



KINGDOM PROPHET

PART SIX

Forty Daily Devotions
from Ezekiel 26-48
(Based on the NKJV)

Introduction

Although we primarily think of Ezekiel as a prophet, the book that bears his name clearly identifies him first as a priest (Ezekiel 1:3). The name, Ezekiel, means “God strengthens” or “strengthened by God.” God’s strength was something that Ezekiel, and the people to whom he preached and ministered, were going to need! When Nebuchadnezzar transported the second group of exiles from the Promised Land to Babylon, Ezekiel and his contemporaries were among them. The lives of Ezekiel and his fellow Jews were marked by four things: chastisement, confusion, change, and comfort. I can think of no greater change for an Israelite than to be removed from the land that God promised to them and then to be relocated to a land that did not even believe in their God! What we will read in this powerful book is a story of how God used a priest-turned-prophet to convict and then comfort His people during some very difficult times in their lives.

Daily Reading Schedule

Day	Scripture Reading	Date
1	Ezekiel 26:1-21	04/13/21
2	Ezekiel 27:1-18	04/14/21
3	Ezekiel 27:19-36	04/15/21
4	Ezekiel 28:1-10	04/16/21
5	Ezekiel 28:11-26	04/17/21
6	Ezekiel 29:1-9	04/18/21
7	Ezekiel 29:10-21	04/19/21
8	Ezekiel 30:1-12	04/20/21
9	Ezekiel 30:13-26	04/21/21
10	Ezekiel 31:1-18	04/22/21
11	Ezekiel 32:1-16	04/23/21
12	Ezekiel 32:17-32	04/24/21
13	Ezekiel 33:1-20	04/25/21
14	Ezekiel 33:21-33	04/26/21
15	Ezekiel 34:1-10	04/27/21
16	Ezekiel 34:11-31	04/28/21
17	Ezekiel 35:1-15	04/29/21
18	Ezekiel 36:1-15	04/30/21
19	Ezekiel 36:16-38	05/01/21
20	Ezekiel 37:1-14	05/02/21

Day	Scripture Reading	Date
21	Ezekiel 37:15-28	05/03/21
22	Ezekiel 38:1-23	05/04/21
23	Ezekiel 39:1-16	05/05/21
24	Ezekiel 39:17-29	05/06/21
25	Ezekiel 40:1-16	05/07/21
26	Ezekiel 40:17-37	05/08/21
27	Ezekiel 40:38-49	05/09/21
28	Ezekiel 41:1-12	05/10/21
29	Ezekiel 41:13-26	05/11/21
30	Ezekiel 42:1-20	05/12/21
31	Ezekiel 43:1-12	05/13/21
32	Ezekiel 43:13-27	05/14/21
33	Ezekiel 44:1-17	05/15/21
34	Ezekiel 44:18-31	05/16/21
35	Ezekiel 45:1-25	05/17/21
36	Ezekiel 46:1-24	05/18/21
37	Ezekiel 47:1-12	05/19/21
38	Ezekiel 47:13-23	05/20/21
39	Ezekiel 48:1-16	05/21/21
40	Ezekiel 48:17-35	05/22/21

Day 1: Ezekiel 26:1-21

“Therefore thus says the LORD GOD: ‘Behold, I am against you, O Tyre, and will cause many nations to come up against you, as the sea causes its waves to come up.’” (Ezekiel 26:3)

Judgment Against Tyre

After delivering four shorter, prophetic messages of judgment against other Gentile nations, God gave Ezekiel a rather lengthy message for the people of Tyre. This message begins here in Ezekiel 26:1 and runs through Ezekiel 28:19. This section of Scripture is divided into four messages against this city. These people were known enemies of Israel, and no doubt, rejoiced to hear that Nebuchadnezzar entered Israel’s land, conquered many of her cities, and laid siege against Jerusalem. Their shouts of joy were soon to become sighs of woe because Israel’s enemy was now to come to their city and do the same things to them. Each of the messages to Tyre begin with “thus says the LORD GOD” (vs. 3, 7, 15, and 19), and each pronounced judgment against this city and its people because they mocked Israel after receiving the news of her suffering. God’s message was clear: “Because Tyre has said against Jerusalem, ‘Aha! She (Israel) is broken...she is laid waste.’ *Therefore*, thus says the LORD GOD: ‘Behold I am against you, O Tyre, and will cause many nations to come up against you’” (vs. 2-3). God went on to say that He would make them “a desolate city” (v. 19). He said, “you shall be no more...you will never be found again” (v. 21).

Prayer Emphasis: Refuse to rejoice at the suffering of others, whether they be friend or foe! **Realize** that sinful attitudes and actions often lead to a “Thus says the LORD”! What already happened to Jerusalem was now going to happen to Tyre. God said, “they shall destroy the walls of Tyre and break down her towers” (v. 4). **Note** that Tyre’s “Aha!” soon became an “Oh, no!”

Day 2: Ezekiel 27:1-18

“The word of the LORD came again to me, saying, ‘Now, son of man, take up a lamentation for Tyre, and say to Tyre...’” (Ezekiel 27:1-2)

A Lamentation for Tyre

After telling Ezekiel to pronounce judgement against Tyre, God then commanded His prophet to “take up a lamentation for Tyre” (v. 2). A “lamentation” was very much like a funeral dirge. As we read through these words against Tyre, we see that her destruction was so certain that God said her funeral could begin! The “lamentation for Tyre” that God authored compared Tyre to a ship. It is written partly like a poem and partly like a song. In verses 1-9, God referred to Tyre’s past glory by comparing her to a strong, beautiful ship. In verses 10-18, God begins to mention many of the cities and nations with which Tyre associated commercially and to whom she had sold her goods. In verse three, God describes Tyre as being “situated at the entrance of the sea” and a “merchant of the peoples on many coastlands.” The last part of verse three reveals that Tyre certainly had not suffered from any image issues. God acknowledged the city’s pride when He reminded them: “you have said, ‘I am perfect in beauty.’” In verses 5-9, God describes the luxurious materials that went into the construction of Tyre’s “ship.” Verses 10-11 reveal that Tyre was protected by the best mercenary soldiers that money could buy. However, no one could save her from God’s wrath!

Prayer Emphasis: Remember that God’s judgment is sometimes delayed. **Refuse** to think that everything is fine simply because you are still experiencing blessings. Material blessings are not always an indication of spiritual obedience. **Chart** your personal course so that it aligns with God’s plan for your life!

Day 3: Ezekiel 27:19-36

“...You were filled and very glorious in the midst of the seas. Your oarsmen brought you into many waters, but the east wind broke you in the midst of the seas.” (Ezekiel 27:25b-26)

The Lamentation Continues

In verses 18-24 of today’s reading, God continues to mention many of the trade partners of Tyre. We saw yesterday that some of Tyre’s customers, like “Tarshish,” did business with Tyre because of her “many luxury goods” (v. 12). But others, like “Javan, Tubal, and Meshech...bartered human lives” for Tyre’s “merchandise” (v. 13). Today we read about places like “Damascus,” “Dan and Javan,” “Dedan,” “Arabia,” and even “the merchants of Sheba” who had done business with profitable Tyre (vs. 18-22). These, and others, were described as Tyre’s “merchants in choice items” and fine garments (v. 24.) Verses 25-27 describe the last days of Tyre’s glorious “ships” before they all, filled with many “riches, wares, and merchandise,” along with many seamen, fell “into the midst of the seas on the day of (Tyre’s) ruin.” Verses 28-32 describe the sorrow of those who once did business with Tyre and how they bemoaned the loss of a good business partner. Verse 35 says that those who once admired Tyre would “be astonished” at her. God closed this lamentation by saying, “The merchants among the peoples will hiss at you; you will become a horror, and be no more forever” (v. 36).

