

EZEKIEL

EZEKIEL 1-3 — HIS CALL AND PREPARATION

Ezekiel was carried to Babylon with King Jehoiachin, as we gather by comparing 1:1; 33:21; 40:1 with ~~2~~²² Kings 24:11-16; and lived with the exiles on the river Chebar probably at Tel-abib (1:1, 3; 3:15). Unlike Jeremiah, he was married and had a stated residence (8:1; 24:1, 18). His ministry began in the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity, and seven before the capture of Jerusalem (1:1-2), when he himself was thirty years old (v. 1). His prophetic activity extended over a period of at least twenty-two years (1:2; 29:17), during which time he was often consulted by the leaders in exile (8:1; 14:1; 20:1), though his advice was not always followed. The time and manner of his death are unknown.

Like Daniel and the Apostle John who, like himself, prophesied outside of Palestine, he follows the method of symbol and vision, or as we prefer to put it, God followed that method through him. And like them, his ministry was directed to "the whole house of Israel," the twelve tribes, rather than to either Judah or Israel distinctively, after the manner of the pre-exilic prophets. His purpose was twofold:

- (1) to keep before the exiles the national sins which had brought Israel so low; and
- (2) to sustain their faith by predictions of national restoration, the punishment of their enemies, and ultimate earthly glory.

Scofield divides the book into seven great prophetic strains indicated by the expression, "The hand of the Lord was upon me" (1:3; 3:14, 22; 8:1; 33:22; 37:1; 40:1), and seven minor divisions indicated by the formula, "And the word of the Lord came unto me." But although this is interesting and instructive, yet for our present purpose, we emphasize three main divisions only, as follows:

1. Prophecies delivered before the siege of Jerusalem, foretelling its overthrow (chaps. 1-24). These correspond to the general character of Jeremiah's messages with whom for a while Ezekiel was contemporary.

2. Prophecies delivered during the period of the siege (chaps. 25-32). These are chiefly about the Gentile nations.
3. Prophecies after the downfall of the city (chaps. 33-48). These deal with the restoration entirely.

THE PROPHET CALLED

Give the time, place and circumstances as indicated in verses one and two. Look at the map and identify the Chebar. Give the details of Ezekiel biography in verse three.

Note the vision he beheld — the whirlwind, cloud, fire, brightness, color (v. 4); the four living creatures (vv. 5-14); the wheels (vv. 15-21); the firmament (vv. 22-23); the voice (vv. 24-25); the throne and the man above it (vv. 26-27); and finally, the definition of it all (v. 28). Note in the last verse that out of this glory the voice spake that directed the prophet. Freshen your recollection by comparing Exodus J, 33 and 34; ~~1~~1 Kings 19; ~~3~~Isaiah 6; ~~7~~Daniel 10; ~~4~~Acts 9; and ~~6~~Revelation 1.

The "living creatures" are doubtless identical with the cherubim of the garden of Eden, to which further reference will be made in the next lesson.

EQUIPPED AND COMMISSIONED

Note the address "Son of Man" (v. 1). It is used by Jesus Christ seventy-nine times in referring to Himself, and by Jehovah ninety-one times in speaking to Ezekiel, which suggests that the prophet is considered in a priestly and mediatorial capacity. Or, we may take the thought of Scofield that in the case of our Lord it is His racial name as the representative man in the sense of I Corinthians 15:45-47. If so, applying the idea here, it means that Jehovah, while not forsaking Israel even in her disobedience and hour of punishment, would yet remind that people that they are but a small part of the race for which He also cares.

Note the relation in which the Holy Spirit comes to the prophet, and examine your concordance to see that "entering into him" is more of a New Testament than an Old Testament way of speaking of that relation.

Note finally, that like other recipients of God's revelation the prophet heard the voice that spake to him and recognized the speaker.

Now follow a description of the moral condition of the people to whom he is sent (vv. 3-5), and a warning to himself, corresponding to Jeremiah's (vv. 6-8). The demand for absolute obedience in the transmission of his message are set forth symbolically in the figure of the book (2'9; 3:3), although the transaction itself is difficult to explain. Perhaps it took place in a vision. How does it show that he was to preach only what God imparted to him? How that he was to make it his own? How that in a spiritual sense he was to live on it? Whatever its message, the Word of God is sweet to faith because it is the Word of God (compare Jet. 1:9; 15:16; ~~(6119)~~ Revelation 10:9-10).

QUESTIONS

1. When was Ezekiel made a captive?
2. What do we learn of his domestic history?
3. What method of teaching does he exemplify?
4. What was its purpose?
5. State the three main divisions of the book, with chapters.
6. What other men had corresponding visions of glory?
7. What, possibly, is the significance of the phrase "Son of Man"?
8. How is the inspiration of Ezekiel's message symbolized?

THE CHERUBIM

In our last lesson we had the first description of the cherubim met with in Scripture, although the beings themselves were brought before us in Eden (Genesis 3), and their images, or figures, in the tabernacle. In the latter case two were in the Holy of Holies over the Ark of the Covenant and others wrought in needlework upon the curtains of the sanctuary and the veil (~~(1271)~~ Exodus 25-27).

Imperfect and erroneous conceptions of the cherubim have prevailed, as instanced in that they are almost always pictured as angels, which they are not, but rather the living embodiment of some important truth.

FAMILY TO ISRAEL

That they were familiar Israel is seen in that Moses gives no description of them either in Genesis or Exodus. Is this accounted for by the circumstance

that they continued to exist in Eden guarding the approach to the tree of life, and visible to man, say, down to the time of the flood? If so, Shem, who was contemporaneous with Abraham for 150 years, might easily have transmitted to him, and through him to his descendants, a knowledge of their appearance and of that which their presence was intended to teach.

But their appearance is not revealed to us until we reach Ezekiel, when they are presented as having in general, a human form, but each with four faces and four wings — one face of a man, another of a lion, a third of an ox, and a fourth of an eagle. Their motions were as swift as lightning, and the sound of their wings in flight as of great waters of a mighty host. A throne was in the firmament above them, and on the throne the divine glory in the likeness of a man. "This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord," said the prophet, which shows the connection between it and our humanity in the person of Immanuel.

Subsequently, at chapter 10, the prophet speaks of seeing these beings again in the temple at Jerusalem, and identifies them as "the cherubim."

They are seen once more by John on Patmos (~~in~~ Revelation 4-5) where "they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty," and with the four and twenty elders they fall down before the Lamb and sing a new song — a song of praise for the redemption of man. This is very significant.

