

Ezekiel 48:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the residue shall be for the prince, on the one side and on the other of the holy oblation, and of the possession of the city, over against the five and twenty thousand of the oblation toward the east border, and westward over against the five and twenty thousand toward the west border, over against the portions for the prince: and it shall be the holy oblation; and the sanctuary of the house shall be in the midst thereof.

Analysis

The residue shall be for the prince—the Davidic ruler (nasi, prince/leader) receives land on both sides of the sacred square, extending east to the Jordan and west to the Mediterranean. Unlike monarchic land-grabbing (1 Kings 21, Ahab seizing Naboth's vineyard), this prince's portion is divinely prescribed, preventing royal encroachment on sacred space.

The sanctuary of the house shall be in the midst thereof—the climactic phrase centers everything on God's dwelling. Prince, priests, Levites, city, and agricultural lands all orient around the sanctuary, establishing theocentric geography where God's presence—not human power—defines the center. This corrects the exilic crisis: God didn't lose His sanctuary; He temporarily withdrew it. Here He returns, enthroned at Israel's heart, with all other realities properly ordered around His glory.

Historical Context

Pre-exilic kings often treated the temple as personal chapel (2 Kings 16:10-18, Ahaz remodeling the altar). Ezekiel 43:7-8 condemns kings who built palaces adjoining the temple, defiling it. This vision separates royal residence from sanctuary while still providing princely territory—the proper balance between honoring Davidic covenant (2 Samuel 7) and preventing royal presumption.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

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

1. How does the prince receiving prescribed (not seized) land challenge human tendencies to grasp power and accumulate possessions?
2. What does the sanctuary "in the midst" teach about Christ as the center around whom all life—personal, communal, political—must orient?

Interlinear Text

וְהִנּוּתָּ ר	לְנֹשֶׁת יֶא	מִן־הָ	וּמִן־הָ	תְּרוּמָה ת		
And the residue	for the prince	H2088	H2088	oblation		
H3498	H5387			H8641		
וְהָיָה דָשׁ	וּלְאֻחֲזֵי ת	הָעִיר	אֶל	פָּנָיו		
and it shall be the holy	and of the possession	of the city	H413	over against		
H6944	H272	H5892		H6440		
הַחֲמִשָּׁה	וְעֶשְׂרִים	אֶלְפֵי	תְּרוּמָה ת	עַד	גֹּבֶל	וְלַעֲרֹב
the five	and twenty	thousand	oblation	H5704	border	toward the east
H2568	H6242	H505	H8641		H1366	H6921
וְלַעֲרֹב	עַל	אֶלְפֵי	וְעֶשְׂרִים	הַחֲמִשָּׁה	פָּנָיו	עַל
and westward	H5921	over against	the five	and twenty	thousand	H5921
H3220		H6440	H2568	H6242	H505	border
						H1366
וְלַעֲרֹב	לְעֵמֶת ת	חֲלָקֵי	לְנֹשֶׁת יֶא	תְּרוּמָה ת	וְהִיְתָה	
and westward	over against	the portions	for the prince	H1961	oblation	
H3220	H5980	H2506	H5387		H8641	
וְהָיָה דָשׁ	וּמִקְדָּשׁ	הַבַּיִת	בְּתוֹכָהּ:			
and it shall be the holy	and the sanctuary	of the house	shall be in the midst			
H6944	H4720	H1004	H8432			

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 48:22 (Parallel theme): Moreover from the possession of the Levites, and from the possession of the city, being in the midst of that which is the prince's, between the border of Judah and the border of Benjamin, shall be for the prince.