Prayer Emphasis: Notice that our focus verses reveal that it was in the same place that Tyre experienced her greatest glory (“in the midst of the seas”) that she also come to her disastrous ruin. It seems that Tyre’s laughing days are over and there is nothing but sorrow on the horizon. Babylon, like the devil that it represents, lured Tyre into a place of false security before destroying her completely.

Day 4: Ezekiel 28:1-10

“The word of the LORD came to me again, saying, ‘Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, ‘Thus says the LORD God...’” (Ezekiel 28:1-2a)

“The Prince of Tyre”

In chapter 28, God’s message for Tyre through Ezekiel began to narrow in its focus. Rather than addressing the whole city, God began to speak a message to “the prince (ruler) of Tyre” (v. 2). This person obviously held himself in very high esteem. Verse two explains why God sent this corrective message to this man: “Because your heart is lifted up, and you say, ‘I am a god’” (v. 2). This man considered himself to be “wiser than Daniel” (v. 3). He obviously developed some acute business acumen that prompted God to say: “With your wisdom and your understanding you have gained riches for yourself” (v. 4). But, as is most often the case, this political figure accumulated more than just earthy riches. He also developed a great sense of personal pride that would ultimately lead to his downfall. Unfortunately, that meant that all his people were going to suffer because of his prideful arrogance. God’s response to this man’s lofty opinions was: “I will bring strangers against you, the most terrible of the nations; and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of your wisdom, and defile your splendor” (v. 7). Regardless of what this man thought of himself, he would be only “a man” in the eyes and hands of his attackers (v. 9).

Prayer Emphasis: Beware of pride and the dangers that always accompany it. **Refuse** to think more of yourself than what God says that you are. **Humble** yourself before God every day and **submit** to His divine authority in your life.

Day 5: Ezekiel 28:11-26

“Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ‘Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, “Thus says the LORD GOD...”’” (Ezekiel 28:11-12a)

“A Lamentation for the King of Tyre”

Although Ezekiel was directed by God to deliver this final prophecy as “a lamentation for the king of Tyre,” the language in these verses make it clear to us that God is not just speaking of some earthly king. In yesterday’s reading, we saw where God had Ezekiel refer to the leader of Tyre as “the prince of Tyre” (28:2). The prophecy recorded in Ezekiel 28:11-19 is not to that “prince” but to the ultimate “king,” Satan, who led the “prince” of Tyre to be the vain, corrupt, selfish, and evil person that he was. It is obvious that the language used to describe this “king” was not a reference to any human being who has ever lived on this earth. The entity to whom God speaks here had been “in Eden, the garden of God” (v. 13), and was an “anointed cherub” who had access to “the holy mountain of God” (v. 14). In verse 16, this “king” is said to have been “cast...out of the mountain of God.” The description of the person described in Ezekiel 28:13-16 does not fit Adam, or any other human being that has ever lived. There are some who refuse to say that Satan exists, but they would change their tune if they ever allowed Jesus Christ to change their lives!

Prayer Emphasis: Live a life that makes Satan angry! **Refuse** to be numbered among those who choose not to believe in a real devil that seeks to destroy God’s work and people. Like Jesus did during His temptation, thwart the work of Satan by giving him a “thus says the LORD” or an “as it is written” every time he tries to lead you astray.

Day 6: Ezekiel 29:1-9

“...the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ‘Son of man, set your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophecy against him, and against all Egypt.’” (Ezekiel 29:1b-2)

A Prophecy Against Egypt

At the close of yesterday’s Scripture reading, we saw where God had Ezekiel deliver a severe message to the people of Sidon (28:20-24) before speaking some comforting words about Israel (28:25-26). Ezekiel 29 begins with judgment being pronounced against Egypt’s Pharaoh and the nation itself. This is the seventh nation against whom God had Ezekiel to prophesy, and this is another lengthy message. God’s message to Egypt includes all of chapters 29-32. In the first 32 chapters of Ezekiel, God pronounced judgment on seven nations, and now the judgment against this seventh nation contains seven prophecies. The way that the prophecies and judgments fall out in this section of Ezekiel is similar in format to the way God’s judgments unfold in the Book of Revelation. God’s anger was kindled against Egypt because it had been “a staff of reed to the house of Israel” (v. 6). When Israel relied on Egypt for help after Babylon first attacked her, the king and people of Egypt had not given Israel the kind of support on which they could lean. God had Ezekiel tell Egypt that the “staff of reed” (v. 6) that they provided to Israel had broken when Israel “leaned” on it (v. 7).

Prayer Emphasis: Read Hebrews 11:21 and see where Jacob, when he was old and dying, “worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff.” The staff provided both strength and stability to those who could not walk on their own. **Realize** that no human being, or government, can provide the strength and stability that you need to walk for God. **Lean** hard on God and **believe** that He will never fail you.

Day 7: Ezekiel 29:10-21

“Therefore thus says the LORD GOD: ‘Surely I will give the land of Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; he shall take away her wealth...and that will be the wages for his army.’” (Ezekiel 29:19)

Judgment Against Egypt

Verses 10 and 11 of today’s reading describe God’s warning of judgment against Egypt. Through Ezekiel He said to Egypt, “I am against you...I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate...and it shall be uninhabited forty years.” Verse 12 has God saying, “I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them throughout the countries.” Then God said, “At the end of forty years I will gather the Egyptians from the peoples among whom they were scattered” (v. 13). So, the land was to be made desolate, the people taken captive, and then, after forty years God was going to allow them to return to their land (v. 14). But God was not finished. To the horrors which He had already described He added, “I will give the land of Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; he shall take away her wealth” and all that he plundered from the land of Egypt would “be the wages for his army” (v. 19). Since God has used Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon as His agents to bring judgment against Israel, Judah, and other nations, He said, “I have given him the land of Egypt for his labor, because they worked for Me” (v. 20). God is certainly not beyond using unbelievers to accomplish His will.

Prayer Emphasis: God’s judgment against Egypt was going to be widespread and devastating. **Believe** that “The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy” (Psalm 103:8). But also **realize** that “He will not always strive with us, nor will He keep His anger forever” (Psalm 103:9). Ezekiel had the sad job of announcing to many people that God had taken all that He was going to take from them!

Day 8: Ezekiel 30:1-12

“For the day is near, even the day of the LORD is near; it will be a day of clouds, the time of the Gentiles. The sword shall come upon Egypt...” (Ezekiel 30:3-4a)

Egypt’s “Day” was “Near”

As you read through this 30th chapter of Ezekiel today and tomorrow, watch for the phrase, “Thus says the LORD GOD” or something very similar to it. You will see it in verses 2, 6, 10, and 13. God had a very strong message for some of the nations, including Egypt, in this section of Ezekiel, and He wanted the people to know that it was Him speaking and not just Ezekiel. We all should realize that the Bible is one large “Thus says the LORD” and not just the thoughts and opinions of men. God made it quite clear that Egypt was going to face a “day” of judgment and that “day” was “near.” God had not spared His own people, Israel, from judgment and now He was not going to spare Egypt. God also mentioned a “day” of judgement to Israel when He said, “Behold the day! Behold, it has come! Doom has gone out...” (See Ezekiel 7:1-14, especially 7:10.) In an earlier warning to Israel, God said, “I will draw My sword” (21:3), and now, in this message to Egypt He says, “The sword shall come upon Egypt” (v. 4). Not only was Egypt to suffer, but “the men of the lands” who were “allied” with Egypt would “fall with them by the sword” (v. 5).

Prayer Emphasis: Realize that, although it will be at separate times and for separate reasons, both the saved and unsaved will have their own day of judgment (2 Corinthians 5:6-10 and Revelation 20:11-13). **Understand** that no one is exempt from God’s judgment, whether it is in this life or in the life to come. **Live** every day as if it is the “day” God will judge your life and works.