TYPE OF REDEEMED HUMANITY

That they are beings designed to set forth some great truth of redemption is evident, since they are introduced at its opening scene in Genesis, and in its closing scene in Revelation, and associated with it throughout.

The symbolism of the faces of the cherubim considered together, gives us the highest possible conception of life, with the noblest characteristics belonging to created intelligence.

The face of the man sets forth the highest ideal of wisdom and knowledge; that of the lion adds majesty and power; that of the ox, creative or productive industry; and the eagle, dominion and irresistible might, for the range of his vision and the power of his flight, as well as his boldness and courage, are unequalled.


The other features, however, were equally striking. Eyes before and behind, show ceaseless vigilance and exalted capacities for knowledge; wings, denote a higher and wider sphere of service than simply the earth; going straight forward, never turning their bodies, as we must necessarily do, but with four faces always moving in the direct line of vision, points to a superior spiritual nature and undeviating integrity in God's service; their glorious appearance, also, like burning coals of fire, sparkling as burnished brass, has its significance.

If now, according to the ordinary principles of symbolic interpretation, we ask for the realization of all this, we may find it in our redeemed humanity when delivered from the curse, and restored, and glorified through Jesus Christ. The cherubim would seem to be the embodiment of that glory to which our humanity is destined in the resurrection state — that combination of powers and excellencies which shall be ours when our salvation is consummated in the life to come.

THE EMBODIMENT OF THE GLORIFIED LIFE

This is further corroborated by the fact that originally they stood within the prohibited bounds of paradise, and kept "the way of the tree of life"; i.e., they not only guarded it, but preserved the approach to it, as if until, in the fullness of time, redeemed humanity might have access to it again.

The divine presence since the entrance of sin, had withdrawn himself from all familiar intercourse with men, no longer walking with them as in their innocence in paradise. But He had not withdrawn Himself from earth or from men altogether, since He might still be approached, and His favor secured at the gateway to the tree of life. Here the cherubim dwelt with the flaming sword of the divine presence between them. So also in the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle, their privileged place lies over the mercy seat, while here in Ezekiel's vision above their heads in the crystal firmament, the glory of the God of Israel in human form was seated on the throne.

Thomas Wicke, D.D., from whose "The Economy of the Ages" the above is an abridgment, regards the fact that the cherubim are always found in immediate connection with the surroundings of the divine presence, as declaring that those they represent have a right within the paradise of God — the blessed promise held out to our redeemed humanity. Compare  Revelation 5:9, where the cherubim unite with the four and twenty elders in the song of redemption itself — the song of the Lamb.

EZEKIEL 4-7 — SECOND VISION OF GLORY

Remember that in the first part of this book, chapters 1-24, we are dealing with prophecies before the siege of Jerusalem and foretelling its overthrow. The present lesson begins at verse 22 of chapter 3. (Compare v. 23 with 1:1; v. 24 with 2:2; and ^{<400>}Acts 2:4 and 4:31.) Verse 25 is to be taken figuratively. (Compare ^{<4761>}2 Corinthians 6:11-12.) The same is true of verse 26, which means that as Israel had rejected the words of the prophets hitherto, the time had now come when God would deprive them of those words for the time being at least (^{<1002>}1 Samuel 7:2; ^{<3081>}Amos 8:11-12).

THE SIGN OF THE TILE (CHAP. 4)

The sign (vv. 1-3) and those that follow immediately, were symbolic testimonies to the wickedness of the nation as well as prophetic of the coming siege. It is common to say that these things were performed in vision and not in external action, but we can hardly be sure of that. At all events the tile represents that God has set a wall of separation between Him and the nation, that can not be forced through. The second action, lying first on one side and then the other, (vv. 4-8) supplements the first. The third, eating the coarse and polluted bread, and by weight, is explained in the closing verses of the chapter (v. 16-17; compare Jet. 52:6). As to verse 12, the Arabs use beasts' dung for fuel, as wood is scarce, but to use that of man implies the most awful need. As to do so was in violation of the Mosaic law (^{<544>}Deuteronomy 14:3; 23:12-14), the command to the prophet, symbolized that now God's people were, as a judicial punishment, to be outwardly blended with the heathen (^{<538>}Deuteronomy 28:68; ^{<3093>}Hosea 9:3).

THE SIGN OF THE HAIR (CHAPS. 5-7)

This symbol (vv. 1-4) is explained in the rest of the chapter. The "knife" or "razor" was the sword of the enemy which God would use. The whole hair being shaven was a sign of humiliation (^{<3004>}2 Samuel 10:4-5). "Balances" expresses God's discrimination in the coming judgments. The "hairs" are the people in this case. One third was to be killed, another destroyed by famine and pestilence, and the remainder scattered among the Gentiles. The few to escape were symbolized by the hairs bound in Ezekiel's skirts, and even of these some were to pass a further ordeal (vv. 3-4). Compare these

last-named verses with the story of the remnant in Jerusalem in ^{<441>}Jeremiah 40-44.

Chapters 6 and 7 are a continuation of the subject of chapter 5, which our familiarity with the prophets preceding will simplify for us. The first of these may be divided into three parts. Verses 1-7 contain a message against Israel; verses 8-10, speak of that "remnant" which God always promised to spare because of their repentance, while the rest of the chapter, and the whole of chapter 7, is filled with the desolations God shall send upon the land for its iniquity.

QUESTIONS

1. What characterizes the prophecies of the first 24 chapters of this book?
2. Have you read ^{<007>}1 Samuel 7:2 and ^{<1081>}Amos 8:11-12?
3. To what do the symbols of chapter witness?
4. What is symbolized by the coarse bread eaten by weight?
5. Give the interpretation of the symbol of the hair in your own words.
6. Have you refreshed your recollection by re-reading ^{<2411>}Jeremiah 40-44?
7. Analyze chapter 6.

EZEKIEL 8-11 — VISIONS OF IDOLATRY

It is the general opinion that these chapters introduce a new stage of the prophecies, and that while those of the last lesson comprehended Judah and Israel, these refer more particularly to Jerusalem and the people of Judah under Zedekiah. The fuller story of this period was in Jeremiah.

The prophet is seen in his own house by the Chebar, and the elders of Judah are before him for instruction (8:1). "Elders" we understand to mean, some who are in captivity with the prophet.

"The Visions of God to Jerusalem" (v. 3) concern the profanations of the temple and other wickedness of the people past and present, and because of which the partial captivity had befallen them which was speedily to be followed by a completer one.

