

Ezekiel 48:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the five thousand, that are left in the breadth over against the five and twenty thousand, shall be a profane place for the city, for dwelling, and for suburbs: and the city shall be in the midst thereof.

Analysis

The five thousand, that are left...shall be a profane place for the city—the term **profane** (לְחֵלָה, chol) means "common" or "secular," not defiled but simply non-sacred. This distinction creates balanced theology: not all space is temple-holy, yet common life adjacent to sacred space receives dignity and purpose.

For dwelling, and for suburbs (לְמוֹשָׁב וּלְמִגְרָשׁ, le-moshav u-le-migrash)—residential areas with open lands for agriculture, showing God's concern for ordinary human needs alongside sacred worship. **The city shall be in the midst thereof**—centrally located, the city serves those who minister in the temple, creating integrated sacred-secular community rather than isolated monasticism.

Historical Context

Unlike ancient Near Eastern temple cities where priests monopolized resources, Ezekiel's vision includes common people serving the sanctuary community. The "profane" designation doesn't diminish but dignifies ordinary labor supporting sacred service. Archaeological evidence from Jerusalem shows the ancient city intermingled sacred and domestic spaces without formal zoning.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 – Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does the distinction between "holy" and "common" (not "profane" as defiled) shape your understanding of secular work?
2. What does centralized planning around the sanctuary teach about orienting all of life toward worship?

Interlinear Text

למֹשֶׁב בְּעָיר הַוְאָ קָל יְשָׁרִים אֶלְף וְשָׁנִים and twenty thousand shall be a profane H1931 and the city H5892 for dwelling H4186

בתוכה:	בְּעֵיר	וּבְבָתָה	וְלִמְגַבֵּשׁ	שׁ
and for suburbs	H1961	and the city	shall be in the midst	

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 45:6 (Parallel theme): And ye shall appoint the possession of the city five thousand broad, and five and twenty thousand long, over against the oblation of the holy portion: it shall be for the whole house of Israel.

Ezekiel 42:20 (Parallel theme): He measured it by the four sides: it had a wall round about, five hundred reeds long, and five hundred broad, to make a separation between the sanctuary and the profane place.