Day 9: Ezekiel 30:13-26

“I will pour My fury on Sin, the strength of Egypt...and set a fire in Egypt; Sin shall have great pain...”
(Ezekiel 30:15-16)

“The Strength of Egypt”

In this section of Ezekiel’s prophecy against Egypt, God named many places upon which His judgment would come. His strongest message was against the city called “Sin.” God said, “I will pour out My fury on Sin.” The city called “Sin” in the NKJV and some other translations, is called “Pelusium” in some translations. The Hebrew word that is in the text is transliterated “Ciyn” but pronounced like our word “seen.” Whatever you name it, this city called “Sin” was described as the “strength of Egypt.” It was described that way because this city was a major military stronghold that guarded the northern part of Egypt. The word that is translated “strength” in our focus verse is translated “stronghold” or “fortress” in other places in the Bible and is translated “stronghold” here in some translations. Since Sin was a gateway into Egypt, a military “stronghold” or “strength” had been strategically placed there. One can only imagine the fear that spread throughout all Egypt when they learned that their guardian city had been destroyed. Egypt was soon to learn that no “strength” or “stronghold” built by man could prevent God from coming and having His way with them.

Prayer Emphasis: Destroy your own, personal strongholds such as pride, arrogance, disbelief, or anything else that causes you to believe that you are exempt from God’s chastisement. **Read** 2 Corinthians 3:4-5 where the New Testament describes “strongholds” as anything “that exalts itself against the knowledge of God.” These verses also indicate that the “weapons” needed to bring down such “strongholds” are spiritual.

Day 10: Ezekiel 31:1-18

“Whom are you like in your greatness? Indeed Assyria was a cedar in Lebanon, with fine branches that shaded the forest, and of high stature; and its top was among the thick boughs.” (Ezekiel 31:2b-3)

A Comparison to Assyria

When we compare the dates given in Ezekiel 30:20 and here in Ezekiel 31:1, we see that less than two months have passed since Ezekiel’s last prophecy against Egypt and this one. In this prophecy Egypt is likened to Assyria and Assyria is likened to a cedar tree. The Egyptians would have had a great knowledge of Assyria. Assyria once attacked Egypt and destroyed their capital cities. Then, Assyria was conquered by Babylon, the same people that God was now saying would invade Egypt. So, Egypt knew how tall and powerful Assyria stood among the nations, and they knew how Assyria had been cut down by the enemy that was soon to attack them. It is like God is saying, “Assyria beat you and then Babylon beat them. You guys don’t stand a chance!” As God continued to draw a parallel between Egypt and Assyria, he pointed out that Assyria’s “height was exalted above all the trees of the field” (v. 5), “and in its shadow all great nations made their home” (v. 6). In the end, God made it clear that he was speaking *to* Egypt and not just *about* Assyria when He said, “This is Pharaoh and all his multitude” (v. 18).

Prayer Emphasis: Compare the last line quoted here from verse 18 to the first line in verse 2. **Note** that God was very clear as to whom He was speaking! **Refuse** to think that God is always talking about someone else and not us! A key to understanding Scripture is to know who is speaking and to whom they are speaking.

Day 11: Ezekiel 32:1-16

“For thus says the LORD GOD: ‘The sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon you. By the swords of the mighty warriors...I will cause your multitude to fall.’” (Ezekiel 32:11-12)

“The Sword of the King of Babylon”

There are not that many dates given in Ezekiel, but the ones that are given are very important. This sixth prophecy that Ezekiel is directed to give against Egypt was given “in the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, on the first day of the month” (v. 1). When we look ahead and compare this date to the one given in Ezekiel 33:21, we see that this prophecy was given two months after the news that Jerusalem had fallen came to those who were in captivity. That verse tells us that a runner went to where the captives were and announced, “The city has been captured!” In this prophecy, Egypt is likened to “a young lion among the nations” and “a monster in the seas” (v. 2). Both comparisons likened Egypt to a fierce and powerful creature. God’s destruction of Egypt was to be swift and severe. God said, “I will lay your flesh on the mountains, and fill the valleys with your carcass” (v. 5). Egypt’s fall and destruction were so sure that God directed Ezekiel to “take up a lamentation for Pharaoh king of Egypt” in the first part of verse 2. Because God was going to “make the land of Egypt desolate” (v. 15), He went on to say, “the daughters of the nations shall lament her” (v. 16). Since a “lament” was basically a funeral dirge, God was saying that Egypt was as good as dead.

Prayer Emphasis: Underscore the phrase “Thus says the LORD GOD” in verse three and then **circle** the words “I will” found in verses 3-16. **Note** that, even though God said, “The sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon you” (v. 11), He wanted Egypt to know that He was the one that defeated them. **Realize** that God is in control of all nations and peoples, and not just those that honor and serve Him.

Day 12: Ezekiel 32:17-32

“Son of man, wail over the multitude of Egypt, and cast them down to the depths of the earth...with those who go down to the Pit.” (Ezekiel 32:18)

“The Pit”

In this final section of Ezekiel that deals with God’s prophecy of judgment against Egypt, God makes it clear to Pharaoh and his followers that there is no opportunity to change one’s eternal destiny after death has come. Since no month is given in the date found in verse 17, we assume that this prophecy came in the same month as the last. That means that just two weeks after God announced Egypt’s fall, He announced that they would be “cast...down to the depths of the earth...with those who go down to the Pit” (v. 18). Notice that the NKJV and some other translations capitalize the word “Pit” in verse 18. The term, “the Pit,” is found six times in this chapter (vs. 18, 23, 24, 25, 29, and 30). An important truth that we learn from this Scripture is that there is an afterlife and that Hell is a real place. Egypt, who had boasted of her military power, would be powerless before God, humbled by defeat and death, and “cast...down to the depth of the earth...down to the Pit” with all other nations that had not acknowledged God as Lord and King. In verses 22-32, Ezekiel told the story of other nations who dared to defy God and were now “there” (vs. 22, 24, 26, 29, and 30). Verse 31 records God saying, “Pharaoh will see them.”

Prayer Emphasis: Realize that Jesus talked about Hell more than any other person in the Bible and He described it in great detail. **Read** Matthew 25:41 and see where Jesus warned of a place of “everlasting fire” that was originally prepared for “the devil and his angels.” **Warn** someone of hell’s dangers today.

Day 13: Ezekiel 33:1-20

“So you, son of man: I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore you shall hear a word from My mouth and warn them for Me.” (Ezekiel 33:7)

“A Watchman”

In Ezekiel 33 we begin a new section of Ezekiel’s prophecy. In chapters 1-24, Ezekiel prophesied of God’s judgment on Judah. Then, in chapters 25-32, Ezekiel prophesied about God’s judgment on the Gentile nations. Now, finally, in the final chapters we will be reading about God’s blessings that were to come upon Israel. Israel was to learn that she was not going to have to live under God’s judgment forever and that God was going to restore her and then fulfill all His promises to her. But, as is usually the case, there are burdens that come with blessings. Ezekiel is told by God that he is to be “a watchman for the house of Israel.” As “a watchman” he was to “hear” from God and then “warn” the people. This is the second time that Ezekiel was to be made a “watchman” for the people of Israel (see Ezekiel 3:17). On his first term as a “watchman” Ezekiel was commissioned to warn the people of the judgment that was to come if they did not repent. This time the message was to be different. The thrust of this message was to be on Israel’s restoration. If Ezekiel did not fairly warn the people of their need to now turn back to God, God was going to “require” their “blood” at his “hand” (v. 8).

Prayer Emphasis: **Accept** your own role as “a watchman” by sounding out a warning against those who refuse to repent and return to the Lord. **Be careful** to **speak** only the “word” that you hear from God and not just you own personal opinions. **Refuse** to allow others to miss the blessings of God because you did not share God’s truth with them.