As another puts it, the prophet was showing these things to the present generation of Jews in Babylon to justify to them the righteousness of God in their present chastening. There were some of the younger element who had been born in captivity and to whom these things presumably were unknown. The visions were so vivid to the prophet that it seems as if he were transferred back to Jerusalem at the time these things were occurring.

THE THIRD VISION OF GLORY (8:1-4)

Verse 1 compared with 1:2, raises the presumption that the "lying on his sides" (vv. 5-6), had been completed. Verse 2 refers to a further manifestation of the Messiah as the Angel of the Covenant, in whose person alone God manifests Himself (^{<4018>}John 1:18). Verse 3, "the image of jealousy," was a heathen image worshiped with licentious rite and provoking God's jealousy (^{<4216>}Exodus 20:5). Verse 4 refers to the Shekinah which still rested over the temple and upon the mercy seat.

THE PROFANATIONS OF THE TEMPLE (8:5-18)

The idolatries named (v. 10) had been introduced from Egypt. "Chambers of his imagery," (v. 12) means his perverse imagination. "*Tammuz*" (v. 14) is the name of a heathen god, the Syrian form of Adonais. "The branch to the nose" (v. 17), refers to the sacred trees which were symbols in idol worship.

SEALING THE FAITHFUL (9:1-11)

"Them that have charge over the city" (v. 1) are doubtless angelic executioners of God's will as in ^{<27013>}Daniel 4:13, 17, 23, and elsewhere. The man with the ink horn (v. 2) is thought to symbolize the Messiah, who is here marking his elect (v. 4, compare with ^{<4217>}Exodus 12:7, ^{<4408>}Revelation 7:3, and other places). The departure of the "glory of the God of Israel" (v. 3) is significant, presaging His final departure from the nation which would be given over to its punishment. Quoting Scofield:

It is noteworthy that to Ezekiel, the priest, was given the vision of the glory departing from the cherubim to the threshold (9:3): then from the threshold (^{<10:18>}); then from the temple and the city to the mountain on the east of Jerusalem (11:13), and finally returning again to the temple to abide permanently in the millennium (43:2-5).

THE JUDGMENTS SPREADING (10-11:13)

The wrath of God is now about to burn the city, as His sword in the hand of Babylon, had slain its inhabitants. This is the story of chapter 10, but in 11 we have a separate prophecy of the punishment of the corrupt princes. Their wicked counsel is indicated in verse 3, which agrees with what we saw in Jeremiah. They were ever contending against that prophet that his word was not true, and that destruction by the Babylonians was not coming. They therefore, because of their unbelief, were responsible for the slaying of the city (vv. 6-7). Their judgment was certain (vv. 8-13).

FUTURE RESTORATION PROMISED (11:14-25)

Ezekiel wonders if there shall be no salvation (v. 13), and he is told that those who have been carried away, and whom the remainder in the land despised and sneered at for that reason, will be watched over wherever they are (v. 16). This leads to that prophecy of the future repentance and restoration of the nation with which we have become familiar in other prophets. Verses 17-21 is a picture of the millennial period.

QUESTIONS

1. To what do the prophecies of this lesson more particularly refer?
2. What are the local circumstances under which they are delivered?
3. What specifically, do "the visions of God" concern?
4. Explain the difficult expressions in 8:1-4.
5. What is the definition of "Tammuz"?
6. How would you identify the man with the inkhorn?
7. What four journeys of "the Glory of the Lord" are recorded in Ezekiel?
8. To what period does 11:17-21 apply?

EZEKIEL 12-15 — DISTRIBUTING THE RESPONSIBILITY

While these visions and prophecies may be new as to the particular occasions for them, yet they are in substance the same as the preceding.

"THE PRINCE IN JERUSALEM" (12:1-16)

In chapter 10 we had a vision of the judgment upon the city of Jerusalem, in chapter 11, upon the princes, and in this upon the king himself (v. 10). The explanation of the action commanded the prophet in verse 1-7 is given in verse 8-16. It is thought that this was performed by him in vision only and not outwardly, but if so, its effect could hardly have been intended for those he was instructing but only for himself, which we doubt (v. 9). The whole thing typifies Zedekiah's flight by night. (Compare Jet. 39:4.) He went out furtively as digging through a wall, and covered his face so as not to be recognized.

THE NEARNESS OF THE EVENT (12:17-28)

The infidels scoffingly said that because the threatened judgment was long in coming, it would never come (v. 22), but they are to be taught otherwise (vv. 23-25). As a matter of fact it was very near (vv. 26-28).

THE LYING PROPHETS (13:1-23)

The city, the princes, the king have each been singled out for judgment, and now come the prophets. Note where they obtained their false messages (v. 2), and the ill effect of them on the people (v. 6). Note the judgments to fall on them (v. 9), which probably means that their names would be erased from the registers like those who had died for their crimes (²⁴⁷³Jeremiah 17:13; ⁴⁸⁸⁵Revelation 3:5; ²¹⁰⁰Luke 10:20). Moreover, they never would return from captivity. As teachers they were like men building up a wall with untempered mortar and their work would come to naught (vv. 10-16). There were false prophetesses as well as prophets (vv. 17-23). They "sew pillows to all armholes" might be rendered "to elbows and wrists," and the reference is thought to be the cushions which the prophetesses made to lean upon as typifying the tranquility they foretold to them who consulted them. "Kerchiefs on the head of every stature" might be rendered on "mean of every age," though its significance is doubtful. The prophetesses engaged in their wicked work for the paltry fees (v. 19).

THE HYPOCRITICAL PEOPLE (14:1-11)

The spirit in which some of the people sought the instruction of the prophet is shown in verses 1-5, and it is a judgment upon them that they shall listen to false prophets and be deceived. God will judicially darken the

false prophets' mind to that end, or He will permit Satan to do it. The evil teaching of these false prophets, in other words, will serve the purposes of His just judgment. (Compare ^{<1122>}1 Kings 22:23; ^{<301>}2 Thessalonians 2:11-12.)

INTERCESSION USELESS (14:12-23)

The inevitableness of the coming judgment on Jerusalem is shown in the discouragement of intercession on her behalf. Ezekiel had been pleading, but he might as well desist. Noah, Daniel and Job (14:14) had prevailed with God on former occasions, but even their petitions would now be helpless. The reference to Daniel is interesting, for although his prophecies were mostly later than Ezekiel, yet his fame for piety and wisdom was already established, and the events recorded in the early chapters of his book had already occurred. But even he, though the Jews may have had their hopes turned towards his influence either in the court of Babylon or that of heaven, could not avert the approaching calamity.

