

# MATAN AL HAPEREK

## The Six-Year Online Weekly Tanach Learning Program



In loving memory of Ilan Yechezkel ben Aharon Zev v'Sara Rivkah z"l  
and Elisha Chanina ben HaRav Aharon Avraham v'Chana Mindel z"l

### Perek 47:1-12

The perakim about the Temple end with a wonderful vision of a stream that trickles out of the Temple and flows to the Dead Sea (1-2). The stream begins as a weak trickle and grows until the prophet can no longer pass over it (3-6). The wondrous waters revive and heal everything around them, eventually reaching the Dead Sea which becomes a vibrant and blossoming area (7-12). The vision of the stream trickling out of the Temple is the transition from the perakim of the Temple which come before it to the perakim which deal with the division of the land and the borders which come after.

- 1 The static appearance of the future Temple acquires a dynamic twist when we see the water coming out of the Temple and expanding into a wide stream. There is a connection between the tour of the Temple and the tour of the trail of the stream: pay attention to the similarity of the role of the man in both tours, and note the difference in the direction of the tour – from outside inward and from inside outward. Think about the tension between the trends of separation and of influence of the Temple on its surroundings as seen in both tours and explore what stands behind the differences.

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- 2 a) The vision of the stream is based on a description of the Garden of Eden. See Bereshit 2:9-10 and compare it to pesukim 1 and 12 in our prophecy. What does this similarity teach us about the explanation of the vision of the stream? Pay attention to the role of the Temple and the meaning of the return of the Spirit of God to it. See also the description of the redemption in 36:35.
- b) Central to the prophecy of the healing and reviving stream we have an image (7) and a vision which Yechezkel hears from the angel (8-12). The stream flows toward the Dead Sea. Think about the meaning of the repair being done here, in light of the texts in Bereshit 13:10 and 19:24-25. See also Yechezkel's prophecy in 16:55.

### Perek 47:13 - 48

The section which ends Sefer Yechezkel deals with the future borders of the land and its division for the tribes. This division of the land for the tribes is completely different from the division which took place in the days of the First Temple. It is based on dividing the land into equal strips, with the Temple and the city being central and shared by all the tribes.

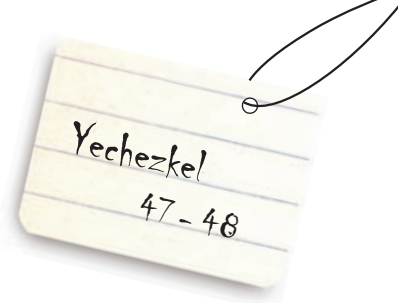
- 3 The future borders are based on the description in Bamidbar 34, but differ from it in a few aspects.
- a) Who will settle the land according to Sefer Bamidbar (34:13-15) and according to Sefer Yechezkel (47:13-14)? Think about the meaning of the change, and what Yechezkel's attitude is toward Transjordan settlement. See also the criticism of the two and a half tribes in Yehoshua 22:19. Think about how the change we see in Yechezkel meshes with the general trend toward repair which is found in these perakim.
- b) Pay attention to the novelty of who receives an inheritance in the land that did not before, in the section which is added at the end of the perek (21-23).



- 4 The order of the division as described in Yechezkel is from the North to the South: First the Northern tribes are listed (1-7), afterward the Temple and the city (8-22) and finally, the Southern tribes are listed (23-34). This division is different in its principle from the division which existed in the time of the First Temple. What are the different views which are the basis for the new division of the land? Pay attention to the similarity between this division and the tribes' camp around the tabernacle in Bamidbar 2. Think about the nature of the division into strips which are equal in width.
- 5 "...and the name of the city from that day will be *"The Lord is There."* (35) – the description of the division of the land, and with it the entire book of Yechezkel, ends by noting the name of *the city* – Jerusalem – calling it *"The Lord is There."* The future change of the name of Jerusalem appears in a number of different prophets – see for example Yishayahu 1:26. What does this future name of Jerusalem express? How does it express the central idea of the perakim of the Temple in Yechezkel and Yechezkel's general attitude to Jerusalem? Pay attention to the fact that the name of Jerusalem is never mentioned in the perakim of redemption, from perek 37 until the end of the book. See also Yechezkel's harsh criticism of Jerusalem in his prophecies (for example 22:2, 5). Use the following sources to understand:

**Gemara in Bava Batra 75b:** R. Shmuel b. Nahmani said in the name of R. Yochanan: Three were called by the name of the Holy One; blessed be He, and they are the following: The righteous, the Messiah and Jerusalem... Jerusalem — as it is written: *"and the name of the city from that day shall be 'the Lord is there.'"* Do not read, 'there' (in Hebrew: *shama*) but 'its name' (in Hebrew: *shma*).

**Radak:** *"and the name of the city from that day shall be 'the Lord is there.'"* - This means to say that the Spirit of God will never leave the city again.



## Appendix

### The healing of the Dead Sea

There were two prophets who saw visions of a future in which fresh water would flow out of Jerusalem and into the Dead Sea. In his vision, Zechariah saw the Mount of Olives split into two, as he mentions the earthquake in the days of Uziyahu, king of Judah: *“And it shall come to pass on that day that spring water shall come forth from Jerusalem; half of it to the eastern sea (= the Dead Sea), and half of it to the western sea”* (Zechariah 14:8) Yechezkel, as is his wont, describes the vision with much detail and vibrant color...

The clear distinction which Yechezkel makes between the water of the Dead Sea which will be healed of its saltiness and come alive and the marshes and the pools which will be set aside for salt and will not be healed is understandable in light of what we know about the sea and its properties. Y Breslavy writes: *“The pools, the puddles, the precipitates and the salt crusts along the shores of the sea are clear traces of tides in the Dead Sea. At the time of high tide the water rises and covers the land strip by strip, and as it recedes it leaves behind standing water. The water in these pools and in ruts and marshes evaporates, and leaves behind the salt which was dissolved in it. During Turkish rule the Bedouins would collect the salt to sell in the marketplace... We can understand Yechezkel’s prophecy in light of this phenomenon: *“And it will be [a place] beside which fishermen will stand, from Ein-gedi to Ein-eglaim; a place for spreading nets they will be; their fish will be of many kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea, very many. Its marshes and its pools will not be healed; they will be set aside for salt [mines].”** That is to say, the waters of the Dead Sea themselves will become sweet and will even be rich with fish, but the marshes and the pools which surround the sea after the tide will not be healed. They will serve as a source of salt.”

(Free translation of N. HaReuveni, *Midbar veRoch BeMoreshet Yisrael*, pp. 35-36)

(Wikipedia / Ester Inbar)



Salt pools of the Dead Sea Works on the Southern half of the Dead Sea

## חזק חזק ונתחזק!

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