Day 14: Ezekiel 33:21-33

“Indeed you are to them as a very lovely song of one who has a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument; for they hear your words, but they do not do them.” (Ezekiel 33:32)

Some Sad News for Ezekiel

Beginning at verse 23 of today’s reading, Ezekiel addressed two groups of people. He first spoke a strong message of condemnation to the Israelites who still dwelt among “those ruins in the land of Israel” and who were still claiming their rights to the promises made to Abraham (v. 24). God had Ezekiel point out to those people that there was a major difference between Abraham and them. Abraham was a righteous man that honored God and His word, and they were a wicked people that did not honor God in their lives (vs. 25-26). Then, beginning in verse 30, God gave Ezekiel a message for the Israelites that were now living in Babylon. God told Ezekiel that the Israelites would come and “sit before” him, and “hear” his “words,” but then not do them. They were honoring God “with their mouth” but with their “hearts” they were only after “their own gain” (v. 31). God told Ezekiel that the Israelites in Babylon did not see him as any different than they might see an entertainer who sang “a very lovely song” with “a pleasant voice” (v. 32). In other words, church for these people had become a place where they were merely entertained without being trained. But God went on to assure Ezekiel that the people would know “a prophet has been among them” (v. 33).

Prayer Emphasis: **Read** James 1:21-24 and see that to “lay aside all filthiness and ...wickedness” were signs that people were “doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving” themselves. **Refuse** to leave a church service without taking something of spiritual value with you.

Day 15: Ezekiel 34:1-10

“... *for I will deliver My flock from their mouths...*” (Ezekiel 34:10)

A Sad Story

Who was God speaking of when He said, “I will deliver My flock from their mouths”? We know that the words “My flock” referenced the people of Israel. But from whose “mouths” did the Israelites need to be delivered? You might guess that God was speaking of the Babylonians whose armies besieged Jerusalem and other Israelite cities, stormed them, and then took many of the people into captivity. You might think that God was speaking of wild animals who, after the destruction of the city walls, could prowl the streets and devour the people. But, sad to say, the ones from whom God’s “flock” needed to be protected were “the shepherds of Israel” (v. 2). The rulers of God’s people were often called shepherds because they were to guard their people like a shepherd would guard his flock. But Ezekiel was directed to “prophesy against the shepherds (rulers) of Israel,” saying to them, “Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks?” (v. 2). In verses 3-10 God condemned the wrong things that the rulers *were* doing as well as the good things that they were *not* doing. The sins of the leadership of Israel led God to say, “Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require My flock at their hand...I will deliver My flock from their mouths” (v. 10).

Prayer Emphasis: Pray for the political and spiritual leaders of our country. **Ask God** to make them strong men and women of character who will, when necessary, put the needs of the people before their own. **Pray** for our nation, asking God to heal the great divisions that exist among us. **Practice** the Christian art of loving people and treating them the way that you would want others to love and treat you!

Day 16: Ezekiel 34:11-31

“*For thus says the LORD GOD: ‘Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock...so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them...’*” (Ezekiel 34:11-12)

“I Am Your God”

While the first 10 verses of Ezekiel 34 explain how Israel’s leaders failed them, the remaining verses of the chapter serve as a great reminder that God never fails His people. Where the shepherds failed, the Great Shepherd would surely succeed! As a result, God’s people were promised that He would rescue them from the “cloudy and dark” situation in which they found themselves (v. 12). God promised that He would “gather them from the countries...and...bring them to their own land.” But that was not all He promised. He went on to say, “I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys and in all the inhabited places of the country” (v. 13). This part of God’s message through Ezekiel would be partially fulfilled on earth, but ultimately fulfilled in the Millennium. As you consider the verses that we read today, think about this: The character of a person is always made evident by their conduct toward others. God said that He would “judge between sheep and sheep” (v. 17). As such, God wanted His people of that day to know that He was watching how they treated one another and would judge them accordingly.

Prayer Emphasis: Read again the promises made in verses 23-30. **Believe** that God will fulfill all of His promises to His people. He always has and He always will! **Read** verse 31 again: “You are My flock, the flock of My pasture; you are men, and I am your God.” **Understand** that God is who He says He is, and He can and will do what He says that He will do!

Day 17: Ezekiel 35:1-15

“...you shall be desolate, O Mount Seir, as well as all of Edom – all of it! Then they shall know that I am the LORD.” (Ezekiel 35:15)

Two Ways of Learning

In yesterday’s reading, after He shared with His people how He would love, protect, and care for them in the best pastures, He added, “and they shall know that I am the LORD” (34:27). In today’s chapter, after telling “Mount Seir” (Edom) how He was going to judge them for the mistreatment of His people, He again said, “Then you shall know that I am the LORD” (35:12). It seems clear from these two very similar verses that there are two ways to help people to better understand who God is and what He can do. First, we can be a good people who obediently follow Him into good pastures and treat others good along the way. If we do that, like the people described in Ezekiel 34:11-31, we “shall know” that God is “the LORD.” Or we can be like the angry, aggressive people of Edom and live in such a way that we incur the wrath of God against us, and, through that wrath, learn to “know” that He is “the LORD” (v. 12). In both of those situations, the same lessons about God were learned. One nation learned about God through His blessings for their obedience. The other learned the same thing about God through His chastisement for their sin and disobedience. Which way would we prefer to learn that He is “the LORD”?

Prayer Emphasis: Choose wisely when it comes to how you respond to God’s commandments. **Believe** that obedience to God’s commands brings blessings into the lives of His people. **Refuse** to be fooled into thinking that sin and disobedience ever go unnoticed or unpunished. **Learn** about God through His love and care and not from His chastisement.

Day 18: Ezekiel 36:1-15

“Therefore thus says the LORD GOD: ‘I have raised My hand in an oath that surely the nations that are around you shall bear their own shame.’” (Ezekiel 36:7)

“An Oath”

No promise is more sure and secure than a promise from God. When God said, “I have raised My hand in an oath” He was stating that what He was saying to Israel was His sworn testimony. In the first 15 verses of Ezekiel 36, God makes three distinct promises to His people. First, in verses 1-7, God promised, under oath, that He would punish Israel’s enemies. Judgment was to be His job and not theirs. That rule has never changed, and we should leave vengeance to the Lord. Early on, God said to His people, “Vengeance is Mine” (Deuteronomy 32:35). It was true then and it is true now. If you do not believe that, then read Romans 12:19 where New Testament believers are told the same thing. Second, in verses 8-12, God promised Israel that He would someday restore them to their land. God promised His people that, “the cities shall be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt” (v. 10). God’s promise was so certain that He said, “I will make you inhabited as in former times, and do better for you than at your beginnings. Then you shall know that I am the LORD” (v. 11). Finally, in verses 13-15, God swore with “an oath” that He would remove Israel’s reproach. He said to Israel, “Nor will I let you hear the taunts of the nations anymore, nor bear the reproach of the peoples” (v. 15).

Prayer Emphasis: Trust God to fight your battles and to defend you. If He says vengeance is His business, then leave it to Him! **Believe** that He will keep His promises and provide your every spiritual and material need. **Know** that God can do more for us than we could ever imagine doing for ourselves!

Day 19: Ezekiel 36:16-38

“Thus says the LORD GOD: ‘On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will also enable you to dwell in the cities, and the ruins shall be rebuilt.’” (Ezekiel 36:33)

“I Will” & “You Will”

In the NKJV you will find God saying “I will” 14 times in today’s verses. The first “I will,” found in verse 23, is related to a *problem*. God said to His people, “And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst” (v. 23). But after that first “I will,” in verse 23, every “I will” that follows is related to a *promise*. For example, verses 24-27 record God saying, “I will...bring you into your own land,” “I will cleanse you,” “I will give you a new heart,” and, “I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes.” After those first “I will” promises from God, we find the first of the “you will” responses that God anticipated from His people. Also, in verse 27, after God said, “I will put My Spirit within you,” He added, “and *you will* keep My judgments and do them.” Two more “you will” statements are made in verse 31 where God said that, after they began to follow His Spirit, they would “remember (their) evil ways” and would “loathe (themselves) in (their) own sight.” But, in verse 35, among the “I will” and “you will” statements, we find a “*they will*” statement. When God’s people follow the leadership of God’s Spirit, people notice!