THE BURNING VINE (CHAP. 15)

The point of this vision seems to be that as the vine is worthless as wood so the people of Jerusalem have ceased to have any value in His eyes. They were once His vine, but now they shall pass from fire to fire until they come to naught.

QUESTIONS

1. How does this lesson illustrate its theme?
2. What leads to the belief that the prophets "removal" was acted outwardly?
3. What did it typify, and how?
4. What had become the proverb of the scoffers?
5. What judgment would fall on the false prophets?
6. Explain the figure of untempered mortar.
7. Can you quote ^{<301>}2 Thessalonians 2:11-12?
8. Who have divine testimony borne to them as men of power in prayer?

EZEKIEL 16-18 — PARABLES AND RIDDLES

THE UNFAITHFUL WIFE (CHAP. 16)

The theme of chapter 16 is Jerusalem and her abominations (vv. 1-2), but it is worked out in parabolic form, Jerusalem, or the nation of Israel, being personified as a female.

There are five stages in the story:

- (1) Jehovah adopts her as an infant (vv. 1-7);
- (2) when attained to marriageable age she becomes his wife (vv. 8-14);
- (3) as a wife she proves unfaithful (vv. 15-34);
- (4) punishment follows (vv. 35-42); and
- (5) unexpected and unmerited restoration is promised (vv. 53-63).

Verse 7, first part, is corroborated by ^{<D1257>}Exodus 12:37-38. To spread a skirt (v. 8) was an oriental mode of espousal (^{<XRB>}Ruth 3:9). With verse 9 compare ^{<D292>}Exodus 19:12, and similar allusions. Verses 11-13 refer to the customary marriage gifts of one who was to become a queen. Verses 15-36 speak of her worship of idols after the manner of the surrounding nations, with which was accompanied gross sins of the flesh. Verses 35-52 refer figuratively to the shame, suffering, and loss, entailed by the Babylonian siege and overthrow — the enemy hurled stones at the siege and slew with the sword afterward (v. 40), and so on throughout.

The restoration was to be brought about at the end, not on the ground of Israel's repentance even, but of God's own promise to the fathers (v. 60). It was His returning to them that would result in their returning to Him (v. 61).

THE EAGLES AND THE VINE (CHAP. 17)

The "eagle" (v. 2) was the symbol of the Assyrian god Nisroch, and is here applied to the king of Babylon. "Lebanon" means Jerusalem, and "the highest branch" is King, Jeconiah, or Jehoiachin, whom the Babylonians carried away some time previously (^{<1248>}2 Kings 24:8-16). The "city of merchants" is Babylon. The "seed of the land planted" is Zedekiah placed

on the throne of Judah by Babylon. Verse 6 means that at first Zedekiah was an obedient vassal to Babylon. The eagle of verse 7 is Egypt towards whom Judah turned in her heart, as a means of breaking the Babylonian yoke. But her scheme would not prosper (vv. 9-10), as the remainder of the chapter shows.

EATING SOUR GRAPES (CHAP. 18)

Verse 2 shows the people were charging injustice upon God, and claiming that they were suffering not for their own sins but their fathers, but he proves that this is not so. How does the last clause of verse 4 declare to the contrary? Note the following illustration of God's impartiality in a series of supposed cases:

(1) a just man (vv. 5-9);

(2) an unjust son of a just man (vv. 10-13);

(3) a just son of an unjust man (vv. 14-18). "Righteousness" in verse 20 is not used as if any were absolutely righteous, which would contradict Scripture everywhere; but in the sense of seeking righteousness in God's way as far as that way had been revealed to them. In the light of the New Testament there is no ground of righteousness save that which is imputed for Christ's sake, and as the result of His atonement; but while this was not clearly understood by the Old Testament saints, yet it was the ground on which any righteousness of theirs could be accepted. This is brought out in verse 22, "in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live." Not "for," or "on account of" that righteousness, but "in" it. In the same manner, verse 31, shows not what man can do, but what he ought to do; and when he sees that he ought to make him a clean heart, and finds that he can not, he throws himself in his helplessness on God's mercy and receives it.

QUESTIONS

1. Name the parables and riddles in this lesson.
2. Name the four stages in the story of the faithless wife.
3. On what final ground shall the future restoration of Israel be brought about?
4. What nations did the two eagles symbolize?

5. Tell this riddle and its interpretation in your own words.
6. In what sense only can righteousness be understood in this lesson?
7. What is the logic that causes man to cry out for mercy?

EZEKIEL 19-24 — CLOSE OF PART ONE

Lack of space makes it necessary to crowd the remainder of Part 1 into a single lesson, but nothing vital to its general understanding will be lost, as the chapters are, to a certain extent, repetitions of the foregoing.

LAMENTATIONS FOR THE PRINCES (CHAP. 19)

The theme of this chapter is found in the first and last verses. The "princes" are the kings of Judah — Jehoahaz, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah, whose histories were made familiar in the closing chapters of 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles. Judah is the lioness (v. 2). Jehoahaz is the first of her young lions (v. 3), and Jehoiachin the second (vv. 4-9). Zedekiah is probably in mind in verse 14.

REJECTION OF THE ELDERS (CHAP. 20)

Verse 1 gives the occasion for this message, which falls into two great parts. Verses 1-32 recite the peoples' rebellions against God during five distinct periods, i.e., in Egypt (vv. 2-9), in the wilderness (vv. 10-17), on the borders of Canaan (vv. 18-26), when a new generation arose in Canaan (vv. 27-29), and finally in the prophet's own time (vv. 30-32). The explanation of verses 25-26 seems to be that God chastised them, as in ~~Exo~~ Numbers 25, by permitting Baal's worshippers to tempt them to idolatry, ending in judgment upon them. The easy success of the tempter's arts, showed how ready they were to be led astray (compare v. 39).

Verse 32 should not lightly be passed over. It was in the heart of these Jews to live like the heathen round about them, and so escape the odium of having a peculiar God and law of their own. Moreover, they seemed to be getting nothing for it but threats and calamities, whereas the heathen seemed to be prospering. But God said it "shall not be at all," and how literally this has been fulfilled is seen in the later history of the Jews down to our day. Though the Jews seem so likely to have blended with the rest of mankind and laid aside their distinctive peculiarities, yet they remained

for centuries dispersed among all nations and without a home, but still distinct.

