

**Message #52****Ezekiel 47:13-48:35**

What no one, who honestly reads the Bible, can deny is that there are multiple passages that predict Israel will one day have a specific land.

In fact, in the Bible there are at least 170 specific references to Israel inheriting a specific land. There are 55 references that say this promise of a land to Israel is by an oath of God. There are 12 references that specifically say the land promises are everlasting.

That promise started with Abraham in Genesis 12 and that theme may be tracked all through the Bible (i.e. Ezek. 20:6). Dr. Walvoord said, “God promised Abraham (cf. Gen. 13:14-17; 15:17-21) and his descendants the land of Palestine and that promise has never been rescinded” (*Ezekiel*, p. 1315).

**It is critical that God give Israel that land because it clearly and tangibly shows that God is a God who is true to His promises and a God who is true to His Word.** God is faithful to His Word. God can be trusted to do what He says He will do and the fulfillment of this amazing prophecy is proof of that.

**IN THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM THERE WILL BE SPECIFIC LAND BOUNDARIES FOR THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL AND IN THE MIDDLE OF THE LAND BOUNDARIES WILL BE A PORTION FOR FOREIGNERS.**

Back in the days of Joshua, when the twelve tribes of Israel were allotted land, the boundaries varied. Some land boundaries were larger than others. In this division of land in the Millennium, the boundaries are all equal.

Keep in mind that when Ezekiel made this prediction, Israel was not even in her land. She was in captivity in Babylon. So this makes this prediction even more amazing.

**PROPHETIC MESSAGE #1 – God gives His land instructions. **47:13-14****

In **verses 13-14**, God gives His instructions concerning the land. Notice the end of **verse 14**, God is giving this land to Israel because He swore an oath that He would to that:

**Instruction #1** - There are to be specific boundary divisions of land among the twelve tribes of Israel. **47:13**

A. C. Gaebelein said no intelligent reader can deny the fact that this does refer to literal land and the literal tribes of Israel (*Ezekiel*, p. 336).

**Instruction #2** - The divisions of the land are to be equal inheritance divisions. **47:14**

There will be equal divisions for the twelve tribes of Israel.

**PROPHETIC MESSAGE #2 – God gives his specific boundary instructions. 47:15-20**

In **verses 15-20** God gives the boundaries of the land divisions. The area is similar although not identical to the land allotment in Numbers 34:1-12. What is missing from the land is the territory located east of the Jordan River. That apparently is no longer considered to be part of this land allotment. Originally that area was home to Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

**(Boundary #1) - The northern boundary. 47:15-17**

The northern boundary of the land will run east from the Mediterranean Sea (Great Sea) (**v. 15**). The boundary line will go by way of Hethlon, which location is uncertain.

Many believe that Hethlon is the modern town of Heitela, a town N.E. of Tripoli in modern day Lebanon.

Zedad is probably Sadad, about 25 miles north of Damascus.

Hamath has been identified as a city in modern day Syria.

Berothah, Sibraim are located between Damascus and the Syrian border.

Hazer-hatticon is modern day Al-Qaryatayn, a desert oasis N.E. of Damascus.

So the northern boundary starts at the Mediterranean Sea and moves north through Lebanon and Syria all the way to near southern Turkey.

**(Boundary #2) - The eastern boundary. 47:18**

The eastern border will extend between Hauran, Damascus and Gilead. This is land today that is Syria and Jordan and further east to Iraq.

**(Boundary #3) - The southern boundary. 47:19**

The southern border will extend from Tamar, southern end of the Dead Sea, as far as the waters of Meribah, which is in Egypt, and then it loops back up north to the Mediterranean Sea.

**(Boundary #4) - The western boundary. 47:20**

The western boundary will be the Mediterranean Sea to the north point “Lebo-hamath,” which follows the coast back north.

**PROPHETIC MESSAGE #3 – God gives His land distribution instructions. 47:21-23**

In verses 21-23, God gives further instructions about the land division process:

**Instruction #1** - The land is to be divided among Israel. **47:21**

**Instruction #2** - The land is to be divided by lot. **47:22a**

**Instruction #3** - The land will include a place for faithful non-Jewish Gentiles. **47:22b-23**

This is fascinating because for the most part today, Israel is despised by many nations. However, when this happens Israel will be so blessed and esteemed that people from other nations will want to live with her in her land.

There will be Gentiles who will be permitted to live in the land within the tribes of Israel. We suspect that this will begin at the judgment of the nations (Matt. 25:31-46). It is interesting that **verse 22** indicates that there will be Gentiles in the land who will actually have children during the Millennium.

Many faithful Gentiles will be allowed to share in the land blessings to Israel. They, too, will enjoy the full blessings of God in that land.

**PROPHETIC MESSAGE #4 – God gives His specific land tribal divisions. 48:1-29**

The order of land divisions is completely different than the one in Joshua 15-19. What we learn is that seven tribes of Israel are in the northern part of the Promised Land and five tribes of Israel are in the southern part of the Promised Land.

The central division of the land was allotted to King David, the priests and the Levites. We may notice that the divisions run from east to west

**Division #1** - The land division for Dan. **48:1-2a**

The tribal allotment to Dan is in the extreme north. It is located the farthest away from the Temple. We may remember that Dan was a corrupt tribe (Judges 18). Also in Revelation 7, men from Dan are left out of the list of the 144,000.