Prayer Emphasis: **Believe** that God is both able and willing to do what He promises He will do for His obedient children. **Accept** the responsibilities that come with being a born-again child of God and a follower of Jesus Christ. **Realize** that our obedience to God bears an impact on others who observe us as we live our lives out before them.

Day 20: Ezekiel 37:1-14

“The hand of the LORD came upon me and brought me out in the Spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of bones.” (Ezekiel 37:1)

“Bones”

Ezekiel 37 contains two stories that God used to illustrate the powerful results of the promises He made to His people in chapter 36. The first illustration is found in today’s verses. It is the story of the “valley...full of bones.” The condition of these “bones” were representative of the spiritual condition of Israel without the fulfillment of God’s promises to them. Not only are we told that these bones were “dry,” we are told that, “indeed they were *very* dry” (v. 2). There in that valley God asked His servant, “Son of man, can these bones live?” (v. 3). In other words, God asked Ezekiel something like, “Do you see any possibility that these very dead and dry bones could live?” Ezekiel did not know the answer to that question, but he knew that God did. God then told Ezekiel to “Prophesy to these bones, and say to them, ‘O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD!’” (v. 4). God then told Ezekiel to tell those bones that He would “cause breath to enter” them and that they would “live” (v. 5). Ezekiel said, “So I prophesied...and as I prophesied...suddenly...the bones came together, bone to bone” (v. 7). However difficult it might have been for Ezekiel to believe God’s promises that He could restore Israel to their land, I am sure he became a believer there in that valley!

Prayer Emphasis: **Read again** verse 12 where God said, “I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.” Take time to **recall** some of the promises that God has made to you and the miraculous ways that He has met them! They are your “dry bones” illustrations!

Day 21: Ezekiel 37:15-28

“... I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation...” (Ezekiel 37:21-22)

The Sign of the Sticks

After the sign of the “bones” (vs. 1-14), God gave Ezekiel a second sign. This second sign is described in verses 15-17 and then explained in verses 18-28. God directed His prophet to take one “stick” and “write on it” the name of Judah. He was then told to “take another stick” and to “write on it” the names of Joseph and Ephraim (v. 16). The two sticks represented the divided nation of Israel which, during Solomon’s reign, became two nations. The southern part of the nation became known as Judah, and the northern part of the nation was thereafter known as Israel and was sometimes called “Ephraim” (see Hosea 5:3 and 5). God told Ezekiel to take the two sticks and “join them one to another for yourself into one stick, and they will become one in your hand” (v. 17). But, based on what we read in our focus verse, the two nations were not to only become one in Ezekiel’s “hand,” they would once again be one nation in “their own land.” But God had more than just a physical change in mind for His people. Beginning at verse 23 God began to show His prophet some wonderful spiritual changes that were going to come about for Israel. God said He would “cleanse them” and afterwards they would be His “people” and He would be “their God.”

Prayer Emphasis: Read verses 24-28 and note the many blessings that God planned to bestow upon His people when they returned to their land. **Realize** that this promise alone was a great blessing to a people who were living in captivity. **Look** for God’s promises every time you read your Bible and **claim** them when you spend time in prayer.

Day 22: Ezekiel 38:1-23

“Now the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ‘Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him.’” (Ezekiel 38:1-2)

Gog Attacks Israel

Ezekiel 38 and 39 describe a person (“Gog”) and a place (“Magog”) that will, along with some allies, attack Israel, attempting to destroy the Jewish race from the earth. The most difficult part of this prophecy is determining whether it is describing a historical or future event. Some think that it might really be doing both. Some think this leader, his armies, and his allies were the ones that attacked Israel during the days of Esther (see Esther 9). Some think this is speaking of a future event that will ultimately take place after the rapture of the church and during the tribulation period. If so, then the nations mentioned in this prophecy would represent Russia and such allies as Iran, Libya, and Turkey. This prophecy describes a time of extreme anti-Semitism and an effort by a confederacy of nations to literally annihilate the Jews. If this invasion is, in fact, an end-time event, then the battle described in these chapters would take place sometime before the Battle of Armageddon. The mention of “horses” and primitive weapons such as “swords” (v. 4) may mean that the armies of the world will be in such disarray after the first years of the tribulation that a return to more primitive warfare would be required.

Prayer Emphasis: Believe the Bible to be a book *of* the past as well as a book *for* the present and the future. **Ask** God to help you know the difference. **Allow** God’s lessons about yesterday and tomorrow lead you to become a more faithful follower and witness for Him today.

Day 23: Ezekiel 39:1-16

“And I will send fire on Magog and on those who live in security in the coastlands. Then they shall know that I am the LORD.” (Ezekiel 39:6)

A Grisly Aftermath

While we may not be completely certain about who the armies of Ezekiel 38 and 39 are, or when they will attack Israel, we can be certain about their outcome. These invading armies will be disarmed (v. 3) and destroyed (v. 4) by God. The last part of verse four declares that these once powerful armies will become food for the birds of prey and other animals. But, as our focus verse indicates, God will not only punish those who invade Israel, He will punish the nations from which they came. His purpose for that punishment is clear: “Then they shall know that I am the LORD.” Although no numbering of these attacking armies is recorded, we are told that “those who dwell in the cities of Israel” will use their weapons as fuel for a period of seven years (vs. 9-10). After the battle is over, it will take the people of Israel “seven months” to bury the dead bodies of their invaders “in order to cleanse the land” (v. 12). Ezekiel prophesied that there would be so many dead bodies that “all the people of the land will be burying” and afterwards some men would be “regularly employed” as a “search party, to pass through the land” and continue to bury the dead and mark their graves (vs. 13-14).

Prayer Emphasis: Refuse to wage warfare against God or to associate with those who do. When it comes to such end-time events as those described here in Ezekiel and other places in the Bible, **realize** that the believers will be raptured from this earth before those battles begin. **Commit** your life to warning as many people as possible of the dangers of taking an adversarial position against God.

Day 24: Ezekiel 39:17-29

“When I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them out of their enemies’ lands...then they shall know that I am the LORD their God, who sent them into captivity...” (Ezekiel 39:27-28)

Israel Restored to the Land

Yesterday we read where the bodies of the slain armies of Gog and his allies were made food for the “birds of prey” and “to the beasts of the field to be devoured” (v. 4). Today we see a further result of the great battle described in these verses. Verses 17-20 describe a reversal in the usual roles of people and animals. Usually people sacrificed animals and ate them. In these verses people are the sacrifices and the animals eat them. The remainder of the chapter, verses 21-29, describes the effects of this great battle on the people of Israel. First, Israel, and “all the nations.” would see God’s “glory” and “judgment” and realize that their chastisement came from God’s “hand” which He “laid on them” (v. 21). Then the “Gentiles” would observe God’s dealings with His people and realize that God had dealt harshly with them because of their “iniquity” and because “they were unfaithful” to Him (v. 23). Verse 24 finds God saying that He dealt with Israel “according to their uncleanness” and “their transgressions.” However, after God finished dealing with His people, and after He “brought them back” to their own land and “gathered them out of their enemies’ lands”, He would be “hallowed...in the sight of many nations” (v. 27).

Prayer Emphasis: Realize that the world learns a lot about God by observing the relationship that His people have with Him. **Refuse** to compromise God’s will for your life by intentionally straying from the path that He has laid out for you. **Believe** that God can teach others through our experiences, including our problems.

