

November 30, 2025

“Ezekiel’s Vision”
Lesson 4

Ezekiel 47:1-9, 12

Intro

Previous lessons this month have dealt with Ezekiel warning the people to change their ways. They didn’t, and were taken into exile in Babylon. Today’s passage is a prophecy given to them while they are in captivity. Though a prophecy was given to them that they would return to the Promised Land (Jer. 29:10-14), many were feeling hopeless about this possibility. But these verses come at the end of a long section, from chapters 40-48 of Ezekiel, which is a vision of their future. This passage includes a vision of a restored city and temple, and particular instructions about official to serve in the temple, the allotment of land, and how to carry out Passover and other special days. These details lead us to today’s passage.

Read Ezekiel 47:1-9, 12

1. vs. 1: The “man” here is an angel, who has been guiding Ezekiel since chapter 40
 They are at the entrance to the temple, which faces east
 Oddly, there is water flowing *under* the threshold of the temple door
 (A threshold is the space between the bottom of the door and the floor)
 Also oddly, the water is coming from the *south* side of the temple, “south of the altar”
 The significance of this will be developed in the verses to come
2. vs. 2: Now the angel leads Ezekiel out of Jerusalem
 They go out the north gate and turn right, ending up at the east gate
 Why didn’t they just go out the east gate in the first place?
 In 44:1-3, it’s told that God has closed that gate
 Still, Ezekiel notes the water coming from the south side of the temple
3. vs. 3: The “man” leads Ezekiel eastward, the direction the water is flowing
 He uses a measuring rod, perhaps the same one from 40:3
 They walk a thousand cubits, about 500 yards
 They find the water is “ankle-deep”
4. vs. 4: The two walk another 1000 cubits, another 500 yards
 The water has now grown to knee-deep
 Another 1000 cubits (500 yds) and the water has risen to their waists
 This much water could not come from an underground well below the temple
 This suggests then that these images are metaphors regarding the future
 The changes could be indicating a change in people’s hearts, their receptivity to God
5. vs. 5: After another 1000 cubits, the water is so deep that Ezekiel is unable to cross it
 He even says “no man could cross it”, suggesting deep and fast-flowing water
 They have now gone about 2000 yards, or roughly a mile and a quarter

6. vs. 6: The angel again addresses Ezekiel as “son of man”, referring to his human frailty
He then says to Ezekiel, “Do you see this?”
This is not a “Look at this and tell me what it means” kind of statement
This is a call to amazement and wonder
“Do you see this?” is equal to “Isn’t this amazing? Wow!”
It’s a call to see what God will do for His people
They go back to the bank of the river
It appears they were in the water all the time from vs. 3 on
7. vs. 7: Ezekiel notes that he sees a lot of trees on the river’s bank
The book of Ezekiel has about 30 verses that speak about trees
This is more than in any other book of the Bible
About half of these 30 are in the prophecy of chapters 40-48
Most of these are references to normal trees
In 31:16,18 however, he refers to the “trees of Eden”
Rev. 22:2 sees Ezekiel’s tree visions as trees of life
The Babylonians cut down many trees to make siege ramps in their conquest
The land was devoid of trees in many areas
Ezekiel’s vision shows a land restored, with the trees back by the river
8. vs. 8: Three phrases here all indicate Israelite territory
The Dead Sea is Israelite territory, as is the Arabah
The “eastern region” can sometimes be non-Israelite territory
But when coupled with the other two, it is seen as referring to Israel as well
The waters flow eastward from the temple in Jerusalem to the Dead Sea
The Dead Sea is too salty to sustain life; it’s much saltier than the oceans
But the waters flowing into it make the Dead Sea fresh, implying life and liveliness
9. vs. 9: The angel says that the fresh water of the river will bring fresh life to the sea as well
He specifically mentions large numbers of fish
“Where the river flows everything will live”
This is another promise of restoration, of normalcy and life
10. vs. 12: This verse concludes with the tree’s fruitfulness
The angel says that they trees will produce fruit *every month*
These are not typical trees, which have a fruitful season, but not monthly
The leaves on the trees also never wither
No disease of any kind will negatively affect these leaves
These leaves will bring healing, says the angel
These images remind us of what we see in Revelation
John describes a place of eternal perfection from a restored relationship with God

Application: Ezekiel’s vision sees its completed expression in Revelation 22. There the apostle John saw a river as the source of life. Trees on either side were fruitful, just like Ezekiel’s. And the leaves of the trees John saw were a source of healing, like Ezekiel’s. This shows us how Ezekiel’s vision should be understood. It’s God fulfilling His promise to restore and redeem

a people broken by sin, to bring them to a place He has made. This place will be filled with life and health, all because of the healing work done on the cross by Jesus.

Prayer: Father God, the world we live in is both broken and beautiful. Thank You that you have promised us a better world, a restored one, that will be beautiful but no longer broken. Help us to do our parts in the healing of the brokenness of this current world. We ask these things in the name of Jesus. Amen.