

graceWORKS ! GOING DEEPER¹ The Papou Study Bible is a daily study provided by me to



help folks explore the depth and joy of the “conneXion” life of God. It’s my personal study, and is not intended as a doctrinal statement or statement of any church or denomination or congregation. It’s also my belief that “grace” works, and the servant of God should always want to go deeper. Multi-tasking as usual, I’m also calling this the “Papou Study Bible.” I’m writing it as if I were speaking to my girls who love me and any descendant they have that love their Papou too. And to anyone who wants to consider me a spiritual Dad or “Papou.” I want them to be able to study the Bible with Papou (grandpa in Greek) after I’m gone---and if they don’t, I’ll haunt them. The Scriptures say it’s noble to “search the Scriptures daily” to verify truth like the ancient Bereans did (Acts 17:11). My folks came from Berea. My incredible Dad (and your grandfather and great grandfather, guys), Vasil Charles Valekis taught me to do this like he did---every day until I die. He taught me and everyone I know to go to church no matter what and to put God first. While Mama (Maria Pagona Stratakis Valekis) never really did this, she made sure we listened to Daddy on this one. She would have hit us with a spatula or frying pan or worse if we didn’t. This is a simple sharing my “daily search.” And I’d like to think it is a continuation of God’s life through my Dad through me. Both my “Dads” by the way. And a way to honor him, mama and our loving “Dad”---God. And for all of us to be together, in Spirit, even when we I join them in heaven. I like to use the Blue Letter literal, very “visual,” Greek translation a lot to help “visualize” these truths the beautiful way Greek enables you to view. And I like to share this with folks serving in an elder capacity, or any capacity, to grow them, challenge them, and stretch them. But especially share it with anyone I’ve ever brought to Christ and family members who truly love me. And when you study these, I’ll make sure to connect with you from heaven. *Ever an orthodox Greek, Jim Valekis*

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Christ IN You Series

Colossians 1:27 (King James Version)

²⁷To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is *Christ in you*, the hope of glory

graceWORKS! GOING DEEPER
Ezekiel 45 Part ²

The level of detail in this prophetic parable is amazing. With the vision now including the resurrection of the “whole house of Israel” from death, and the restoration of the Temple and the priesthood, a shift is made to the division of the land. Again, Israel is seen as the center of the world, perhaps of the universe! Great detail is given about the restoration of worship cycles, sacrifices offered, and the perfectly symmetrical temple. Again, I see this as a prophetic parable spoken to these people of the perfection that is being offered through the service of Christ---and it’s intriguing to consider that a creaturely “visual” of what Christ has done for us may be effectuated for all to see. Let’s continue our study, with a brief wrap up on the last portion of Ezekiel 44.

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² New International Version (NIV) Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright ©1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide. (Author’s note: This translation, and the source for many of the study notes that accompany it, are taken from The NIV Study Bible, Copyright 1985,1995, 2002, 2008, 2011 . These notes are referenced throughout and paraphrased frequently in the notes.)

I said I would briefly comment on this, so let me do so before I get into 45 proper.

God is holy. We, as His priests are holy!

You are what you eat! I'll briefly comment on this next time and move on.

Ezekiel 4p4 Wrap U

²⁸ “I am to be the only inheritance the priests have. You are to give them no possession in Israel; I will be their possession.

Wow. What a beautiful, beautiful inheritance---for “God” to be not only your God, but your possession. I would like to believe that this is true of me in my life. He’s my main blessing. The honor of having a life focused on a relationship with God is absolutely wonderful. I love the way it’s pictured in this portion of Scripture.

²⁹ They will eat the grain offerings, the sin offerings and the guilt offerings; and everything in Israel devoted ^[given over irrevocably] to the LORD will belong to them. ³⁰ The best of all the firstfruits and of all your special gifts will belong to the priests.

You are to give them the first portion of your ground meal so that a blessing may rest on your household. ³¹ The priests must not eat anything, whether bird or animal, found dead or torn by wild animals.

The priests were to earn their living from their work for the Lord.

So when people brought offerings, they ate a portion of it. It was a mixed bag in one way, since they technically wouldn't "own" anything. There was not even a tribal land assignment made to the Levites. But on the other hand, since people were supposed to offer the best to the Lord, they would receive the "best of all the firstfruits."

Now let's see how that works in the assignment of the land being made here.

Again, I'll use the Christian Standard Bible because it's easier for me to visualize the dimensions of this area when it's already translated in terms of miles.

Ezekiel 45 Christian Standard Bible (CSB)

The Sacred Portion of the Land

45 "When you divide the land by lot as an inheritance, set aside a donation to the LORD, a holy portion of the land, $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles^[a] long and $6\frac{2}{3}$ miles^[b] wide. This entire region will be holy.

When Israel first came into the Promised Land, Joshua divided the land "by lot."

Distribute the land **by lot**, according to your clans. To a larger group give a larger inheritance, and to a smaller group a smaller one. Whatever falls to them **by lot** will be theirs. Distribute it according to your ancestral tribes. **Numbers 33:54**

Here is a brief commentary on that custom from the website: <https://www.biblestudy.org/question/what-is-casting-lots.html>

Numbers 18:23

It is the Levites who are to do the work at the tent of meeting and bear the responsibility for any offenses they commit against it. This is a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. They will receive no inheritance among the Israelites.

Numbers 18:24

Instead, I give to the Levites as their inheritance the tithes that the Israelites present as an offering to the Lord. That is why I said concerning them: "They will have no inheritance among the Israelites."

Numbers 26:62

All the male Levites a month old or more numbered 23,000. They were not counted along with the other Israelites because they received no inheritance among them.

Deuteronomy 10:9

That is why the Levites have no share or inheritance among their fellow Israelites; the Lord is their inheritance, as the Lord your God told them.)