Day 25: Ezekiel 40:1-16

“In the visions of God He took me into the land of Israel and set me on a very high mountain; on it toward the south was something like the structure of a city.” (Ezekiel 40:2)

The New Temple

Today’s verses begin with one of the more clearly dated portions of Ezekiel’s prophecy. This vision of the new temple came “In the twenty-fifth year” of Israel’s “captivity, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was captured.” On that “very same day the hand of the LORD was upon” him, and, Ezekiel, through “visions,” was taken back to Jerusalem and “set...on a very high mountain” from whence he could see “something like the structure of a city” (v. 1-2). In these “visions” Ezekiel was taken on a tour of the New Jerusalem by “a man” who told the prophet to “fix” his “mind on everything” that he saw because he had been sent there to “show them” to him. He was then to “Declare to the house of Israel everything” that he had seen (v. 4). Verse five states that one of the things Ezekiel saw in this New Jerusalem was “the temple”. Verses 6-16 provides a detailed description, including measurements, of the eastern gate to the new temple. The eastern gate was one of three gates that led to the outer court. Since this was the most important gate, this eastern gate was described in great detail because it would be through this gate that “the glory of the LORD” would eventually come upon this temple (see 43:4).

Prayer Emphasis: Imagine Ezekiel’s excitement as God revealed His future city and temple to him through the visions that He gave him. However, **realize** that we have something greater than “visions” available to us today through the Bible. I am sure Ezekiel would gladly trade all of his “visions” for just one copy of the Bible! **Read** it. **Believe** it. **Obey** it.

Day 26: Ezekiel 40:17-37

“Then he brought me into the outer court...Then he brought me into the inner court through the southern gateway...” (Ezekiel 40:17 & 28)

The Outer and Inner Courts

Yesterday’s verses provided a description of the eastern gate to a new temple that Ezekiel saw through “visions” of the future Jerusalem (v. 2). Apparently, everything that Ezekiel observed in the first part of his tour of the new city and the new temple was from the outside of the temple. Today’s verses, beginning at verse 17, find Ezekiel saying, “Then he brought me *into* the outer court”. In the outer court “there were chambers and a pavement made all around the court” with “thirty chambers” facing “the pavement”. The “three gate chambers” that were mentioned yesterday (v. 10) are described more fully in today’s verses. The first description is of the northern gateway, or, “a gateway facing north” (vs. 20-23). Verse 24 begins with Ezekiel saying, “After that he brought me toward the south” where Ezekiel was shown “a gateway” that was “facing south”. This was to be known as the southern gateway. “Seven steps led up” to this gate and it had “palm trees” on each side of “its gateposts” (v. 26). The third “gateway” that was shown to Ezekiel was the one that led to “the inner court” (v. 27). Through that gateway Ezekiel was “brought” into “the inner court” (v. 28). Verses 29-37 describe this inner court.

Prayer Emphasis: Note that the dimensions of all the gates that Ezekiel was shown were exactly the same. The lesson that we should learn from this fact is that God’s message to us is consistent – no matter how we look at it. **Trust** God to reveal His character and will to you as you read His word.

Day 27: Ezekiel 40:38-49

“There was a chamber and its entrance by the gateposts of the gateway, where they washed the burnt offering.” (Ezekiel 40:38)

Sacrifices?

As, by way of a vision, Ezekiel continued his tour of the new temple, he was shown “a chamber...where they washed the burnt offering.” Then, “in the vestibule” he saw “tables” for three of the Levitical offerings: “the burnt offering, the sin offering, and the trespass offering” (v. 39). He also saw “eight tables on which they slaughtered the sacrifices” (v. 41). Such language has baffled many as they wonder at the thought of Old Testament sacrifices being mentioned in connection with this new Jerusalem temple. We must always remember that the Old Testament sacrifices were never intended to remove sin guilt. Hebrews 10:1-4 discusses this fact and then concludes that, “it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.” We can only conclude that these sacrifices that Ezekiel was shown in the new temple were symbolic. By that, I mean these sacrifices might be much like our Lord’s Supper is for us today. A reminder of what Christ has done for us. Whether symbolic or literal, these sacrifices will be a reminder of the price that Christ paid for our pardon from sin. Remember, Christ still bore the marks of the nails and spear in His body after His resurrection. These sacrifices may serve the same purpose as those scars.

Prayer Emphasis: Remember the great price that Jesus paid for your salvation and **realize** that God has chosen to never allow us to forget it. **Read** verses 44 and 45 again and note that there will be “chambers for the singers” and a “chamber...for the priests” in this future, Millennial Temple. Obviously, there will be opportunities for singing and serving in the future Jerusalem!

Day 28: Ezekiel 41:1-12

“Then he brought me into the sanctuary and measured the doorposts, six cubits wide on one side and six cubits wide on the other side – the width of the tabernacle.” (Ezekiel 41:1)

“Into the Sanctuary”

The final two verses of yesterday’s reading described the entrance to the temple. Today’s verses begin with Ezekiel saying, “Then he brought me into the sanctuary.” While they were in the sanctuary Ezekiel’s guide “measured the doorposts” and other areas of the sanctuary. Notice that our focus verse has Ezekiel saying, “Then he brought me *into the sanctuary*.” Here we should remember that Ezekiel was a *priest* as well as a *prophet* (see Ezekiel 1:3). Had he not been a priest, he would not have been allowed into this inner sanctuary of the new temple. While today’s verses may appear to be only a detailed description of the measurements of part of the new temple, allow the first verse to remind you that God always has a plan for His people. He knows our future and He is always preparing us for it. Ezekiel’s preparations for the priesthood were not in vain. God called him as a priest with the knowledge that Ezekiel would one day enter this holy temple, even if only by way of a vision. I am sure that, as a priest, Ezekiel had a great appreciation for what he was seeing and for the One who made it possible for him to see it!

Prayer Emphasis: Read Romans 8:28 today and **realize** that God does not squander His opportunities to make “all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.” **Remember** that Ezekiel was called to be a priest, and that calling was certainly paying off for him now as he visited the inner sanctuary of the temple by way of this vision.

Day 29: Ezekiel 41:13-26

“So he measured the temple, one hundred cubits long...also the width of the eastern face of the temple, including the separating courtyard, was one hundred cubits.” (Ezekiel 41:13-14)

Dimensions and Decorations

In today’s verses Ezekiel describes the dimensions (vs. 13-15) and the decorations (vs. 16-26) of the new temple. Our focus verses indicate that the temple Ezekiel saw was “one hundred cubits long” and “the width of the eastern face of the temple, including the separating courtyard, was one hundred cubits.” One hundred cubits was approximately 175 feet. However you measure it, it is clear that the new temple that Ezekiel was shown was much larger than either of the two temples that existed before it. Some have argued that the temple mount in Jerusalem is not large enough to support a temple the size of the one Ezekiel saw. But we must always remember that Luke 1:37 says, “For with God nothing will be impossible.” The building was decorated “with cherubim and palm trees” (v. 18). Cherubim are often referred to as guardians in the Bible. Their first mention in the Bible was in Genesis 3:24, where, after Adam was driven from the garden, God placed “Cherubim...to guard the way to the tree of life.” Palm trees were often associated with blessings in the Bible. As such, we see that the new temple was decorated with reminders of both the *protection* and the *provision* of God.

Prayer Emphasis: Remember that no part of the Bible is without significance. **Realize** there are great lessons to be learned from every page and paragraph in the Bible, even those that describe the dimensions and decorations of a building! **Believe** that God is committed to your protection and provision and **trust** Him to be, and do, what He has promised!

