one-half miles. 48:17 The city will have open spaces: On the north there will be 437½ feet, on the south 437½ feet, on the east 437½ feet, and on the west 437½ feet. 48:18 The remainder of the length alongside the holy allotment will be three and one-third miles to the east and three and one-third miles toward the west, and it will be beside the holy allotment. Its produce will be for food for the workers of the city. 48:19 The workers of the city from all the tribes of Israel will cultivate it. 48:20 The whole allotment will be eight and a quarter miles square, you must set apart the holy allotment with the possession of the city.

48:21 “The rest, on both sides of the holy allotment and the property of the city, will belong to the prince. Extending from the eight and a quarter miles of the holy allotment to the east border, and westward from the eight and a quarter miles to the west border, alongside the portions, it will belong to the prince. The holy allotment and the sanctuary of the temple will be in the middle of it. 48:22 The property of the Levites and of the city will be in the middle of that which belongs to the prince. The portion between the border of Judah and the border of Benjamin will be for the prince.

48:23 “As for the rest of the tribes: From the east side to the west side, Benjamin will have one portion. 48:24 Next to the border of Benjamin, from the east side to the west side, Simeon will have one portion. 48:25 Next to the border of Simeon, from the east side to the west side, Issachar will have one portion. 48:26 Next to the border of Issachar, from the east side to the west side, Zebulun will have one portion. 48:27 Next to the border of Zebulun, from the east side to the west side, Gad will have one portion. 48:28 Next to the border of Gad, at the south side, the border will run from Tamar to the waters of Meribath Kadesh, to the Stream of Egypt and on to the Great Sea. 48:29 This is the land which you will allot to the tribes of Israel, and these are their portions, declares the sovereign Lord.

48:30 “These are the exits of the city: On the north side, one and one-half miles by measure, 48:31 the gates of the city will be named for the tribes of Israel; there will be three gates to the north: one gate for Reuben, one gate for Judah, and one gate for Levi. (48:32) On the east side, one and one-half miles in length, there will be three gates: one gate for Joseph, one gate for Benjamin, and one gate for Dan. (48:33) On the south side, one and one-half miles by measure, there will be three gates: one gate for Simeon, one gate for Issachar, and one gate for Zebulun. 48:34 On the west side, one and one-half miles in length, there will be three gates: one gate for Gad, one gate for Asher, and one gate for Naphtali. 48:35 The circumference of the city will be six miles. The name of the city from that day forward will be: “The Lord Is There.”

PRAYER

Lord, You are the flowing water that brings blessing in this world and eternal life in Heaven, and anything not directly connected to You will not flourish. May I draw near to You and be blessed and nourished every day.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Ezekiel was shown “These waters go out toward the eastern region and flow down into the Arabah; when they enter the Dead Sea, where the sea is stagnant, the waters become fresh ... But its swamps and its marshes will not become fresh; they will remain salty. On both sides of the river’s banks, every kind of tree will grow for food. Their leaves will not wither nor will their fruit fail, but they will bear fruit every month, because their water source flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing.”

He heard that this is what the sovereign Lord says: “Here are the borders you will observe as you allot the land to the twelve tribes of Israel. (Joseph will have two portions.) You must divide it equally just as I vowed to give it to your forefathers; this land will be assigned as your inheritance ... “This is how you will divide this land for yourselves among the tribes of Israel. You must allot it as an inheritance among yourselves and for the foreigners who reside among you, who have fathered sons among you. You must treat them as native-born among the people of Israel; they will be allotted an inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel. In whatever tribe the foreigner resides, there you will give him his inheritance,” declares the sovereign Lord.

Ezekiel received this final detail “The circumference of the city will be six miles. The name of the city from that day forward will be: “The Lord Is There.””

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

The water that was to flow from the new temple would bring life to all that came in immediate contact with it; however, that which was merely close yet not immersed would not benefit.

DISCUSS

How amazing would it have been to hear that the planned new city would be called “The Lord Is There.”?

REFLECT

A permanent place among Israel would be “foreigners” (gentiles) who had been folded-into their family.

SHARE

When have you observed someone - just beyond a genuine surrender to the Lordship of Christ - who was suffering and wilted while another who had fully surrendered demonstrated a sense of joy and of a renewed life?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you someone who is close but not yet truly saved.

ACT

Today I will pray with special earnest for the one who needs to take that final step, and if the Holy Spirit guides, I will encourage them directly.

Be Specific _____

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Note 2: When NET text is quoted in commentary and discussion all pronouns referring to God are capitalized, though they are lower-case in the original NET text.

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