

Friday, June 14, 2019

Glorified

Ezekiel 47-48

The man brought me back to the entrance of the temple, and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east). The water was coming down from under the south side of the temple, south of the altar.
Ezekiel 47:1

There will be a river that flows from the temple in the millennial kingdom. This river is described as increasing in depth as it flows toward what is now the Dead Sea. As it flows into that sea it will bring the sea to life so that it teems with fish! Along the banks of this river will be trees that will bear fruit in every season because of the water from the sanctuary that flows to them. The fruit of these trees will be for food and the leaves for healing. While these trees are similar to the tree in Revelation 22 they are necessarily different. Revelation speaks of one tree flowing from the throne of God (since there is no temple in Revelation 21:22). This is a life-giving river. It will bring life to a sea that is dead! Yet, the marshes will remain to provide much needed salt. This life-giving water causes me to consider the living water that Jesus promises those who trust in Him (John 7:38). His proclamation is made during the feast that would cause His listeners to consider this future river. Jesus has come so that life may be had in abundance. Just as the Dead Sea will come to life, so has my dead spirit come alive by the regeneration given to me by the life-giving Spirit flowing through me (Ephesians 2:1 KJV)!

Dear God, thank You for the promise of new life. Thank You for the life-giving Spirit in me that brings the dead to life. Thank You for the future promise of a life-giving river that once again proves that You are working out Your plan for eternity. Precious LORD, I confess there are many things I do not fully understand in these last chapters of Ezekiel. But what I do see as I read is that You are a loving and kind God who has a plan for the future. It makes me long for the time of peace that is foretold. May it be soon and may I be about Your business as I wait. Amen.

Saturday, June 15, 2019

Resolved

Daniel 1-2

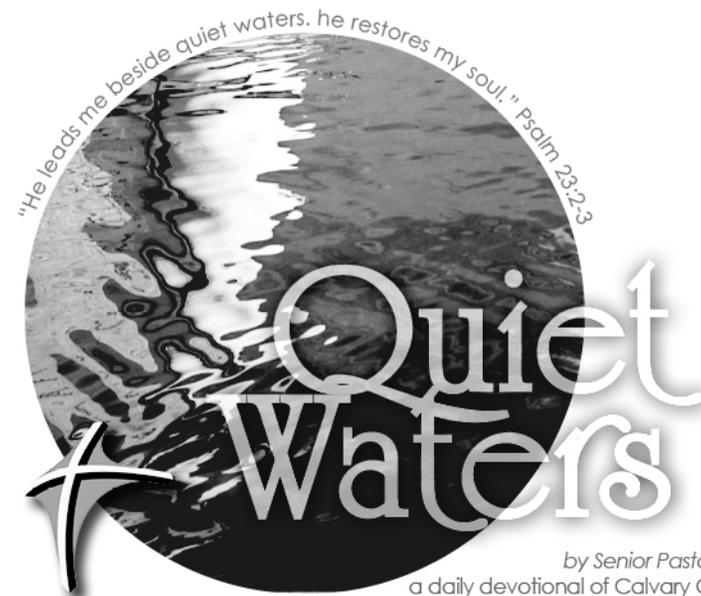
But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine and asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself in this way.

Daniel 1:8

Daniel is taken away from his home in 605 B.C. and he will not return. He will remain in exile for the rest of his life. Yet he will serve God boldly while in exile. He will serve in the administration of four different rulers, three kingdoms, and two different empires, over a period of almost 70 years. I am sure that many times he would long to be home. He was taken from that home as a 15-year-old teenager. At that point, he had a decision. How would he respond to the circumstances in which he found himself? It does not take long to find the answer. He resolves not to defile himself. This will identify his life. In the entire time of his exile, he will choose to live a life that is set apart. This would not have been easy. God's hand of blessing will be on him and he will be given a rank that will allow him to have anything he wants. After decades of this temptation, all indications are that he remained true to the Lord. I believe it is because, as a teenager, he resolved not to let anything defile him. I think about my own life and I realize that I can't go back—but I can look forward. Truthfully, I have allowed many things to defile me in my life. I have indulged myself with the delicacies of this world. It has impacted me negatively and has caused me to be less than focused. Today I am reminded of the importance of resolving to protect myself from taking in the things that would defile me as I look forward to how I may serve the LORD.

Dear God, I am convicted by this today. Thank You. Show me the ways that I have been defiled and let me see clearly how that has caused me to become apathetic toward the obedience that allows me intimacy with You. Help me set myself apart joyfully and willingly in Your service. Please Lord, find me faithful and true. Amen.

June 10 - 15, 2019



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

Monday, June 10, 2019

Holy

Ezekiel 39-40

Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will now bring Jacob back from captivity and will have compassion on all the people of Israel, and I will be zealous for my holy name. They will forget their shame and all the unfaithfulness they showed toward me when they lived in safety in their land with no one to make them afraid. When I have brought them back from the nations and have gathered them from the countries of their enemies, I will show myself holy through them in the sight of many nations. Ezekiel 39:25-27

God's plan does not change. Through the fulfillment of the promises that He has made to Israel He will show Himself to be holy. That is His plan and design. This will show that God is holy to all the nations of the world. I have a hard time with understanding the concept of holiness as fully as I would like. All too often holiness takes on a meaning that actually keeps me from truly grasping who God is. The holiness of God is what sets Him apart from me. He is pure. I am not. Yet I am called to be holy as He is holy. So was the nation of Israel. The holiness of God is revealed in the obedience of His people. His called out ones reflect who He is. The nation of Israel failed terribly at this. They embraced everything they could except God. They did detestable things and expected God to just look away. As a nation, they treated His love with contempt. But God has a plan whereby He will place in them a new Spirit and they will turn to Him and they will live in the purity that God has designed and this will reveal God as holy to all who look on. I have failed miserably as well. I love among a people who have failed miserably. I look forward to the fulfillment of this prophecy and to the day when we turn a page on this era and move on to the next. Yet even so, I am motivated to not repeat the sins of the past. Oh that I may reflect the holiness of God in my life.

