

The Book of Ezekiel, Teacher's Guide

Lesson 21: The Holy Land, the Prince, and the Offerings

Ezekiel 45:1–46:24

Teaching Aim (Teacher Orientation)

To show that the holy district, the prince, and the offerings belong to the symbolic temple vision and picture an ordered, set-apart people gathered around God's dwelling, not a literal future temple with renewed sacrifices.

To present the just prince as a pointer to Christ the righteous King, and the appointed offerings as worship fulfilled in Him, so that the class resists the dispensational reading and rests in the finished work of the cross.

Question 1

Student Question:

What is set apart in the holy district of Ezekiel 45:1–8, and how are the portions for the priests, the Levites, the city, and the prince arranged around the sanctuary?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

When the land is divided by lot, a portion is first set apart as a holy district, an offering to the LORD, before the people receive their inheritance. God's claim comes first; the dwelling place of the holy is reserved before anything else is parceled out.

Within the district the sanctuary and its surrounding area are marked for the priests who minister, with a separate area for the Levites who serve the house. The arrangement teaches order, set-apartness, and proximity to God as the organizing center of the whole community.

The city is given its own portion alongside the sacred area, distinct from the holy ground yet near it. The common life of the people is ordered around, but not confused with, the dwelling of God.

This is vision-geography, idealized and symmetrical, not a survey map. The point is theological: God at the center, His ministers near, His people gathered around, the whole land shaped by His holy presence.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Do not press the dimensions as a literal future plot to be measured out in modern Israel; the vision speaks in the symbolic, ordered language we have seen since chapter 40.

- The set-apart portion teaches that worship and the presence of God are not one item among many but the center that orders everything else.
- Holiness here means belonging wholly to God, reserved from common use, a theme fulfilled in a people called to be holy in Christ.

Discussion Prompts

- What does it teach that the LORD's portion is set apart before the people receive theirs?
- How is your life ordered around the presence of God, or around something else?
- Where do we confuse the common and the holy in our own worship?

Question 2

Student Question:

Where in your own week do you actually set time apart as holy to the Lord, and where has it quietly become common?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The prince is given land on both sides of the holy district and the city, a generous and clearly bounded portion. He is provided for so that he will not need to seize.

The very provision is a rebuke of the past: God says His princes shall no longer oppress His people. The bounds are set precisely so that the abuse of power has no excuse.

The prince is a governing figure within the vision, ranked under the holiness of the sanctuary, not exalted above it. He is a servant of order, not a rival to God's throne.

This sets up the warning of the next verses and points forward to a ruler whose reign is marked by justice rather than self-seizure.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The prince is not the LORD enthroned; he is a human-figured office inside the vision, subordinate to the sanctuary and its holiness.
- Resist reading the prince as a literal restored earthly monarch; the role is symbolic, and its true substance is the righteous King to come.
- God's provision for the prince teaches that contentment and clear boundaries are God's appointed guard against the abuse of power.

Discussion Prompts

- Why does God provide the prince a portion before warning him against oppression?
- Where might contentment guard you against grasping for what is not yours?
- How does a leader subordinate to God's holiness differ from one who exalts himself?

Question 3

Student Question:

In 45:9–12 the prince is charged to put away violence and oppression and to keep just weights and measures. What does this tell us about the kind of ruler God requires, and why is justice tied so closely to true worship?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The charge is blunt: enough, O princes of Israel; put away violence and oppression, execute justice and righteousness. The same God who orders worship demands just government.

Just balances, a just ephah, a just bath, honest weights and measures, are commanded. The integrity of the marketplace is treated as a matter of holiness, not merely of commerce.

Justice and worship are bound together. A people gathered around the sanctuary cannot cheat one another and then come near to God; the two cannot be separated.

This righteous demand exposes the failure of Israel's past rulers and prepares for the only Ruler who fully embodies justice and righteousness.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Worship that ignores justice is a contradiction God will not accept; the holy district and the just scale stand together.
- Honest weights and measures press on every believer's daily dealings, not only on rulers; integrity is worship lived out.
- The demand for a perfectly just ruler points beyond every human prince to Christ, who alone executes justice and righteousness without fail.

Discussion Prompts

- Why does God place honest weights in the same vision as the holy sanctuary?
- Where are your daily dealings measured by a just balance, and where are they not?
- How does the demand for justice point us toward Christ the righteous King?

