

# Ezekiel 48:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And by the border of Dan, from the east side unto the west side, a portion for Asher.

## Analysis

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**And by the border of Dan, from the east side unto the west side, a portion for Asher.** Ezekiel's vision of tribal land redistribution begins with Dan (northernmost) then moves south to Asher. The Hebrew *gēvul* (גָּבוּל, "border") emphasizes defined boundaries in the restored land. Each tribe receives equal portions running east-to-west across the entire breadth—radically different from Joshua's historical allotments where tribes received irregular territories of vastly different sizes.

This geographic equality signals theological transformation. In Joshua's conquest, Dan originally received coastal territory but migrated north (Judges 18) after failing to drive out inhabitants. Here, Dan receives first position in the ideal distribution despite being least among the tribes and notorious for early idolatry (Judges 18:30-31). Asher, historically confined to the northern coast, now receives a full east-west portion. **The symmetrical allotment symbolizes restored covenant relationship where God's grace, not tribal merit or historical failure, determines inheritance.**

The reordering of tribes (Dan, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim, Reuben, Judah) differs from both birth order and historical prominence. This reshuffling emphasizes divine sovereignty in the eschatological restoration—God reorders according to His purposes, not human tradition. The equal portions prefigure Revelation's vision where twelve tribes and twelve apostles form foundations of the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:12-14).

## Historical Context

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Ezekiel prophesied this vision around 573 BC, during Babylonian exile when the land was desolate and tribal identities fragmented. The northern kingdom (including Dan, Asher, Naphtali) had been destroyed by Assyria in 722 BC, and these tribes were scattered among the nations. By Ezekiel's time, the "ten lost tribes" were effectively dissolved as distinct entities.

Joshua's original land distribution (Joshua 13-21) reflected military conquest realities, geographic features, and tribal population sizes. Dan's relocation northward and Asher's incomplete conquest showed the gap between promise and historical reality. Ezekiel's vision presents an idealized future where these failures are overcome, and every tribe receives full inheritance regardless of past unfaithfulness. Post-exilic return saw only Judah, Benjamin, and Levites significantly restored; full tribal restoration remains eschatological.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does God's reordering of tribal inheritance challenge human systems of merit and hierarchy?
2. What does equal inheritance for all tribes teach about grace superseding performance in God's kingdom?

## Interlinear Text

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וְעַל־בְּorder אֶת־דָּן מִמֶּastָּה עַד־

H5921 And by the border of Dan side H6285

H1366

H1835

H6285

פָּאַת עַד

from the east

H5704

side

H6285

אֶשְׁר־אֶת־פָּתָה

unto the west portion for Asher a

H3220

H836

H259

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