

Friday, June 7, 2019

Glorified

Ezekiel 35-36

Then the nations around you that remain will know that I the LORD have rebuilt what was destroyed and have replanted what was desolate. I the LORD have spoken, and I will do it. Ezekiel 36:36

Israel will glorify the LORD. God will restore them for His glory. I can only imagine what Ezekiel was feeling as he penned these prophecies. What comfort it must have brought to those who first read them. How much comfort they continue to bring. God will be glorified as He fulfills these words. The blessings bestowed on Israel will magnify the LORD. What are those blessings? God will cleanse the nation. God will give them a heart of flesh. God will give them the Holy Spirit. God will claim them as His people—He will be their God. God will cause them to abhor their sins. God will again yield to the pleas of His people. God will multiply their number. Then all will know that God is the LORD and He will receive great glory. May it be so.

Dear God, even so Lord, make it so. I wait for the fulfillment of Your promises so that You will receive the glory that You are due. I am amazed by You and Your glory, LORD, and I long for the whole world to know Your glory as well. I long for the day that Israel has been so long waiting for. I pray for the peace of Israel. Amen.

June 3 - 8, 2019

Saturday, June 8, 2019

Breath

Ezekiel 37-38

Then he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to it, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe into these slain, that they may live.'" So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army. Ezekiel 37:9-10

This prophecy would be so encouraging to those reading it. God has a plan for the restoration of Israel. The twelve tribes will once again be united under one King. Of course this is speaking of the future reign of Jesus over His nation of Israel. The breath is the Spirit of God. It reminds me of the body Adam had with no life until God breathed into it (Genesis 2:7). The nation of Israel will have new life. The dry bones will be brought to life and will live under the reign of its King. They will have one Shepherd and will follow the decrees of the LORD. This is clearly to be fulfilled in the future and yet it brings great hope. Our hope is in the certain truth that God keeps His promises. The Church can know that God will keep His promises for her as well. I consider that without God breathing life into people or nations there is no life. I must constantly be seeking for the Spirit to give life to me and the Church even as I pray for Him to breathe life into His chosen people. These things must come to pass. These prophecies must be fulfilled—they will be fulfilled.

Dear God, breathe life into Your people and into Your Church. Breathe fresh power into us so that we may stand as one in unity and broadly proclaim Your love and power. Let us be a testimony for You! Amen.



by Senior Pastor Chuck Cervenka
a daily devotional of Calvary Community Church

Monday, June 3, 2019

Pride

Ezekiel 27-28

“Son of man, say to the ruler of Tyre, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: “In the pride of your heart you say, “I am a god; I sit on the throne of a god in the heart of the seas.” But you are a man and not a god, though you think you are as wise as a god.’” Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says, “Because you think you are wise, as wise as a god, I am going to bring foreigners against you, the most ruthless of nations; they will draw their swords against your beauty and wisdom and pierce your shining splendor. They will bring you down to the pit, and you will die a violent death in the heart of the seas.”
Ezekiel 28:2, 6-8

In the funeral lament for Tyre, found in chapter 27, it is clear that Tyre is a significant city with which many other cities wanted to trade. This caused the city to be identified as prideful (27:3ff). But further, the King of Tyre was a man of great pride, considering himself to be a god. God opposes the proud. It is seen over and over in Scripture and in the world, and in my own life. Pride places one in opposition to the Almighty God of the universe. This is not a good position to choose. Every knee will bow before the LORD. Every person will come to understand that God is the only God and there is no other. The King of Tyre will discover this. He will discover that he is not a god, he is a man. So will I. I continue on the journey toward humility, but truthfully, there are still so many ways in which I stand in defiance to God. My pride causes me to choose things that are opposed to Him. How I grieve over these areas in my life. Yet I look to the Lord who looks at my heart. He knows that my heart is a heart that longs to be broken. That is the difference between the King of Tyre and me. My heart already bows to my loving, sovereign God.

Dear God, again I am reminded of the depths of pride in people. We turn from You and reject You. Thank You that You have turned my heart of stone into a heart of flesh. Thank You that You have allowed me the joy of knowing You in my life. My heart is Yours. Help me keep myself fully devoted to You. Amen.