Verse 33 begins the second division of the prophecy. Lest the covenant people should abandon their distinctive hopes, and amalgamate with the surrounding heathen, God tells them that, as the wilderness journey from Egypt was made subservient to discipline, and also to the taking from among them the rebellious, so a severe discipline (such as the Jews for long have been actually undergoing) would be administered to them during the next exodus for the same purpose (v. 38), and to prepare them for the restored possession of their land (~~2024~~ Hosea 2:14-15). This was only partially fulfilled at the return from Babylon; its full accomplishment is future.

THREE MESSAGES OF JUDGMENT (CHAP. 21)

The three messages of this chapter explain themselves to those who have followed the lessons thus far. The first might be designated the parable of the sighing prophet (vv. 1-7), the second, that of the sword of God (vv. 8-17), while the third is notable for the prophecy that thereafter there should be no true king of Israel till the Messiah came (vv. 26-27; ~~4154~~ Acts 15:14-17).

JERUSALEM'S PRESENT SINS (CHAP. 22)

The repetition of Jerusalem's sins as given here suggests chapter 20; but there they were stated in a historical review, emphasis resting on the past, while here it is on the present.

AHOLAH AND AHOLIBAH (CHAP. 23)

Here we have a parabolic portrayal similar to the adulterous wife in chapter 16; only that in this case it is not idolatries which are emphasized as violating the marriage covenant, but their worldly spirit, their alliances with the heathen for safety rather than confiding in God.

THE PERIOD OF SILENCE BEGINS (CHAP. 24)

Ezekiel proves his divine mission by announcing, though three hundred miles away, the very day of the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem by

Nebuchadnezzar (vv. 1-2). "The ninth year" means that of Jehoiachin's captivity, which was also that of Ezekiel.

There was a self-confident proverb among the people (11:3) expressed in the sentence: "This city is the caldron and we be the flesh." They meant that Jerusalem would prove "an iron caldron-like defense from the fire" of the Babylonian hosts around about them in the siege; but God tells them that their proverb would fit the case in a different way (vv. 3-14). Jerusalem should be a caldron set upon the fire, but the people, so many pieces of flesh subjected to boiling water within.

At verse 15 a period of silence begins for the prophet, covering the three years of the siege (compare vv. 1 and 27 of the chapter, with 33:21-22). The opening of the period is marked by a personal calamity — the death of the prophet's wife (vv. 16-18). Ezekiel is not forbidden sorrow, but only the loud expression of it after the oriental manner, that his countrymen might be moved to ask the question (v. 19) whose answer constitutes the remainder of the chapter. When Jerusalem would be destroyed, the calamity would be so felt that the ordinary usages of mourning would be suspended, or perhaps it signified that they could not in their exile manifest their sorrow, but only "mourn one toward another." Thus the prophet was a sign unto them (v. 24).

QUESTIONS

1. What is the title of chapter 19, and to whom does it refer?
2. What gives occasion for the rejection of the elders (v. 20)?
3. Analyze the first part of this chapter.
4. Explain verses 25-26 and 32.
5. What Messianic promise is found in 21:27?
6. How would you explain chapter 33?
7. How does Ezekiel prove his inspiration in chapter 24?
8. How is the proverb about the caldron understood?
9. How long a period of silence is enjoined on the prophet?

EZEKIEL 25-32 — JUDGMENTS ON GENTILE NATIONS

The prophet's "dumbness" enjoined in the last chapter, was only towards his own people, and the interval was employed in messages touching the Gentiles. These nations might have many charges laid against them, but that which concerned a prophet of Israel chiefly was their treatment of that nation — see this borne out by the text. Their ruin was to be utter in the end, while that of Israel was but temporary (^{24:38}Jeremiah 46:28).

Seven nations are denounced, "the perfect number, implying that God's judgments would visit not merely these, but the whole round of the Gentile world." Babylon is excepted here, because she is, for the present, viewed as the rod of God's justice against Israel.

Use the marginal notes of your Bible for light on the historical references, and the maps for geographical data. A Bible dictionary also would be of much assistance.

"Men of the east" (24:4) means the nomadic tribes beyond the Jordan. The prophecies upon Gentile powers in these chapters, have had partial fulfillments, of which history bears witness. But the mention of the "Day of the Lord" (30:3) makes it evident that a fulfillment in the final sense is still future. These countries will once more be the battleground of the nations.

TYRE (CHAP. 26-28)

In the first of these chapters we have Tyre's sin (vv. 1-2), her doom and the instruments of its execution (vv. 3-14), and the effect of her downfall on the other nations (vv. 15-21). In the second, we have a lamentation over the loss of such earthly splendor, and in the third, an elegy addressed to the king on the humiliation of his sacrilegious pride. This last is the most important chapter of the three.

As to the destruction of Tyre, secular history shows how accurately God's word has come to pass. "Though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again" (v. 21). This is not to say that there should be no more a Tyre, but that there should be no more the Tyre that once was. As a matter of fact there were two Tyres in Ezekiel's time, old Tyre and new Tyre, the

first on the main land and the other out in the sea; and as to the first not a vestige of it was left.

Passing over the lamentation attention is called to the description of the king of Tyre (28:1-19), which should be read in connection with that of the king of Babylon in ~~2341~~ Isaiah 14. The comment in that case fits this also, for although these verses are referring to the king of Tyre then reigning, Ithbaal 2, yet they have evidently an ulterior and fuller accomplishment in Satan, or in his earthly embodiment, the beast, or the Antichrist (~~2072~~ Daniel 7:24; 11:36-37; ~~5104~~ 2 Thessalonians 2:4 and ~~6336~~ Revelation 13:6). Many expressions in the chapter baffle our understanding at present.

EGYPT (CHAPS. 29-32)

It should be remembered that "Pharaoh" was a common name of all the kings of Egypt, meaning, as some say, "the sun," others, "a crocodile," which was an object of worship by Egyptians. That nation was very prosperous and proud at this period, and no human sagacity could have foreseen its downfall as Ezekiel describes it, and as it came to pass, God's instrument was Babylon (29:19; 30:10), whose work is figuratively set forth in verses 4-12 of which 6 and 7 refer to the false confidence Israel reposed in Egypt during the siege, and which was recorded in Isaiah and Jeremiah. Note verses 13-15 in the light of the subsequent history of Egypt, and compare them with the promise to Israel (v. 21). God's covenant with the latter holds good, notwithstanding for the present she is dealt with like the Gentiles. "In that day" means in the fullest sense, the coming Day of the Lord.

Reaching chapter 30 we find two messages: the first (vv. 1-19), a repetition, with details, of that in 29:1-16; and the second, a vision particularly against Pharaoh himself.