**Division #2** - The land division for Asher. **48:2b**

**Division #3** - The land division for Naphtali. **48:3**

**Division #4** - The land division for Manasseh. **48:4**

**Division #5** - The land division for Ephraim. **48:5**

**Division #6** - The land division for Reuben. **48:6**

**Division #7** - The land division for Judah. **48:7**

Judah borders the holy section on the north. Judah is the royal tribe which means praise.

**Division #8** - The mid-land division for David, the priests and Levites. **48:8-22**

Division 8 is not a tribal division, but a kingly and priestly division. Now the sacred portion of land distribution takes up many more verses than the other land division boundaries. This area becomes kind of a “Holy of Holies.”

Dimensions are very specific:

- 1) It shall be 25,000 cubits wide and long, 43,750 square feet wide or 8.3 square miles (**v. 8**).
- 2) The part for the LORD will be 8.3 miles long and 17,500 feet wide or 3.3 miles (**v. 9**).
- 3) Toward the north is the allotment for the priests (Zadok) which is 8.3 and 3.3 miles wide. (**v. 10-12**). In the middle of the priests portions is the sanctuary.
- 4) The Levites will have a portion that is 8.3 miles long and 3.3 miles wide (**v. 13**).  
None of this land may ever be sold or exchanged to any tribe because this is the choice Holy portion of the land (**v. 14**).
- 5) A common use area for the city will be 1.6 miles wide (5,000 cubits) and 8.3 miles long (**v. 15**).
- 6) The city will actually occupy 4,500 cubits 7,875 feet square which is 1.5 miles square (**v. 16**).
- 7) The city will have open spaces on each side of 437 feet which will serve as pasture areas (**v. 17**).
- 8) To the east and west are 10,000 cubits or 3.3 miles each way for food production (**v. 18-19**).
- 9) The entire holy allotment area is 25,000 by 25,000 cubits or 8.3 miles square (**v. 20**).

The remainder of the land to the east and west of the square shall be for the prince. Everything not designated in this land as holy will belong to him (**vrs. 21-22**).

**Division #9** - The land division for Benjamin. **48:23**

Benjamin borders the holy section on the south.

**Division #10** - The land division for Simeon. **48:24**

**Division #11** - The land division for Issachar. **48:25**

**Division #12** - The land division for Zebulun. **48:26**

**Division #13** - The land division for Gad. **48:27**

**PROPHETIC MESSAGE #5** – God gives the exits of the city and the names of the tribes of Israel named on those gates. **48:30-35**

This city is not to be confused with the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21. Although there are some similarities, there are also some glaring differences.

We know when God creates the New Jerusalem those gates will also have the names of the twelve tribes of Israel (Rev. 21:12) and there will also be twelve foundation stones with the names of the twelve Apostles (Rev. 21:14). There is certainly no mention of the twelve Apostles here.

Now there apparently will be some kind of wall with entrances in it. The wall is 4,500 cubits square or 1.5 mile square. There are three gates on each wall with names on them. These names on these gates clearly prove Israel is restored to her land and to her God. This is royal land, these are royal tribes and this is a royal city.

The gates are also called exits (**v. 30**). Typically, for security purposes, there was only one main gate, but during the Millennium there will be twelve.

The gate grouping on the north side will be Reuben, Judah and Levi—through Jacob's first wife Leah (**v. 31**).

The gate grouping on the east—Joseph, Benjamin born to Rachel and Dan born to Bilhah (**v. 32**).

The gate grouping on the south were Simeon, Issachar and Zebulun born to Leah (**v. 33**).

The gate grouping on the west were Gad and Asher born to Zilpah and Naphtali born to Bilhah (**v. 34**).

**What I find so encouraging from this is that you do not have to have come from a perfect background to be eternally honored.**

According to **verse 35**, the total circumference of the city of Jerusalem will be 18,000 cubits or somewhere around six miles.

When all of this happens, the name of the city will be “Jehovah Shammah” meaning “The LORD is there.”

This will be the most remarkable and wonderful thing about this city. **The LORD will actually be there.**

Think of that. This was the very city that at one time did not want Him there. This was the city that paraded Him through the streets and nailed Him to a cross. This was a city that hated Him and despised Him. But when this occurs, He will be back in that city and honored as King of Kings.

What amazing grace that Jesus Christ would go back to Jerusalem.

When Ezekiel proclaimed this, Israel was in captivity to the Babylonians and Jerusalem had been destroyed. Ezekiel sees a carefully built and measured city that features the very presence of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

One commentator said you cannot read this without realizing and seeing that God has a special place and plan for Israel and the Jewish people.

Again, Gaebelein said the main point to see about all of these predictions is that they remain unfulfilled up to now. We are still waiting for these things to happen.

The thing that is preventing these wonderful blessings of God is her rebellion. That is what has cost her God's blessings and frankly that is our problem, too.

The book of Ezekiel began with God leaving the city and it ends with God back in the city. At the beginning the city was doomed for destruction; at the end it is restored to glory.

What grace. What grace. That is the same grace that touches us. In the beginning we are doomed for destruction but when we believe on Jesus Christ, we are destined for glory.