Question 4

Student Question:

Have you used a dishonest measure of any kind, in business, in your words, or in how you weigh others against yourself? What would honest weights look like for you?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The people bring a measured contribution, and the prince is then responsible to furnish the offerings for the appointed feasts, new moons, and sabbaths, to make atonement for the house of Israel.

The prince stands as provider and representative, gathering the people's contribution and presenting the worship on their behalf. The office mediates between the people and the sanctuary.

These offerings are described in the familiar vocabulary of Israel's sacrificial calendar. The vision uses the only language its first hearers knew for drawing near to God.

We read this provision as a picture, not a program. A representative who provides and presents acceptable worship for the people points unmistakably toward Christ, our representative and provider.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The prince's provision of offerings is representative and mediatorial in figure, pointing to the one Mediator who presents His people's worship.
- Do not infer that animal atonement will be restored; the language is the vision's medium, and Hebrews settles that such sacrifices could never take away sin.
- The careful measured contribution teaches that worship is to be ordered, intentional, and brought, not careless or improvised.

Discussion Prompts

- What does it mean that the prince provides and presents the offerings for the people?
- How does a mediating, providing figure point you to Christ?
- What are you bringing, ordered and intentional, when you come to worship?

Question 5

Student Question:

The prince provides the offerings for the appointed feasts in 45:13–25 and 46:1–15. Is this a literal Davidic king reigning over a rebuilt temple, or does the prince picture something else, and what?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

A calendar of cleansing and feasts is laid out, including a Passover-like observance, with sin offerings to cleanse the sanctuary and offerings throughout the appointed week.

Cleansing of the sanctuary stands at the head of the calendar; before the feasts can be kept, the holy place must be purified. Approach to God always begins with cleansing.

The feasts mark sacred time, ordering the year around remembrance and worship. The people's life is shaped by recurring drawing-near to God.

All of this is the shadow; the substance is Christ, our Passover sacrificed for us, in whom the sanctuary is cleansed once for all and the true feast is kept.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The Passover-like observance points to Christ our Passover, not to a literal feast to be reinstated alongside His finished work.
- The repeated sin offerings underscore, by their very repetition, the need for a final and sufficient sacrifice, which the cross supplies.
- Sacred time and ordered worship remain a principle for God's people, fulfilled now in the Lord's Day gathering of the church.

Discussion Prompts

- Why must the sanctuary be cleansed before the feasts are kept?
- How does Christ our Passover fulfill what this calendar pictures?
- How does the rhythm of the Lord's Day order your week around God?

Question 6

Student Question:

When you come to worship on the Lord's Day, what are you bringing, and is your heart provided and prepared the way the prince was to provide for the people?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The east gate of the inner court is to stay shut on the working days but opened on the sabbath and the new moon, when the people worship at its threshold.

The prince enters by the porch of the gate and worships, while the people bow at the threshold of that gate before the LORD. Order and reverence govern the approach.

The rhythm of opened and shut, working day and holy day, teaches that worship has appointed times and ordered access, not casual or unrestricted entry.

The pattern of reverent, ordered approach foreshadows the access we now have through Christ, who opens the way into God's presence.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The opened gate and ordered approach picture access to God that is real but reverent, never presumptuous.

- Do not literalize the gate schedule into a future ceremonial calendar; the vision teaches the principle of reverent, appointed worship.
- Through Christ the way is opened, yet reverence and order in worship are not set aside but fulfilled.

Discussion Prompts

- What does the shut gate opened on holy days teach about reverent access?
- Has your approach to God become casual where it should be reverent?
- How does Christ open the way while reverence still stands?

Question 7

Student Question:

The appointed feasts and offerings in chapter 46 are described in careful, repeated detail. Why would God picture the hope of the restored people in the language of the old sacrificial calendar, and what does that language ultimately point to?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Detailed measures are given for the burnt offerings and grain offerings the prince provides on the sabbath, the new moon, and the daily morning offering.

The prince enters and goes out by the same way as the people in some cases, sharing their movement and not standing aloof; his leadership is among them, not above the worship.

The daily morning offering pictures continual, unbroken devotion, worship that begins each day rather than worship reserved for occasions.

These measured, repeated offerings are the shadow; the morning sacrifice points to the continual, perfect offering of Christ and to lives continually offered to God through Him.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The repeated, measured offerings teach order and constancy in worship, not a future restoration of literal sacrifice.
- The continual daily offering points to Christ's perfect and continual mediation and to the believer's life as a continual offering, Romans 12:1.
- The prince moving among the people, not above the worship, guards against any leader exalting himself over the worship of God.