"Heathen" (v. 3) should be "nations," from which it will be seen that "the judgment on Egypt is the beginning of a worldwide judgment on all the Gentile people considered as God's enemies." "No more a prince of the land of Egypt" (v. 13), means, no more an independent prince ruling the whole country.

Chapter 31 illustrates the overthrow of Egypt by that of Assyria, for although the former was not utterly to cease to be as in the case of the latter, yet it was to lose its prominence as an aspirant for world-dominion.

Assyria was overthrown by the Chaldeans or Babylonians, and so Egypt would be.

Chapter 32 includes two lamentations rather than one, a fortnight apart in time, divided at verse 17. Verse 7 may refer figuratively to the political sky, and yet the thought of supernatural darkness (as in ^{<21>}Exodus 10:21-23) is not excluded. The second lamentation accompanies Egypt in imagination to the unseen world where she shares the fate of other nations (v. 18 ff.).

QUESTIONS

1. What were the limitations on the prophet's dumbness?
2. Why were judgments pronounced against the Gentile nations?
3. How many nations are named, and what is the symbolism of that number?
4. Have these prophecies yet been entirely fulfilled?
5. Briefly analyze chapters 26-28.
6. What secondary yet complete application awaits the prophecy of 28:11-19?
7. How would you explain ^{<31>}Ezekiel 30:13?

EZEKIEL 33-37 — BROKEN SILENCE

Ezekiel's commission to his own countrymen is now renewed (vv. 21-22), and evidences a new tone. "Heretofore his functions had been chiefly threatening, but now the evil having reached its worst in the overthrow of Jerusalem, the consolatory element preponderates." (See ^{<32>}Ezekiel 22:11.)

Verses 23-29 of the same chapter, have reference to the handful left in Jerusalem after the siege, the best commentary on which is ^{<34>}Jeremiah 40-42. Verse 30 to the end describes conditions at Chebar. The last verse alludes to the news in verse 21. When they heard that report which took some time to reach them, they had reason to change their minds about the prophet and his work.

MANY FALSE SHEPHERDS AND THE ONE TRUE ONE (CHAP. 34)

"The shepherds of Israel" (v. 2) are not the prophets and priests so much (though they may be included), as the rulers — kings, princes, judges. The indictment against them extends to verse 10, at which point encouragement and comfort is given to the scattered sheep, the people of Israel. The language corresponds with that of all the prophets, and points to the regather-ing of the nation in the latter times, and their restoration and blessing in the land again (vv. 11-22). This will synchronize with the second coming of the Messiah, here called "my servant David" (v. 24) and "a plant of renown" (v. 29). Verses 25-28 indicate that millennial conditions are in mind. Though a number of the people returned after the seventy years of captivity, and though they had a larger posterity in the land, yet they were continually under the Gentile yoke, until in A.D. 70, they were finally driven away again in a dispersion which still continues.

JUDGMENT ON MOUNT SEIR OR EDOM (CHAP. 35)

This is placed here by way of contrast with Israel's promised blessing. The Edomites, descendants of Esau, Jacob's brother, had treated their kin shamefully in the past (v. 5), therefore, unlike them their desolations should be perpetual (v. 9). Remember that it is only in their national character of foes to Israel that they are to be destroyed. God is always merciful to individuals who repent. "When the whole earth rejoices" (v. 14), means Judah and the nations that submit themselves to her God.

MORAL RESTORATION (CHAP. 36)

It is always understood that the national restoration of Israel implies their moral restoration. They will repent and turn to the Lord before the promised blessings shall be poured out upon them. It is this moral restoration which is foretold here.

We have first restoration of the land (vv. 1-15), and then the people (35:16; 37:28). Verses 19-22, like those that follow, are spoken anticipatively. Observe God's motive for restoring them (vv. 22-23). Observe the symbolic allusion to their moral regeneration (vv. 25-27), and that afterwards comes the material blessing. Many will have been gathered back to their land before the moral cleansing takes place, but the blessing will be withheld till then (vv. 28-38).

VALLEY OF DRY BONES (CHAP. 37)

In this chapter we have in symbol what the preceding foretold in plain language — in other words what the prophet saw in vision. Verse 11 is the key to the chapter. The "bones" are the whole house of Israel on the earth at the time to which the prophecy refers, which is the beginning of the millennial age. The "graves" are the Gentile nations among which they shall be scattered. They shall be gathered out from among these nations back to their land (v. 12). This will result in their conversion (v. 13), after which they will be filled with the Holy Spirit (v. 14). The two sticks (v. 16) are Israel and Judah which shall again become one (vv. 17-27). Following this is a blessing on the whole earth (v. 28). Compare ^{<44516>}Acts 15:16-17.

Verse 8 indicates that the people will return to their land at first unconverted. "David my servant" (v. 24) is generally understood of the Messiah. The chapter, as a whole, presents a beautiful image of Christian faith, which believes in the coming general resurrection of the dead in the face of all appearances against it, because God said it (^{<4421>}John 5:21; ^{<44117>}Romans 4:17; ^{<44009>}2 Corinthians 1:9).

QUESTIONS

1. Explain the title of this lesson.
2. Quote ^{<44311>}Ezekiel 33:11.
3. Who are the shepherds of chapter 34?
4. What title is twice given the Messiah in this lesson?
5. What explains the location of chapter 35?
6. What precedes the national restoration of Israel?
7. Explain chapter 37.
8. Tell the story of that chapter in your own words.
9. What does verse 8 seem to show?
10. Of what is the chapter a beautiful image?

EZEKIEL 28-39 — PROPHECY AGAINST GOG

It is fitting that following the prediction of Israel's restoration and blessing, there should come another showing judgment upon her enemies. Only it is

doubtful if these enemies are those spoken of hitherto. Those were contiguous to Israel, but this is a north-eastern power which gathers its allies on the mountains of the Holy Land. There is reason to identify it with Russia. She and the northern powers allied with her have been the latest persecutors of dispersed Israel, "and it is congruous both with divine justice and God's covenants with Israel that destruction should fall at the climax of the last made attempt to exterminate her in Jerusalem."

Let not the similarity of names with ~~Rev~~ Revelation 20:7-8 lead to the supposition that the same event is in mind, as that takes place at the close of the millennium, and this near its beginning.

IDENTIFICATION WITH RUSSIA

Gog is probably a common name of the kings of the land like "Pharaoh" in Egypt. "The chief prince" is more properly Prince of Rosh or Russ, which suggests Russia, to say nothing of Meshec and Tubal, which are almost identical with Moscow and Tobolsk. It is more difficult to locate "Gomer" and "Togarmah," but the whole military combination never having been referred to prior to this time, strengthens the contention in favor of a Russian alliance of some sort.