Day 30: Ezekiel 42:1-20

“He measured it on the four sides; it had a wall around, five hundred cubits long and five hundred wide, to separate the holy areas from the common.” (Ezekiel 42:20)

“The Chambers”

As I mentioned yesterday, this future temple that Ezekiel was touring will be much larger than the two previous temples. When everything within the temple walls were “measured” it was revealed that the temple complex was “five hundred cubits” square. “Five hundred cubits” was about 875 feet. To gain some perspective of just how large this walled complex was, just imagine 13 football fields joined together as one space, and you will have some idea of just how large an area this temple complex will cover. Before giving us these final measurements, God gives us some more information about the buildings that will be within this great, walled-in area. Around the temple proper, there will be some other structures. The buildings that are described for us today were “three stories” high and contained “chambers” (rooms) (vs. 6-7). The rooms in the upper stories were narrower than those located on the first floor. Verse 13 explains that “the north chambers and the south chambers” were considered “holy chambers” because that was where “the priests...shall eat the most holy offerings”.

Prayer Emphasis: Imagine how enormous this new temple area will be. Scholars have anticipated that the current space on the temple mount is not large enough to hold a building complex the size of the one that Ezekiel describes for us. But, **remember**, this temple will be built at the end of the tribulation after the last days have passed.

Day 31: Ezekiel 43:1-12

“The Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the temple.” (Ezekiel 43:5)

The Return of God’s Glory

In Ezekiel 10 and 11 we read about the departure of God’s glory from Jerusalem. In Ezekiel 10:18, we read where “the glory of the LORD *departed* from the threshold of the temple”. In Ezekiel 11:23 we read where “the glory of the LORD went up *from* the midst of the city”. Now, here in chapter 43, as Ezekiel is touring the eternal temple, he says that “the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east” (v. 2). In verse four, he adds, “And the glory of the LORD came into the temple by the way of the gate which faces toward the east.” Ezekiel said, “The Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the temple” (v. 5). This was to be a dramatic reversal of the LORD’s departure from Israel, and “the Spirit” wanted Ezekiel to have a good vantage point from which he could clearly see “the glory of the LORD” coming again to dwell among His people! Ezekiel said, “Then I heard Him (God) speaking to me from the temple... And He said to me, ‘Son of man, this is the place of My throne... where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever’” (vs. 6-7). The temple was designed to show sinful men how they could have access to a holy God. That was, what God called, “the law of the temple” (v. 12).

Prayer Emphasis: Believe that the promises of God are true. **Claim** God’s promise that we will one day be with Him and clearly see His glory. When we see Him as He really is, then we will also see ourselves in the way that God has designed us to be. We will there, in eternity, finally keep God’s “ordinances” and “perform them” (v. 11). **Thank** God for the “Spirit” who lifts us up so that we can see these things (v. 5).

Day 32: Ezekiel 43:13-27

“These are the measurements of the altar in cubits...the base one cubit high and one cubit wide, with a rim all around its edge of one span...” (Ezekiel 43:13)

The Altar

In today’s verses Ezekiel will be given “the measurements of the altar” (vs.13-17) and directions for how to consecrate it (vs. 18-27). The “cubit” that is described in verse 13 is what is commonly referred to as the long cubit because it was “one cubit and a handbreadth.” Using this biblical standard of measurement, we can determine that the altar was approximately 19 feet tall, although part of it was below the surface of the ground. The part of the altar that was above ground was like the altar in the temple constructed by Solomon (2 Chronicles 3:3). The “altar hearth” was “square”, measuring “four cubits high”, “twelve cubits long” and “fourteen cubits wide” on all “four sides” (vs. 15-16). There were “steps” up to this altar which faced “toward the east” (v. 17). In verses 18 and 19, we read about some “ordinances for the altar” and how it was to first be used to offer sacrifices for the “priests” and the “Levites...of the seed of Zadok” who would “minister” before the LORD at the altar. Specified offerings were to be made “every day for seven days” (v. 25). This seven-day ritual for cleansing and consecration was similar to that followed by Moses and Solomon.

Prayer Emphasis: Remember that God is always into details. **Realize** that He is as specific in His instructions to believers today as He was in these days of Ezekiel. **Pay careful attention** to what God has to say and follow His instructions as closely as humanly possible. **Thank God** for the Bible and read it every day while asking God to reveal His detailed plan for your life.

Day 33: Ezekiel 44:1-17

“But the priests, the Levites, the sons of Zadok, who kept charge of My sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from Me, they shall come near Me to minister to Me...” (Ezekiel 44:15)

“Zadok”

If there ever was an appropriate Scripture reference to mark the grave of the priest, Zadok, it might be, “Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful” (1 Corinthians 4:2). If you take the time to read this man’s story, you will agree that “faithful” would be a good word to describe Zadok. Zadok was a descendant of Aaron and was a high priest during the time of David. He joined with David after Saul’s death and served in David’s army (1 Chronicles 12:28). When Absalom revolted against David, forcing David to flee for his life, Zadok, and the Levites under him, stood with David. After Absalom’s death, Zadok was one of the Israelites that helped persuade the leadership of Judah to welcome David to return (2 Samuel 19:11). It is no wonder, then, that this loyal priest was the one David chose to anoint Solomon to follow him as king (1 Kings 1:32-34). Eventually Solomon “removed Abiathar from being priest to the LORD” and “put Zadok the priest in the place of Abiathar (1 Kings 2:27 & 35). Is it any wonder that it would be “the priests” and “the Levites” who were “the sons of Zadok, who kept charge of (His) sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray” that God would choose to “minister” to Him in this glorious temple?

Prayer Emphasis: Review your personal walk with the Lord and **consider** whether you would be declared to be faithful. **Understand** that Zadok could only be faithful to David and Solomon because he was first faithful to the LORD. **Commit** your tomorrows to God today. When you make a commitment to the Lord, be sure that you are giving Him a “blank check” and not a “bad check!”

Day 34: Ezekiel 44:18-31

“And they shall teach My people the difference between the holy and the unholy, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean.” (Ezekiel 44:23)

The Priests

Today’s verses continue the laws governing the priests that began in Ezekiel 44:10. These laws were very explicit and covered such areas as how the priests were to dress (vs. 18-19), how they were to wear their hair (v. 20), and who they were to marry (v. 22). These laws were so detailed that they even governed what these men could eat and drink (vs. 21 and 31). Verses 23-24 describe three of the duties of these men. They were to “teach” God’s people to “discern between the unclean and the clean.” They were also to “stand as judges” and “judge” over any controversies among the people so that things could be settled among them “according” to God’s judgments. Besides that, God said they were to “keep My laws and My statutes in all My appointed meetings, and they shall hallow My Sabbaths.” They were not to “defile themselves by coming near a dead person” (v. 25). However, that verse allowed for them to attend the funerals of their family members. After such events, they were to go through the typical ceremonial cleansing and then quarantine themselves for “seven days” (v. 26). All these commands demanded sacrifices from men who had no physical inheritance in the land. But they had something better than that. God said, “I am their inheritance” (v. 28).

Prayer Emphasis: Remember that God never leaves sin unpunished or His servants unrewarded. **Believe** that God always gives us more than we give Him. **Realize** that any personal sacrifices we might be called to make here on earth will be more than compensated for in heaven!

Day 35: Ezekiel 45:1-25

“Moreover, when you divide the land by lot into inheritance, you shall set apart a district for the LORD, a holy section of the land...” (Ezekiel 45:1)

“A District for the LORD”

In the area of this new temple, in the future Jerusalem, Israel was commanded to set aside an area of land “for the LORD” (v. 1). This rectangular shaped “district” was to be “twenty-five thousand cubits (about 8.3 miles) long and ten thousand (about 6.6 miles) wide” (v. 3). This area was to be considered “a holy section of the land, belonging to the priests, the ministers of the sanctuary, who come near to minister to the LORD; it shall be a place for their houses and a holy place for the sanctuary” (v. 4). The people were also commanded to “appoint as the property of the city an area...adjacent to the district of the holy section” that was to “belong to the whole house of Israel” (v. 6). This area, when added to the earlier described area, would make the original rectangular shaped area a square area measuring 8.3 miles by 8.3 miles. Because of the extra land that would be appointed to “the prince” on both sides of “the holy district and the city’s property” (v. 7), God stated, “My princes shall no more oppress My people, but they shall give the rest of the land to the house of Israel, according to their tribes” (v. 8). The “princes of Israel” were also commanded to “remove violence and plundering” and to deal fairly with the people (vs. 9-17).