Discussion Prompts

- What does the daily morning offering teach about continual devotion?
- Where is your worship reserved for occasions rather than offered each day?

- How does Christ's continual mediation fulfill the daily offering?

Question 8

Student Question:

Where are you tempted to trust the form of worship, the routine and the ritual, instead of the One the form was always meant to point to?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The prince may give of his inheritance to his sons, but a gift to a servant returns to the prince in the year of liberty; the prince's gifts must come from his own portion.

Most pointedly, the prince must not take the people's inheritance by oppression, thrusting them out of their property. The old sin of royal seizure is forbidden by law within the vision.

Justice toward the inheritance of the people is written into the very ordering of the prince's office. Power is fenced so that it serves rather than devours.

This guard against oppression confirms that the vision's ruler is defined by justice, the very quality that points to the righteous King to come.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The prince is bound by justice and cannot enrich himself at the people's expense; the office exists to protect, not to plunder.
- The repeated concern that the prince not oppress echoes the indictment of Israel's past rulers and the promise of a just King.
- This is a standard for all who hold authority among God's people: power is stewardship, never a license to seize.

Discussion Prompts

- Why is the prince forbidden to take the people's inheritance?
- Where might you be tempted to use position or power to take rather than serve?
- How does a justice-bound ruler point to Christ the righteous King?

Question 9

Student Question:

The dispensational reading takes these chapters as a promise of a future literal temple in Jerusalem with restored animal sacrifices. In light of Hebrews 9:11–14 and 10:1–18, why does that reading deny the once-for-all sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice, and how should we instead understand the prince and the offerings as fulfilled in Christ the righteous King and in worship offered through Him?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Ezekiel is shown the places where the priests boil the guilt offering and sin offering and bake the grain offering, and the kitchens where the ministers boil the people's sacrifices.

The holy and the common are carefully kept distinct; the priests' offerings and the people's are prepared in separate places so that holiness is not carried out improperly.

Even the kitchens are part of the ordered vision. Nothing in the worship of God is treated as an afterthought; every detail serves the set-apartness of the whole.

The careful separation of holy and common is the shadow whose substance is a people made holy in Christ, called to a worship and a life that does not blur what God has set apart.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The separation of holy and common places teaches that holiness is to be guarded with care, a principle fulfilled in a holy people.
- The mundane detail of kitchens within a holy vision teaches that all of life, even its ordinary parts, is ordered toward the worship of God.
- Do not read the kitchens as architectural prophecy; read them as the vision's way of teaching thorough, careful holiness.

Discussion Prompts

- Why does the vision give such care to where offerings are prepared?
- Where are you blurring the holy and the common in your own life?
- How does the care for ordinary detail teach that all of life is worship?

Question 10

Student Question:

If the prince points to Christ our King and the offerings point to worship fulfilled in Him, what one thing will you stop adding to His finished work, and how will you draw near through Him this week?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Taken whole, these chapters present a set-apart land, a just prince, and ordered offerings, all gathered around the dwelling of God. The picture is of a people perfectly ordered by, and drawn near to, the holy presence.

The prince is defined throughout by justice and by providing the people's worship, never by self-seizure. He is the figure of a righteous King who provides for and represents his people.

The offerings, given in the old sacrificial vocabulary, are the shadow of a worship whose substance is Christ. To turn them back into literal blood sacrifices would deny that His one offering is final and sufficient.

The whole vision strains forward to its fulfillment: a righteous King reigning in justice, a people drawing near through Him, worship that has found its end in the once-for-all sacrifice of the cross.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The dispensational reading of a future literal temple with restored animal sacrifices cannot stand, for Hebrews 9:11–14 and 10:1–18 declare Christ's offering once for all and final; restored sacrifices would deny the cross.
- The prince points to Christ the righteous King, who reigns now in justice over His church, and the offerings point to worship fulfilled in and offered through Him.
- The call to just weights, to put away oppression, and to ordered worship presses on the church today: a people gathered around God's presence must live justly and worship in spirit and truth.
- The hope of these chapters is not stone and blood restored but God dwelling among an ordered, set-apart, justice-loving people, the very hope the gospel fulfills.

Discussion Prompts

- How do the prince and the offerings together point to Christ and worship through Him?
- Why would a return to literal sacrifices deny the sufficiency of the cross?
- What will you set apart, and how will you draw near through Christ this week?