THE PERIOD AND THE PLAN

Note the time and conditions in verse 8. "The latter years" — the end of this age. Israel is "brought back," restored, and is dwelling "safely" (also 5:11). Note the enemy's motive or plan (vv. 10-13), and compare Jehovah's in permitting this to come to pass (vv. 14-16). The closing verses show the punishment superhuman in character, and final in its result. No more fears for Israel until the muster of the nations at the close of the millennium.

THOROUGHNESS OF THE JUDGMENT (CHAPTER 39)

The prophecy is continued in this chapter, and verses 8-10 describe the going forth from the cities of Palestine to burn the arms of the foe. There is difficulty here, but seven is the sacred number (verse 9) indicating the completeness of the cleansing in Israel's zeal for purity. Nothing belonging to the enemy should be left to pollute the land. How different from the earlier times when Israel not only left the arms but the heathen themselves among them, to corrupt them.

A Public Burial Ground

Where the enemy expected to take the land for a possession, he would find a grave. Verse 11 might be translated: "I will give unto Gog a place for burial in Israel, the valley of the passengers on the east of the Sea; and it shall stop the passengers; and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude."

The travelers shall not stop their noses because of the smell, but the great number of mounds in evidence shall stay their progress, and lead them to think upon the vengeance poured out. This is the sense of the passage. In other words these graves shall be in no obscure spot, but in the direct pathway of travelers.

Verse 15 is striking as compared with the foregoing. In verse 13, "all the people of the land" are burying the dead for seven months. In verse 14, at the end of that time, special men are employed to continue the task to a finish; while in verse 15, the passers-by are helping them by setting up a sign near any exposed bone to identify it until removed.

Verses 17-20 describe the fowls and the beasts feasting on the slain — by rams, lambs, goats, etc. (v. 18) being meant men of different ranks and callings.

QUESTIONS

1. With what Gentile nation is this chapter probably dealing?
2. State two or three reasons for your belief.
3. What period of time is in mind?
4. What shows the superhuman character of the punishment?
5. What illustrates its thoroughness?

EZEKIEL 40-48 — THE MILLENNIAL TEMPLE

These chapters give a picture of the restored temple at Jerusalem during the Millennium, and of the worship of the Messiah when He shall exercise sway from that center to the ends of the earth.

Beginning with chapter 40:1-5, we have an introduction to the subject:

- (1) the location and the opening vision (the vision is of a city on the south);
- (2) a man with a measuring rod;
- (3) a building surrounded by a wall (v. 5).

In verses 6-16 the measurement of the east gate, the threshold, posts, porches, chambers, entry, pillars, etc. Following this (vv. 7-23), the outer court, the north gate and details corresponding to the preceding. Then the south gate with its appurtenances, and so on to verse 38. In verses 38-43 we have a description of the cells and entrances, the tables of stone for slaying the offerings, the inner cells for the singers (vv. 44-47), and finally the measuring of the porch (vv. 48-49).

In chapter 41 the prophet views the house itself, and in chapter 42 he sees the cells or chambers for the priests (vv. 1-12). This is followed by regulations as to eating, dressing of the priests (vv. 13-14), the chapter closing with a general summary.

In chapter 43, a more august sight presents itself, the Shekinah, the visible glory of Jehovah is seen returning to dwell in the midst of His people (vv. 1-5). The force of this is clear enough. It is the sign of God's return to Israel which He had left since the time of their captivity in Babylon. When it left, Israel, or the Jews, ceased to be His recognized people, but when they are taken up again under the Messiah the glory comes back (vv. 6-9).

Following this we have the measurement of the altar, and statutes for the offering of burnt offerings and the sprinkling of blood (vv. 13-17). But why is this, if we are dealing with millennial conditions? While Israel is to return to the land, and be converted and blessed, it will be still as Israel, not as Christians. In the present dispensation all believers, both Jews and Gentiles, belong to Christ in heaven, where such differences are unknown, but when this prophecy is fulfilled, and Christ's reign begins on earth, the distinction will be again resumed, though now for blessing, and not for cursing, as of old. He quotes verses 18-27 as decisive of this, since in these chapters we hear of priests and Levites and the seed of Zadok entrusted with the duties of the altar.

Speaking of the offerings, they will be memorial, looking back to the cross, as under the old covenant they were anticipatory, looking forward to the cross. In neither case have animal sacrifices power to put away sin (~~4:25~~ Romans 3:25; ~~8:04~~ Hebrews 10:4).

FIVE VIEWS OF INTERPRETATION

There are five interpretations of these chapters:

- 1.** Some think they describe the temple at Jerusalem prior to the Babylonian captivity, and are designed to preserve a memorial of it. But the objection is that such a memorial is unnecessary because of the records in Kings and Chronicles; while the description is untrue because in many particulars it does not agree with that in the books named.
- 2.** Some think these chapters describe the temple in Jerusalem after the return from the seventy years in Babylon, but this can not be, because there are more marks of contrast than likeness between the temple here described and that.
- 3.** Some think they describe the ideal temple which the Jews should have built after the seventy years' return, and which they never realized. But this lowers the character of the divine Word. Why should this prophecy in Ezekiel have been given if it was never to be fulfilled?
- 4.** Some think this temple in Ezekiel symbolizes the spiritual blessings of the church in the present age. But this appears unlikely, because even those who hold the theory can not explain the symbolism of which they speak. Moreover, even as symbolism it leaves out several important features of Christianity, such as the atonement and intercession of the high priest.
- 5.** The last view is that in the preceding comments, that we have here a prediction of the temple that shall be built in the millennial age. This appears a fitting and intelligent sequel to the preceding prophecies. A strong objection to it exists in that sacrifices and feasts are referred to, which seem contradictory to Christianity. But it should be remembered that Christianity is not meant, but a new

dispensation with Israel on the earth while the church is in the air with Christ. This involves changes of immense magnitude.

An Architect's Testimony.

While lecturing in Edinburgh, the author received a communication from G.S. Aitkin, Esq., an architect of that city, who had studied this vision of the temple from a technical standpoint, and made a plan of it, finding a place for every measurement referred to.

