

The Book of Ezekiel

Lesson 21: The Holy Land, the Prince, and the Offerings -- Ezekiel 45:1–46:24

The temple vision keeps widening. Having measured the house and described the worship of the restored people, Ezekiel now turns outward to the land itself. A holy district is marked off, a portion set apart for the LORD, with allotments for the priests, the Levites, the city, and the prince who governs. The geography of the vision is becoming a picture of an ordered, set-apart people gathered around the dwelling of God.

Two figures dominate these chapters. First, the prince, who is given land, charged to provide the offerings, and sternly warned against the oppression that marked the rulers of old. Second, the offerings themselves, the appointed feasts and sacrifices through which the people draw near. Both must be read inside the symbolic vision Ezekiel has been shown, not lifted out as a blueprint for a future stone temple in Jerusalem.

We will see that the prince is no earthly Davidic king restored to a literal throne, and the offerings are no reinstated animal sacrifices that would somehow stand beside the cross. The vision speaks the language of Israel's worship to picture a deeper reality: a righteous King who rules in justice, and a people who draw near to God in worship that finds its substance in Christ.

This lesson asks us to hold the picture and its fulfillment together. We honor the detail of the vision while confessing what it points to. The just ruler points to Christ the righteous King; the provision of offerings points to worship fulfilled in Him. To turn this into a program of rebuilt walls and renewed blood sacrifices would undo the very gospel Ezekiel's hope was reaching toward.

Group Discussion: Read Ezekiel 45:1–46:24 aloud as a class, then walk back through the holy district, the prince, the warning against oppression, the just weights, and the appointed feasts. Ask at each point: what is this picturing about how God dwells with His people and how they draw near to Him? Keep returning to the question of literal versus symbolic so the class hears the difference plainly.

Personal Reflection: Before class, read the whole passage in one sitting and then read Hebrews 9:11–14 and 10:1–18 alongside it. Notice how the New Testament treats the sacrificial system as completed in Christ. Write down one place in your own life where you are tempted to add something to the finished work of Jesus, and bring it to the Lord in prayer.

Read Ezekiel 45:1–46:24

Study Questions

1. 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?
2. Where in your own week do you actually set time apart as holy to the Lord, and where has it quietly become common?
3. 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?
4. 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?
5. 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?
6. 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?

7. 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?
8. 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?
9. 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?
10. 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?

Digging Deeper

Reflect on these passages: Hebrews 9:11–14, Christ entered once for all by His own blood; Hebrews 10:1–18, the law's sacrifices could never take away sins but Christ's offering perfects forever; Isaiah 9:6–7, the righteous King reigning in justice on David's throne forever; Jeremiah 23:5–6, the righteous Branch who executes justice; Zechariah 9:9, the just King coming lowly to His people

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