



Study Guide: Ezekiel – Chapter 47

Study Guide: Ezekiel – Chapter 47

This study guide provides an educational overview of Ezekiel Chapter 47 using a verse-by-verse structure, theological context, and application-oriented insights grounded in Scripture.

Introduction

Ezekiel chapter 47 presents a vivid and hopeful vision of restoration centered on a life-giving river flowing from the temple. This chapter shifts the focus from judgment and exile to renewal and blessing, offering a powerful image of God's presence bringing healing and abundance. As part of Ezekiel's larger temple vision, this chapter contributes a crucial element to the book's flow by portraying how divine life flows outward to transform the land and its people. Readers should watch for the symbolic significance of the water's increasing depth and the detailed description of the river's impact on the environment and community.

Context

Ezekiel 47 is situated within the final section of Ezekiel (chapters 40–48), which focuses on the vision of a restored temple, land, and people after the exile. The prophet Ezekiel, speaking as a priest and watchman during the Babylonian captivity, receives this vision from God while in exile. The chapter follows the detailed measurements and descriptions of the new temple in chapter 40–46 and precedes the allotment of the land in chapter 48. The vision reflects covenantal restoration promises, where God's presence returns to dwell with His people, reversing the consequences of Israel's disobedience. Ezekiel is the key speaker, conveying God's revelation to a discouraged community longing for hope and renewal.

Outline

The chapter opens with Ezekiel observing water flowing from beneath the temple threshold, beginning as a trickle and growing into a deep river. This initial section (verses 1–5) emphasizes the source and growth of the river. The next section (verses 6–12) describes the river's life-giving effects on the surrounding wilderness, transforming barren land into a fertile and abundant environment teeming with fish and trees. Finally, the



chapter concludes (verses 13–23) with instructions for dividing the land among the twelve tribes of Israel, highlighting the river as a central feature of the restored inheritance. The chapter ends with a note on the eastern border, completing the vision of the renewed land.

Verse-by-Verse Study

Verses 1–3: Ezekiel sees water flowing from under the temple’s threshold toward the east, initially ankle-deep, then knee-deep, and eventually deep enough to swim in. This gradual increase symbolizes the expanding influence of God’s presence, starting small but growing to encompass and transform.

Verses 4–5: The water flows eastward into the Arabah, a desert valley, and the river’s depth continues to increase, indicating unstoppable divine provision and blessing moving into desolate places.

Verses 6–8: The river brings life wherever it flows. Ezekiel is told to measure the river’s width and depth, underscoring the tangible reality of God’s restorative power. The water heals the Dead Sea, making its waters fresh and alive, a profound image of transformation.

Verses 9–10: The river supports abundant fish life, attracting fishermen from many nations, symbolizing the extension of God’s blessing beyond Israel to the nations. The riverbanks become lush with trees whose leaves do not wither and whose fruit provides healing.

Verses 11–12: The trees along the river serve both ecological and symbolic functions, representing continuous life and health. Their fruit and leaves have healing properties, emphasizing the restorative nature of God’s presence.

Verses 13–21: God commands Ezekiel to apportion the land among the twelve tribes of Israel, using the river as a central reference point. This section details the boundaries and allotments, symbolizing the reestablishment of Israel’s covenant inheritance, now centered around the life-giving presence of God.

Verses 22–23: The chapter closes with a description of the eastern border, completing the vision of the renewed land. The emphasis on precise borders reflects God’s order and faithfulness in restoring His people.



Key Themes

The flowing water from the temple symbolizes the life-giving presence of God, which grows from a small source to a mighty river, illustrating the expansive power of divine blessing. Restoration is a central theme, as barren land becomes fertile and lifeless waters are healed. The river's ability to attract fish and support trees with healing fruit points to the inclusivity of God's blessing extending beyond Israel to the nations. The chapter also highlights covenant faithfulness through the detailed land allotment, underscoring God's commitment to His promises. Lastly, the theme of divine order is evident in the precise measurements and boundaries, reflecting God's sovereign control over restoration.

Cross-References

Psalm 46:4 speaks of a river whose streams make glad the city of God, paralleling the life-giving water flowing from the temple in Ezekiel 47. This connection highlights God's presence as a source of joy and sustenance. Revelation 22:1-2 describes the river of the water of life flowing from God's throne, with trees bearing healing leaves, directly echoing Ezekiel's vision and emphasizing its eschatological fulfillment. Joel 3:18 also mentions a river flowing from Jerusalem bringing life to the desert, reinforcing the prophetic motif of restoration through divine presence. These cross-references deepen understanding of the river as a symbol of God's ongoing and future work of renewal.

Application

Modern disciples can draw encouragement from Ezekiel 47's vision of God's presence bringing renewal even in the most barren circumstances. The gradual increase of the river reminds believers that spiritual growth and impact often start small but can expand powerfully through God's work. The healing and life-giving nature of the river challenges Christians to be conduits of God's grace and restoration in their communities. The inclusive reach of the river encourages outreach beyond familiar boundaries, embodying the gospel's call to all nations. Finally, the detailed land allotment invites reflection on God's order and faithfulness, prompting trust in His promises amid uncertainty.

Summary

Ezekiel 47 offers a compelling vision of restoration centered on a river flowing from the temple, symbolizing God's life-giving presence expanding from a small source to a mighty force that transforms barren land into a fertile, healing environment. The chapter's



detailed description of the river's growth, its ecological impact, and the renewed land allotment underscores themes of divine blessing, covenant faithfulness, and order. This vision not only provides hope for Israel's future but also points forward to the ultimate renewal found in God's eternal kingdom, inviting believers to participate in and anticipate the ongoing work of restoration.