

Small Group Guide: Ezekiel's Final Vision

The Lord Is There (Ezekiel 44-48)



Opening Prayer & Icebreaker (10 minutes)

Icebreaker Question: Have you ever missed something important that was right in front of you? What helped you finally see it?

Key Themes Summary (5 minutes)

This study covers Ezekiel's vision of a future temple where:

- The Lord dwells permanently with His people
 - The priesthood is restored with faithful servants
 - Israel finally understands what they missed about their Messiah
 - God fulfills His promises to Abraham regarding the land
 - The city is named "The Lord Is There"
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Discussion Questions

Section 1: The Shut Gate (Ezekiel 44:1-3)

Read Ezekiel 44:1-3

1. Why do you think the eastern gate remains shut once the Lord enters? What does this symbolize about God's permanent presence?
2. How does this contrast with Israel's history of God's presence coming and going from the temple?

Section 2: The Priesthood Restored (Ezekiel 44:10-31)

Read Ezekiel 44:15-16, 23-24

3. The sons of Zadok are rewarded for their faithfulness with direct access to minister with Christ. What does this teach us about the value of faithfulness even when others around us are unfaithful?
4. The pastor suggests this millennial temple allows Israel to practice the sacrifices while finally understanding what they pointed to—Jesus. How might going through familiar rituals with new understanding change their meaning? Can you think of examples from your own faith journey?
5. In verse 28, it says "I am their inheritance." What does it mean for God Himself to be our inheritance rather than earthly possessions?

Section 3: Justice and Order (Ezekiel 45-46)

Read Ezekiel 45:9-10

6. God emphasizes honest scales, fair treatment, and that rulers cannot evict people from their property. Why is justice so central to God's kingdom? How should this shape our lives today?
7. The temple worship includes a detailed "traffic plan" for the feast days (46:9). What does this orderly approach to worship teach us about God's character?

Section 4: The River of Life (Ezekiel 47:1-12)

Read Ezekiel 47:1-9

8. The river flowing from the temple brings healing and life wherever it goes. Jesus called Himself "living water" (John 7:38). How does this physical river in Ezekiel's vision connect to Jesus's spiritual promise?

9. The water starts at ankle-depth, then knee-deep, waist-deep, and finally too deep to cross. What might this progression symbolize about God's presence and work in our lives?

Section 5: The Land Restored (Ezekiel 47:13-48:29)

Read Ezekiel 47:13-14, 48:35

10. God finally fulfills the complete land promises made to Abraham. Why is it significant that God keeps promises even when they take thousands of years to fulfill?
11. The entire vision concludes with the city being named "The Lord Is There." Why is God's presence the ultimate point of everything?

Key Takeaways

1. **God's presence is the ultimate reward** - The Levites' inheritance is God Himself, not land or possessions
2. **Faithfulness matters** - The sons of Zadok receive special access because they remained faithful when others didn't
3. **God keeps His promises** - Even after 3,500+ years, God will fulfill what He promised Abraham
4. **Understanding transforms practice** - Israel will finally practice their traditions while seeing Jesus, whom those traditions pointed to
5. **God desires to dwell with His people** - The entire vision culminates in "The Lord Is There"

Practical Application

Personal Reflection (5 minutes of silence)

- Is God's presence my ultimate treasure, or am I more focused on earthly inheritances?
- Where have I been going through spiritual "motions" without understanding what they point to?
- Am I being faithful in small things even when others around me aren't?

This Week's Challenge (Choose one)

Option 1: Presence Over Presents Identify one area where you've been seeking fulfillment in possessions, achievements, or recognition rather than in God's presence. Spend 15 minutes each day this week in quiet worship, asking God to become your inheritance.

Option 2: Learning What You Missed Think of a spiritual practice, Bible passage, or tradition you've participated in for years. This week, study it with fresh eyes, asking, "What does this teach me about Jesus that I may have missed?"

Option 3: Faithful in the Mundane The sons of Zadok were faithful when it wasn't popular. Identify one area where you can be faithful this week even if no one notices—in your workplace, home, or community.