Tuesday, June 4, 2019

Source of Confidence

Ezekiel 29-30

Egypt will no longer be a source of confidence for the people of Israel but will be a reminder of their sin in turning to her for help. Then they will know that I am the Sovereign LORD.
Ezekiel 29:16

So many times in Israel's history they turned to Egypt for help. Repeatedly, the kings of Israel and Judah would make treaties with Egypt, assuming that the power of Egypt could rescue them. The prophecy against Egypt is that they would never again be a strong nation. God would make it so weak that it would never again rule over other nations. God does this so that the Israelites would see that they sinned by turning to Egypt as a source of confidence. God proclaims that Egypt has been a false source of confidence—not even strong (29:6-7). They never were a source for Israel. I can learn from this—indeed, I must. I must realize that there are things in which I have placed my trust that are not even a source of strength. I am all too often tempted to run back to the things that have failed me before to find strength to get me through the moment!! What is that about? I pray that God would dry up those sources of confidence in my life so that I can be reminded of the sinful ways that I have turned from God and then be reminded to constantly depend upon Him alone.

Dear God, I realize there are many things that I look to for confidence apart from You. Help me to realize the sin in that and to turn in repentance to You! Reveal those false sources of hope and the weakness that they have so that I will be drawn to You. Amen.

Wednesday, June 5, 2019

Although

Ezekiel 31-32

“Pharaoh—he and all his army—will see them and he will be consoled for all his hordes that were killed by the sword, declares the Sovereign LORD. Although I had him spread terror in the land of the living, Pharaoh and all his hordes will be laid among the uncircumcised, with those killed by the sword, declares the Sovereign LORD.”
Ezekiel 32:31-32

Egypt would join all the other nations under the righteous judgment of God. Egypt will be sent to the pit with the hordes of others who have chosen rebellion against God—especially here, those who have slain innocent lives in a quest for power. In the pit there are no kings or rulers. Death equalizes the human experience. Though Egypt thought herself great, she will be laid low. The word for today that leaps out to me is “although”. God chose to use Egypt to spread terror, yet He held Egypt responsible. In this I learn that there is no excuse for sinful action. God is weaving all things together. He is sovereign over all things, using all things for His purpose and glory. While Egypt thought they were in control completely, this verse proves they were under the sovereignty of God and only moving in freedom within the boundaries He had put in place. As they moved within those areas of freedom, they were accountable for their actions. It was for these actions that they would be punished. God called them to be the agent of justice and discipline, but they went too far and did not acknowledge God. Their fate was sealed.

O LORD, You are sovereign and You are right and just in all that You do. You are working out Your plan for all creation, even when that plan is not recognized and even when You are not praised. Help me remember that I am accountable for how I live out my free will within the boundaries that You have set for me. May my life always reflect Your truth. Amen.

Thursday, June 6, 2019

Peace

Ezekiel 33-34

Then they will know that I, the LORD their God, am with them and that they, the house of Israel, are my people, declares the Sovereign LORD. You my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, are people, and I am your God, declares the Sovereign LORD.
Ezekiel 34:30-31

God establishes another covenant with the house of Israel—His people. It is the covenant of peace. It promises a future time of peace for His chosen people. This section (chapters 33-48) focuses on the hope of Israel. While the church may be able to find comfort in knowing the God who makes these promises, it must be remembered that this is God speaking to the people with whom He has made the covenants. God will keep each of His promises. After the message of judgment, there is the message that there will be a time of peace for Israel. This time has not yet come—it is still in the future. There can be no doubt that God is a covenant-making, covenant-keeping God. I love knowing that. I can't read Ezekiel 34 without being reminded of John 10. The two must be read together to understand the richness of how God shepherds His people and how, by His grace, those of us as Gentiles, who were far off, are now grafted in to the promise of peace.

O LORD, I thank You for being a covenant keeping God. Thank You for setting aside a people for Yourself and thank You especially for grafting me in to Your promises for them!! Amen.