Prayer Emphasis: Imagine what life will be like in this new city! Everyone, including the governmental leaders, will be obedient to God and live in full compliance with God’s commands! This will truly be the fulfillment of the Lord’s prayer: “Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10).

Day 36: 46:1-24

“The prince shall then be in their (the people’s) midst. When they go in, he shall go in; and when they go out, he shall go out.” (Ezekiel 46:10)

Government as it Should Be!

In today’s chapter, God continues His instructions about the offerings and the feast days that began back in 45:18. God gave some very specific instructions as to how the offerings were to be given and even how they were to be prepared. These offerings represented the daily aspects of Israel’s worship. The people were given regulations for the “Sabbaths and the New Moons” (vs. 1-10). God’s instructions were so specific that He even designated which gates the people should enter and by which gates they should depart from the temple (v. 9). In verses 11-15, God gave His people instructions regarding their conduct and the offerings they were to make in the temple. God then added, “When (not “if”) the prince makes a voluntary burnt offering or voluntary peace offering to the LORD, the gate that faces toward the east shall then be opened for him” and then, after he departed the temple, “the gate” was to “be shut” (v. 12). It is quite clear that the governmental leaders will be active participants in the worship services, and there will be no more arguments about the separation of church and state! Amen!

Prayer Emphasis: Imagine a city where the government leaders will play an active part in the worship services of God’s people. **Pray** for our governmental leaders today and **remember** to pray for them every day! **Read** Romans 13:1-7 today and see how God has instructed His people to respect our civil authorities. **Refuse** to criticize governmental leaders for whom you have not prayed.

Day 37: Ezekiel 47:1-12

“Then he brought me back to the door of the temple; and there was water, flowing from under the threshold of the temple toward the east...” (Ezekiel 47:1)

The River

The “he” that is referred to is the “man” that first met Ezekiel back in chapter 40, verse 4. He was God’s designated servant who has been taking Ezekiel on a tour of the new city and the new temple over these past several chapters. As “he” brought Ezekiel to “the door of the temple,” the one that faced “toward the east,” Ezekiel noticed that “there was water, flowing from under the threshold” of that door of the temple. When the heavenly guide “brought” the prophet “out by way of the north gate,” Ezekiel could see “there was water” running out of the temple (v. 2). As you read verses three through five, you can see that every “one thousand cubits” (1,750 feet) the waters got progressively deeper. At the first measurement, the waters only came to Ezekiel’s “ankles.” At the second and third measurement points, the waters were to his “knees” and then to his “waist.” Then, at the fourth measuring point, Ezekiel said the waters became “a river that I could not cross; for the water was too deep, water in which one must swim, a river that could not be crossed” (v. 5). This river would be lined with “many trees” (v. 7). When it entered the Jordan Valley, and its waters flowed into the Dead Sea, the salty waters of the Dead Sea, which are six times saltier than the ocean, were “healed” (v. 8).

Prayer Emphasis: Remember that Ezekiel is being shown a future Jerusalem, a future temple, and a future land that has been healed by the waters from the temple. **Believe** that eternity, God’s great future, will be a time of great blessing, refreshment, and rejoicing for God’s people. **Trust** God to fulfill His every promise that He has made to us.

Day 38: Ezekiel 47:13-23

“You shall inherit it equally with one another; for I raised My hand in an oath to give it to your fathers, and this land shall fall to you as an inheritance.” (Ezekiel 47:14)

The “Inheritance”

The “it” that God promises Israel under the new covenant, is the land that he had sworn “in an oath” to give to Abraham (Genesis 13:14-17 and 15:17-21). Where the NKJV reads, “for I raised My hand in an oath,” other translations read, “because I swore with uplifted hand.” The raising of one’s hand when making a promise was a common gesture in Old Testament times. Psalm 106:26 says that, after Israel refused to cross the Jordan River to enter the land, God “raised His hand in an oath against them.” While Israel was still in bondage in Egypt, God reminded Moses of His great promise to Abraham, saying, “And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham...and I will give it to you” (Exodus 6:8). Even though God’s people were not faithful to Him, God still kept His promises to them. Even after Ezekiel and Israel were taken captive to Babylon, God reminded them that they would return to the land someday. As you finish reading this wonderful Book of Ezekiel, remember that the Israelites turned their backs on God, but God had not turned His back on His people.

Prayer Emphasis: Look back at Ezekiel 20:5, 15, 23, and 42 and see where God repeatedly reminded His people in that chapter that He had “raised (His) hand in an oath” to His people and sworn to give the land to them. **Look again** at Ezekiel 36:7 and 44:12 and you will see God reminding the people that He “raised (His) hand in an oath” to them. It certainly seems that God wants us to remember that He keeps His promises!

Day 39: Ezekiel 48:1-16

“*Now these are the names of the tribes: From the northern border along the road to Hethlon at the entrance of Hamath, to Hazar Enan, the border of Damascus northward...*” (Ezekiel 48:1)

The Division of the Land

The last chapter of the Book of Ezekiel reads like some of the historical books found earlier in the Bible because it is about the division of the land in the Millennial Kingdom. God began to describe the boundaries of the land in the last part of chapter 47. In 47:21 God said, “Thus you shall divide this land among yourselves according to the tribes of Israel.” Then He added, “It shall be that you will divide it by lot as an inheritance for yourselves, *and for the strangers who dwell among you...they shall have an inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel*” (47:22). In that same verse, God told His people that the strangers were to be treated as if they were “native born” Israelites! Foreigners had always been allowed to live among the Israelites, and God always demanded that they be treated fairly (Leviticus 24:22 and Numbers 15:29). However, they had never been granted actual ownership to the land. That right had been granted to the Israelites. So, as you read today’s passages marked by detailed land descriptions and the placement of “borders,” just remember that some of those “borders” will be ours, and that one of those inheritances will be yours!

Prayer Emphasis: Realize that there will be no “second-rate” citizens in heaven! **Read** Philippians 3:20, where the Holy Spirit had Paul say: “For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.” As children of God, we will someday occupy a rightful place in heaven!

Day 40: Ezekiel 48:17-35

“*All the way around shall be eighteen thousand cubits; and the name of the city from that day shall be: THE LORD IS THERE.*” (Ezekiel 48:35)

“THE LORD IS THERE”

We often hear about ending a story on a high note, but there is no higher note with which God could end the story of Ezekiel than the final four words of the book that bears his name: “THE LORD IS THERE.” Think about it, Ezekiel’s story begins in chapter one where a young priest was “among the captives by the River Chebar...in the land of the Chaldeans” (Ezekiel 1:1-3). It was in his “thirtieth year” (1:1), the year that Ezekiel would have begun his service as a priest, that God brought great change into Ezekiel’s life. During his time of captivity in Babylon, this man would see great visions and experience great losses, one of those being the death of his wife who was described as “the desire” of his eyes (24:16). While the Book of Ezra includes a listing of some of the people who returned to Israel after the 70 years of exile were completed, Ezekiel’s name was not among them. Jewish scholars and historians, as well as many Christians, believe that Ezekiel died in Babylon sometime in his mid-50s and that his tomb is in Al Kifli, Iraq. But, have no fear, we know that Ezekiel is not in a grave in Iraq, but in heaven with the God that he so faithfully served!

Prayer Emphasis: Praise God for heaven and the precious thought that our loved ones who have gone on before us are there with the likes of Ezekiel. Thank you for reading through the Book of Ezekiel with us. If we can serve you in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us at gary@seminolebc.com or at 850-562-8069. May God bless you as you continue to read and study His word!