Dear God, Your compassion and patience amaze me. I am overwhelmed to think of the way that you care for Your children. Thank you for choosing the nation of Israel and for being a covenant keeping God. It secures my hope in You. Reveal Yourself through my obedience to Your will for my life. Amen.

Tuesday, June 11, 2019

Details

Ezekiel 41-42

Then the man brought me to the outer sanctuary and measured the jambs; the width of the jambs was six cubits on each side. The entrance was ten cubits wide, and the projecting walls on each side of it were five cubits wide. He also measured the outer sanctuary; it was forty cubits long and twenty cubits wide.

Ezekiel 41:1-2

Okay, so I read these chapters at a great disadvantage. Culturally it is hard for me to understand these chapters and if you are following along with me in this journey through the incredible revealed Word of God it may be for you as well. These two chapters describe (in cubits) the dimensions of some temple including the thickness of the walls. It is tedious reading to say the least. I am sure it must be here for a reason, but there are a lot of details that cause my eyes to glaze over if I am not careful in how I read it. As I read the commentaries, there is no shortage of opinion about these chapters. It seems clear to me that this is not one of the previous temples and it certainly is not an eternal temple since there will not be one. It cannot be the temple that is rebuilt for the Tribulation period because the dimensions are off. So it seems to me, this must be a clear description of the millennial temple. I must remember that Ezekiel is prophesying to Israel of a future time of worship in a rebuilt temple. Ezekiel is a priest so it stands to reason that the details of the temple would be important to him and important for him to communicate—just as it is to God. Following the Tribulation, there will be a battle and then the establishment of the Millennial reign of Christ when He rules for 1,000 years. During that time there will be a temple where worship will take place. These chapters describe that temple. What that worship will look like is described in the next chapters. God has determined that He will dwell among His people. I am grateful.

Dear God, thank You for being a God of details and of detailed promises. Thank You for this future look into a time of great peace as Jesus reigns on earth. What a day for us to look forward to! Amen.

Wednesday, June 12, 2019

Glory of the LORD

Ezekiel 43-44

Then the man brought me to the gate facing east, and I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east. His voice was like the roar of rushing waters, and the land was radiant with his glory. The vision I saw was like the vision I had seen when he came to destroy the city and like the visions I had seen by the Kebar River, and I fell facedown. The glory of the LORD entered the temple through the gate facing east. Then the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple.

Ezekiel 43:1-5

Ezekiel fell facedown as he watched and heard the glory of the LORD return and fill the temple. This is amazing and in sharp contrast to when he had seen the glory depart. This time as the glory fills the temple God declares that it is different. The house of Israel will never again defile the name of God. The glory of the LORD enthroned in this temple will be such that there will be an attitude of awe as the building is entered. It will be like no other building has ever been. People will worship God fully and there will be sacrifices. These sacrifices will celebrate the true sacrifice of Jesus, not try and replace or add to it. The nation of Israel needed to be reassured that the glory of the LORD would indeed return to a temple and a people that were ready to receive Him. But God also wanted this prophecy known so that the current nation would be ashamed and would seek to be holy before Him. I must continue to be filled with awe at the presence of the glory of the LORD. I too must take these words and let them draw me to repentance and obedience.

O LORD, I can only imagine how Ezekiel felt as he watched Your glory return to the temple. May I be as filled with awe at the presence of Your glory in my life in the person of the Holy Spirit. Draw me to keep a short account with You! As I read this passage may it help me to understand the holiness that You desire and require and empower me to have. Amen.

Thursday, June 13, 2019

Sabbath

Ezekiel 45-46

On the Sabbaths and New Moons the people of the land are to worship in the presence of the LORD at the entrance to that gateway. The burnt offering the prince brings to the LORD on the Sabbath day is to be six male lambs and a ram, all without defect.

Ezekiel 46:3-4

The millennial kingdom will maintain the observance of Sabbath. It has been said that it is not so much that the Jewish people have held the Sabbath as it is that the Sabbath has held them. The Sabbath is the queen of all the feasts. Because of that it should not be a surprise to find its observance in the millennial kingdom. Remember that the Messiah is the Lord of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a gift to the people of Israel and is a special time set aside for the LORD. Apparently, in the Millennial reign the prince (whoever he may be) will be a leader who guides careful worship each Sabbath. This prince will not be the Messiah, but he will lead the people in pure worship of the Messiah—who will fulfill the roles of King and Priest. How do I observe the Sabbath? What role does it play in my life? Should I find a special time with God each and every week?

O LORD, I thank You for showing me that the Sabbath remains important to You. You modeled it in creation and established it as a sanctuary in time. Help me find ways to bring Sabbath into my life and embrace the time with You. Amen.