Note the interesting phrase in the last verse posted:

. . . the Lord is their inheritance!

The ancient practice of casting lots would be the same as throwing dice or flipping a coin we commonly use today. In ancient times, they used varying means to cast lots, depending on the place and local customs, such as coins, polished sticks, cards, dice, and so on.

What is particularly significant is the fact that, in ancient Israel, **the High Priest** did use from time to time the tradition of casting lots for important, uncertain decisions. It amounted to consulting God for the answer, as Proverbs states "The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord" (Proverbs 16:33).

At any rate, a holy “donation” of the land would be made, a “donation” to the Lord. It would be the place where Temple would lay, and the priests and Levites homes.

² In this area there will be a square section^[c] for the sanctuary, 875 by 875 feet,^[d] with 87½ feet^[e] of open space all around it.

Since this is translated into miles, let me just share how the numbers are expressed in the ancient measurement of cubits. The Sacred Portion of the land would be “25,000 cubits long” and “20,000 cubits wide.” The NIV says “the entire area will be holy.” Out of this section would be a “500 cubit by 500 cubit” square in which the Temple would be built. A section of “25,000 cubits by 10,000” cubits would be allotted to the priests to build their homes, and another section of similar size to the Levites to live in. The thought is they would live in close proximity to the Temple. A smaller section, “25,000 cubits long and 5,000 cubits wide” would be sacred portion that belonged to all of Israel. And the land on either side of the this holy area would belong to the prince. Notice how that translates in miles.

³ From this holy portion,^[f] you will measure off an area 8½ miles long and 3½ miles^[g] wide, in which the sanctuary, the most holy place, will stand.^[h] ⁴ It will be a holy area of the land to be used by the priests who minister in the sanctuary, who approach to serve the LORD. It will be a place for their houses, as well as a holy area for the sanctuary. ⁵ There will be another area 8½ miles long and 3½ miles wide for the Levites who minister in the temple; it will be their possession for towns to live in.^[i]

So even though they technically received no tribe, they did get some land designated to them to build their homes on. Note this difference called out by the NIV. The priests would not own the land they built their homes on. But the Levites were allowed to possess their portion.

⁶ “As the property of the city, set aside an area 1⅔ miles^[j] wide and 8½ miles long, adjacent to the holy donation of land. It will be for the whole house of Israel.

The former Jerusalem contained the Temple area. The new holy city would not (and it doesn't follow apparently that it had to be Jerusalem). But it would be adjacent though to the area. Now notice how the prince fits into this.

⁷ And the prince will have the area on each side of the holy donation of land and the city's property, adjacent to the holy donation and the city's property, stretching to the west on the west side and to the east on the east side. Its length will correspond to one of the tribal portions from the western boundary to the eastern boundary. ⁸ This will be his land as a possession in Israel. My princes will no longer oppress my people but give the rest of the land to the house of Israel according to their tribes.

Jesus is our High Priest. But Jesus is also our King of Kings, our Prince. At any rate, it is visualized that the leader of the new Israel would be in close (but distinct) proximity of the holy donation of land, which contains the most important space of all Israel, indeed, it's heart beat---The Temple of the Lord.

The Lord was to be at the center of all life in this restored Israel!

Let's continue to study this and see what else we can learn.

Here's a picture of this from a website called: bethelreadstheword.wordpress.com

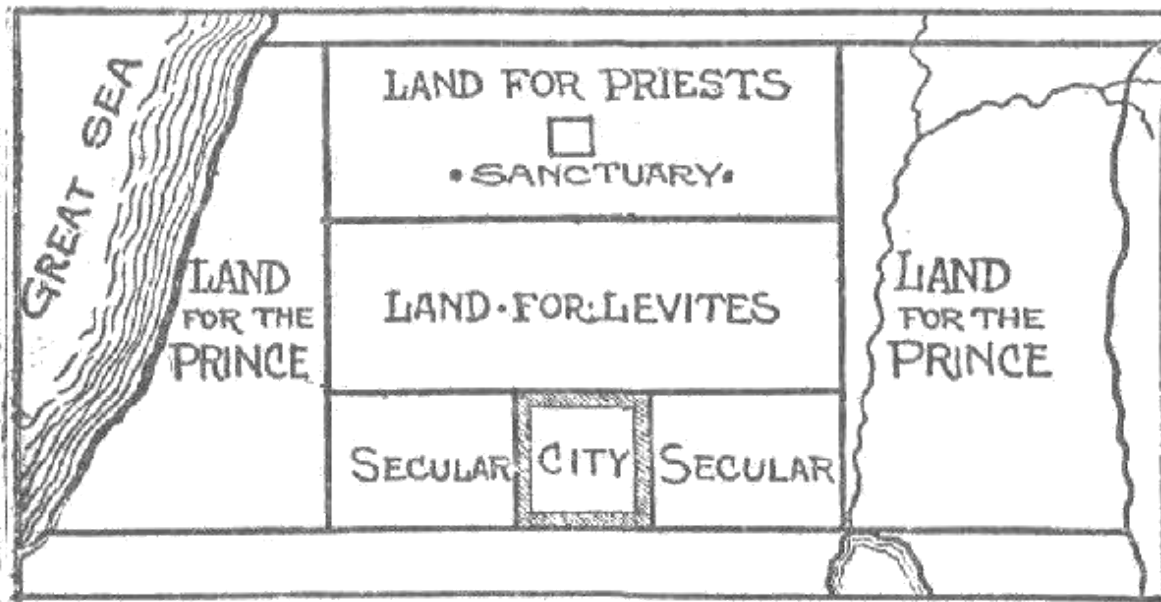


FIG 2 THE HOLY OFFERING OF LAND