

Ezekiel 48:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And for them, even for the priests, shall be this holy oblation; toward the north five and twenty thousand in length, and toward the west ten thousand in breadth, and toward the east ten thousand in breadth, and toward the south five and twenty thousand in length: and the sanctuary of the LORD shall be in the midst thereof.

Analysis

And for them, even for the priests, shall be this holy oblation; toward the north five and twenty thousand in length, and toward the west ten thousand in breadth, and toward the east ten thousand in breadth, and toward the south five and twenty thousand in length: and the sanctuary of the LORD shall be in the midst thereof. This verse specifies that the priestly portion surrounds the sanctuary. The repetition of dimensions with directional markers (north, west, east, south) emphasizes the sanctuary's central position within the priests' allotment.

The phrase *tērûmat-haqqodeš* (תְּרוּמַת-הָקֵדֶשׁ, "holy oblation") intensifies the previous verse's *tērûmâ*—this isn't merely dedicated land but **holy dedicated land**, sacred at the highest level. The priests' inheritance isn't tribal territory but proximity to God's presence. "**The sanctuary of the LORD shall be in the midst thereof**" reiterates the central point: priestly identity and calling center entirely on God's dwelling place.

This arrangement fulfills Numbers 3:38 where the Levites camped around the tabernacle, forming a protective barrier between God's holiness and the camp. The

priests' geographic encirclement of the sanctuary symbolizes their mediatorial role. In the New Covenant, all believers are priests (1 Peter 2:9, Revelation 1:6), and our lives should "surround" Christ—organized around His presence, protective of His honor, devoted to His service. The sanctuary's centrality in priestly inheritance teaches that **God Himself is the inheritance of those who serve Him** (Numbers 18:20, Psalm 16:5).

Historical Context

Under the original tribal allotments, Levites received no territorial inheritance but rather 48 cities scattered among the tribes (Numbers 35:1-8, Joshua 21). This dispersion enabled teaching and ministry throughout Israel but also made Levites economically vulnerable and sometimes spiritually compromised (Judges 17-18, Malachi 2:1-9).

Ezekiel's vision concentrates priests around the sanctuary in permanent, secure territory. This reflects the ideal that those devoted to God's service should be provided for and positioned for effective ministry. The New Testament principle that "those who preach the gospel should live by the gospel" (1 Corinthians 9:14) echoes this provision for priests. The central location ensured priests weren't marginalized but integral to national life—a corrective to Israel's historical tendency to neglect and despise priests (1 Samuel 2:12-17, 29-30).

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does the priests' inheritance being proximity to God rather than productive land challenge modern definitions of blessing and success?
2. In what ways should believers' lives be organized around and protective of God's presence rather than peripheral religious activities?

Interlinear Text

לְקֹדֶשׁ תְּרֻומָתְךָ הִי וְלֹא לָהּ
oblation shall be this holy And for them even for the priests
H428 H1961 H8641 H6944 H3548

אֶלָף וְשָׁרֵם קְמַשׁ הִיא כִּפְרָנִים
and twenty thousand in length and toward the west
H505 H6242 H2568 H3220

אֶלָף עֶשֶׂר רְתָתְךָ רְכָב
and toward the east in breadth ten
H505 H6235 H7341 H6235

אֶלָף וְשָׁרֵם קְמַשׁ הִיא כִּפְרָנִים
and twenty thousand in length five
H505 H6242 H2568 H753

בְּתוּךְ הַמִּקְדָּשׁ יְהוָה הִי
shall be in the midst of the LORD and the sanctuary
H8432 H3068 H4720 H1961

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 45:4 (Holy): The holy portion of the land shall be for the priests the ministers of the sanctuary, which shall come near to minister unto the LORD: and it shall be a place for their houses, and an holy place for the sanctuary.

Ezekiel 44:28 (Parallel theme): And it shall be unto them for an inheritance: I am their inheritance: and ye shall give them no possession in Israel: I am their possession.

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