The two points he settled were, first, as to the meaning of chapter 40:14, which he found referred to a girth measurement. This fixed the position of the outer gates in relation to the enclosing walls, and so determined the position of all the other parts following. The second point, that the five hundred cubit or "reed" dimension (chap. 42:15-16) was also girth and not linear dimensions, as hitherto maintained. The following is an extract of a paper prepared by him on the subject for the "Transactions" of the Royal Institute of British Architects:

In the fourteenth verse of the fortieth chapter is mentioned the measurement that fixes the projections of the gate in relation to the enclosing walls; and as will be afterwards seen, the ultimate form and dimensions of the entire enclosure. Hitherto Ezekiel had been describing linear measurements, but now the expression "Post of the court round about the gate" may be taken to imply that the prophet's companion made a girth measurement from the post of the court on one side right round the gate to the post of the court on the other side of 60 cubits. By deducting the girth of the porch, which is 45 cubits (see author's plan from A to B) from this 60 cubits 15 remain, or 7 1/2 cubits for each shoulder.

The measurements of the buildings within the temple courts being completed, Ezekiel is brought through the eastern gate to the outside of the enclosing north, south, east and west wall, which are measured in his presence, and found to be 500 reeds, or, as corrected by the LXX, 500 cubits each.

To meet this statement, *Hastings' Bible Dictionary* represents the temple area as enclosed with a straight lined wall, which, unbroken in outline, necessarily leads to so large an internal area as to require a greater number of courts than the inspired record allows.

The author's plan, on the other hand, measuring around the broken outline which is obtained by adding the porches and the 'People's Sacrificial Kitchen,' 40 x 30 internally (46:22), or (adding thickness of wall) 52 cubits by 42 cubits externally, secures the desired dimensions of 500 cubits for each side, the Priests' Kitchens (46:19-20) being substituted on the west side for the porches of the other three sides.

If this exegesis is correct, it is a further confirmation that the vision was the result of divine inspiration. Mr. Aitken did not understand what the intrinsic meaning of the whole passage might be, but it occurred to him, after listening to an exposition of the book by the present author, that it might refer to the future rebuilding of the Jewish temple at Jerusalem.

QUESTIONS

1. What picture is given in these chapters?
2. How is 43:1-5 to be explained?
3. Explain verses 13-17 of the same chapter.
4. Name the five views of the interpretation of the whole vision.
5. What is the position taken by the architect quoted?

EZEKIEL 44-48 — THE CLOSE OF THE BOOK

THE GATE OF THE PRINCE (44:1-3)

As the glory of Jehovah had entered this gate (48:4-5), it must hereafter be closed for all but His representative — the prince. This can not mean the Messiah, because the prince requires a sin-offering. (Remember that sin will be suppressed in that day, but not yet extirpated.) Doubtless this prince is a future prince of the house of David.

THE FUTURE PRIESTS AND LEVITES (44:9-31)

Verses 9-14 show that the Levites who, in the earlier time had turned from God to idols, will be made to feel their shame since it is the days of the earthly kingdom that are here referred to, and righteousness (not grace) governs. The concluding verses of this chapter show conclusively that they

are dealing, not with Christian conditions, but with Israel again on the earth, and in covenant relations with God. Verses 17-22, for example, is a repetition of the Levitical law for the priests, only with greater strictness. The priests' decisions are both for ceremonial and judicial matters (vv. 23-24). Death may be rare and exceptional on the earth in that day, but it will still take place (vv. 25-27).

THE LAND AND THE FEASTS (CHAP. 45)

Jehovah's portion of the land must be set aside in acknowledgment of His claim to the whole, but He applies it for the sanctuary and those who minister there (vv. 1-5). The portion of the prince comes next, and then that of the people (vv. 6-8). Note the prophecy, "My princes shall no more oppress the people" — selfishness and greed must at least cease on the earth (vv. 9-12). Note, also, the religious dues to be paid (vv. 13-17). Also the fact of sin still existing (vv. 18-20), and the feasts (vv. 21-24), excepting, however, the feasts of weeks, or Pentecost. One might think this would be the most prominent of the feasts during the Millennium, as that period is considered the era of the Holy Spirit which Pentecost represents, but the feast drops out of the list. Of course the Holy Spirit will be poured out on all flesh in that day, as the prophets foretell, but for a different object than now. Now He comes to baptize both Jew and Gentile into the body of Christ (this is the meaning of Pentecost), but then each Jew and Gentile will be blessed on their own ground, but there will not be union. There will be greater breadth of blessing then, but not the height and depth there is today.

The feast of tabernacle, however, is alluded to (v. 25), because it most fully expresses their great ingathering when they rejoice before Jehovah, and look back on pilgrim days forever past.

PUBLIC WORSHIP (CHAP. 46)

The Sabbath is made much of, and the new moon (v 1). There is a distinction between the prince and the people, but neither goes within the temple to worship (vv. 2-3). There is no drawing near as we now do through the rent veil, for Israel is being blessed on earth, and not like the church in heavenly places. There is no longer an evening lamb, though the offering of the morning lamb continues (vv. 12-15). The jubilee year is re-established (vv. 16-18).

THE TEMPLE WATERS (47:1-12)

Compare with verses 1-5 of this chapter, ~~<0485>~~ Joel 3:15 and ~~<3848>~~ Zechariah 14:8, which show that the region of the Dead Sea, which had been the embodiment of barrenness and desolation, is, in the coming day to be changed into a scene of life and fruitfulness. And the remarkable fact is that the waters increase continually, without the least hint, rather to the exclusion of, accession from tributary streams. The whole thing is literal in fact, and yet supernatural in origin. For the healing effect of these waters read verses 6-12.

THE DIVISION OF THE LAND (47:13-48:35)

In accordance with ~~<0485>~~ Genesis 48:5 and ~~<3301>~~ 1 Chronicles 5:1 Joseph has two portions (v. 13). The land will be rich enough not only for all Israel gathered there, but for the stranger and his children as well (v. 22). And think of the largeness of vision of Israel in that day (v. 23)! A comparison of chapter 48 shows the distribution of the tribes in the millennial kingdom will be different from that previously known, but we can not consider it in detail (vv. 1-29). The distribution is to be made by lot.

The last and chief glory is the presence of Jehovah in the city of His choice (vv. 30-35).

QUESTIONS

1. What shows that the prince is not identical with the Messiah?
2. What consequence of sin will still be in evidence during the Millennium?
3. What noted feast of earlier Israel will be omitted in the Millennium? Why?
4. What ordinance of public worship shows the less desirable position of earthly Israel as compared with the heavenly church?
5. What other prophets corroborate Ezekiel concerning the temple waters?
6. Are these waters literal or only figurative?
7. What is the chief glory of the city of Jerusalem in the millennial age?