Group Prayer Time (10-15 minutes)

Prayer Prompts:

- Thank God that He desires to dwell with us permanently
 - Ask for eyes to see Jesus in Scripture and practices we may have misunderstood
 - Pray for faithfulness in our daily lives, even in small things
 - Request that God's presence would become our greatest treasure
 - Pray for the nation of Israel and God's promises to them
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For Further Study

- **Zechariah 14** - Parallel prophecy about living water flowing from Jerusalem
 - **Revelation 21-22** - The New Jerusalem where God dwells with His people eternally
 - **Hebrews 8-10** - How Christ fulfills the Old Testament priesthood and sacrifices
 - **John 4:1-26** - Jesus as living water
 - **1 Peter 2:4-10** - Believers as a royal priesthood and living stones
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Leader Notes

- Be sensitive that some group members may hold different views on end-times prophecy. Focus on the main point: God desires to dwell with His people
- The detailed nature of Ezekiel's vision can be overwhelming. Keep bringing discussion back to the central theme: "The Lord Is There"
- Some may struggle with the idea of future animal sacrifices. Emphasize the pastor's interpretation: these would be memorial/educational, done in the presence of the Lamb who was slain
- Encourage vulnerability when discussing areas where we've "missed" what God was showing us

Closing Thought: "The reward is Christ. The point of everything—the temple, the city, the land, the practices—is that the Lord is there. May we never lose sight of that truth."

5-Day Devotional: The Lord Is There



Day 1: The Gate That Stays Shut

Reading: Ezekiel 44:1-3; John 10:7-9

Devotional:

The eastern gate remains shut because the Lord has entered and will never leave. This powerful image speaks to the permanence of God's presence with His people. Unlike the temporary dwelling in the tabernacle that moved from place to place, Christ's presence is eternal and unchanging. When Jesus declared Himself the door, He wasn't offering temporary access but permanent relationship. The shut gate isn't about exclusion—it's about completion. God's promise to dwell with His people is finally, fully realized. Consider today: What areas of your life need the assurance of God's permanent presence? Where are you still treating His dwelling as temporary rather than eternal? Rest in the truth that He has come to stay.

Day 2: Seeing What We Missed

Reading: Ezekiel 45:18-25; Luke 24:25-27

Devotional:

Israel will celebrate Passover again, but this time with the Lamb of God present among them. For centuries, they performed rituals without fully understanding what they pointed toward. How often do we go through religious motions without truly seeing Christ? The disciples on the Emmaus road needed Jesus to open the Scriptures before they recognized Him. Israel will finally understand every sacrifice, every feast, every ordinance when they look upon the One they pierced. This isn't about condemnation but restoration—a patient God teaching His people what they missed. Today, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal where you've been going through spiritual motions. What practices have become routine rather than revelatory? Let Christ open your eyes afresh.

Day 3: Living Water Flows

Reading: Ezekiel 47:1-12; John 7:37-39

Devotional:

From the temple flows a river that brings life wherever it goes. Starting at ankle-depth, it becomes a river too deep to cross—a perfect picture of God's overwhelming abundance. What was dead is revived; what was bitter becomes sweet. Jesus promised that from our innermost being would flow rivers of living water. This isn't a trickle of spiritual life but an ever-deepening, ever-widening flood of His presence. Notice that the trees along the riverbank bear fruit every month and their leaves bring healing. When we're connected to the source of living water, we become conduits of life to others. Where in your life do you need this healing water to flow? What dead places need reviving? Position yourself near the source today.

Day 4: The Reward Is Christ Himself

Reading: Ezekiel 44:28-30; Psalm 16:5-6

Devotional:

"I am their inheritance... I am their possession." The priests receive no land because they receive something infinitely better—the Lord Himself. This echoes throughout Scripture: our greatest reward isn't what God gives but who God is. The sons of Zadok, faithful during unfaithful times, receive the ultimate honor of direct access to Christ's presence. Their reward for faithfulness is more of Him. We live in a culture obsessed with accumulation, but God invites us to a different economy where He is the treasure. The psalmist declared, "The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup." Today, examine what you're truly seeking. Are you pursuing God's blessings or God Himself? The faithful priests teach us that proximity to Christ surpasses all earthly possessions.

Day 5: The Lord Is There

Reading: Ezekiel 48:30-35; Revelation 21:1-4

Devotional:

After nine chapters of intricate detail—measurements, allotments, gates, and boundaries—everything culminates in one profound truth: "The Lord is there." This is the fulfillment of every promise, the answer to every longing, the completion of every prophecy. From the Garden of Eden where God walked with humanity, through the tabernacle and temple, to the incarnation when the Word "tabernacled" among us, the story has always been about God's desire to dwell with His people. Revelation promises that one day God will make His dwelling among us permanently, wiping away every tear. The city's new name isn't about its architecture or geography—it's about presence. Whatever you're facing today, remember: the greatest promise isn't about circumstances changing but about God being there. His presence transforms everything.