

# Ezekiel 48:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the suburbs of the city shall be toward the north two hundred and fifty, and toward the south two hundred and fifty, and toward the east two hundred and fifty, and toward the west two hundred and fifty.

## Analysis

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**The suburbs of the city** (שְׁבָעָה, migrash)—open lands surrounding the city, measuring 250 cubits on each side, provided pasture and agricultural space. Levitical cities similarly had migrash zones (Numbers 35:2-5), blending urban and agrarian life while preventing overcrowding.

The four-directional description—**toward the north...south...east...west**—repeats the comprehensive spatial pattern, ensuring balanced development without privileging one direction. This egalitarian design prevents the economic stratification where one city quarter becomes elite while others decay, reflecting God's justice extending to urban planning itself. The 250-cubit buffer (approximately 375 feet) creates breathing room between sacred center and productive periphery.

## Historical Context

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Ancient cities often lacked planned green space, leading to unsanitary conditions. The Levitical cities' migrash provision (Numbers 35) established precedent for open lands supporting urban populations. Archaeological evidence from Iron Age Israelite cities shows some preserved open areas, though economic pressure often

led to encroachment—a problem Ezekiel's vision prevents through fixed measurements.

## Related Passages

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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

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1. How does God's concern for sustainable city planning challenge modern urban sprawl and environmental exploitation?
2. What does the balanced four-directional development teach about equity and justice in community design?

## Interlinear Text

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סְמֵשׁ יָם  
and fifty  
H2572

צָפֵן וְנֶה  
shall be toward the north  
H6828

לְעִיר  
of the city  
H5892

מִגְּרָשׁ  
and the suburbs  
H4054

וּפְנֵי הַ  
and toward the north  
H1961

וּמִאֵתִים:  
and toward the south  
H5045

צָמֵשׁ יָם  
and fifty  
H2572

וּמִאֵתִים:  
and toward the east  
H6921

יְצָדֵן יְמָה  
two hundred  
H3967

וּמִאֵתִים:  
and toward the west  
H3220

צָמֵשׁ יָם  
and fifty  
H2572

וּמִאֵתִים:  
two hundred  
H3967

וּמִאֵתִים:  
and fifty  
H2572

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