

Sunday – August 27, 2017

Preparation

As we open our Bible tomorrow, we'll conclude the book of Jeremiah. However, this is not the last we'll hear of Jeremiah, for the following day we'll read the book of Lamentations. Only consisting of five chapters, Lamentations is Jeremiah's heart on paper, literally "lamenting" over the nation of Israel. By definition the word "lament" means to "cry out with great wailing, and expressing deep sorrow". However, it's not just of Jeremiah's heart that we'll be reading. More importantly, we'll be looking into the heart of God and His anguish over the disobedience of His chosen people; disobedience because of their rejection of His word. We need not reiterate Israel's problems, however, it's so important to note that we learn our lesson from them lest we be the next ones guilty of rejecting God's word.

As we should be accustomed, Lamentations has multiple application throughout the five chapters. Historically, it deals with the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. Prophetically, it provides an incredible picture of the Jews in the Tribulation, albeit the Tribulation will be much, much worse. Because Matthew 24:21 describes it as follows: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." Nonetheless, we cannot discount God's judgment upon the nation of Israel at this time. As we've already seen, there were countless opportunities for repentance, yet to no avail. That being the case, God is bound by His word, and His word that, apart from repentance, Israel would be judged...and so they were.

From Lamentations, we move on in the books of the prophets by opening up the book of Ezekiel. Ezekiel himself was a contemporary of Jeremiah, therefore they had insight into much of the same experiences Israel faced through their captivity and destruction. This book, consisting of 48 chapters, dealing with similar content to the book of Jeremiah: Israel's downfall. Through Ezekiel's writings, we also gain insight into Lucifer's beginning, as well as his end. Being a prophetic book, we will learn much of the happenings during the Tribulation, judgments, even into the millennium. Through the pages of the 48 chapters, we'll find that many things we believe of the Bible would be difficult to reconcile apart from this book.

Although our Bible is not arranged chronologically, it's quite incredible how that each book tends to build on another. It brings to mind the principle recorded in

the book of Isaiah 28:9-10, “Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little” . That being the case, we must allow neither the adversary, nor our flesh, to cause us to trip up, or get “ bogged down” in reading through these prophetic books. There is definitely much to learn and, that being the case, much to be applied through the lessons and contexts of these books. However, if wrongly applied, these books can end up being a “dangerous weapon” . As always, when dealing with scripture, allow the Holy Spirit to guide into all truth by “comparing spiritual things with spiritual ” and, therefore, “let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.” Amen and amen.

Monday – August 28, 2017

TODAY'S READING: JEREMIAH 50-52

OVERVIEW:

God's judgment upon Babylon (50:1-51:64); the fall of Jerusalem and Zedekiah's torment (52:1-11); the Babylonians destroy the Temple (52:12-23); the people are exiled (52:24-30); God has not forgotten and will not forsake David's descendants (52:31-34).

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

To this point, Babylon has been the tool God used to mete out His judgment upon the many nations we read about in chapters 44-49. In chapter 50, Jeremiah prophesies God's judgment upon Babylon and her many gods.

Once Babylon would be defeated, the chosen people of God would once again be gathered and returned to their homeland. This was partially fulfilled in 538 B.C. when Cyrus made a decree permitting the Jews to go back to Jerusalem. The context, however, points to the fulfillment of God's promises to the Jews during the Great Tribulation (notice in 50:4 – *"in those days"*; 50:15 – *"it is the vengeance of the LORD"*; 50:20 – *"in those days"*; 50:28 – *"the vengeance of the LORD our God"*; and 50:30 – *"in that day."*)

That "last days" fulfillment continues in chapter 51. As well as detailing Babylon's judgment in like fashion as does Revelation 17 and 18, God also points to Israel's restoration. Despite all of Israel's defiance against God, He still loves Israel, and has every intention of blessing them. Though the conflict(s!) in the Middle East rages today, Jeremiah (and John in Revelation, not to mention Isaiah, etc., etc.) points to the fact that in the very near future, the conflict will be over, and Israel will be sitting on top. That certainly is not to say that everything Israel does and is doing today is right, but don't ever forget to factor into your equation the EVERLASTING (!!!) Abrahamic Covenant: *"And I will bless them that bless thee (Abraham, or Israel), and curse him that curseth thee"* (Gen. 12:3). Non-Christians think that is a fatalistic viewpoint. Fatalistic it may be, it won't change the outcome! Anyway you slice it, folks, Israel's going to end up on top, and her King and Messiah (and ours, hallelujah!!!), will rule the entire world from His throne in Jerusalem! America has made some incredibly sinful and stupid decisions in the last half a century (or more!). Perhaps the only reason God has not unleashed His judgment upon us is our faithfulness to bless Israel. When/If we curse them, Katie bar the door! I'm afraid we will have sealed our own doom!

In 51:59-64, one last time God wants Jeremiah to give His message via an object lesson. Jeremiah wrote *“all the evil that should come upon Babylon”* and then told Seraiah to take it and read it in Babylon. After reading it, he was to take the scroll, tie it to a rock, and cast it into the Euphrates, explaining to the people that that’s exactly what God was going to do to them!

The Book of Jeremiah concludes in chapter 52 with a somewhat lengthy explanation about the fall of Jerusalem. It is almost word for word with II Kings 18-25, 30, and very similar to what was detailed in Jer. 39:1-18. It recounts the city’s fall, Zedekiah’s attempt to escape, his capture, the murder of his sons *“before his eyes”* (52:20), just before he lost his physical sight.

Back in I Kings 9:1-9 after Solomon built the Temple, God promised to keep His name there as long as they served only Him, *“But,”* He said, *“if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments and my statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them: Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a by word among all people”* (I Kings 9:6-7). The people did not live up to their end of the bargain, but as you might imagine, God did live up to His. Jeremiah 52:12-30 is the fulfillment of God’s warning to Israel in I Kings 9:6-7.

The Book of Jeremiah does end, however, with just a flicker of hope. After 37 years of being exiled in Babylon, Jehoiachin king of Judah, is shown preferential treatment. It is a reminder that God has not forgotten the Davidic Covenant, and just as Jeremiah 30-33 made clear, God would ultimately fulfill His promises to bless Israel.

SPECIFIC REFERENCES TO “THE DAY OF THE LORD”:

51:2 – *“In the day of trouble.”*

51:6 – *“The time of the LORD’s vengeance.”*

51:11 – *“It is the vengeance of the LORD.”*

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

As the REDEEMER WHO PLEADS OUR CAUSE – Jer. 50:34 (Luke 1:68; Rom. 8:34) As the CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE – Jer. 51:15 (Col. 1:16)

Tuesday – August 29, 2017

TODAY'S READING: LAMENTATIONS 1-5

OVERVIEW:

Jeremiah's lamentation over Jerusalem's destruction (1:1-22); God's justifiable wrath (2:1-22); God's incredible mercy (3:1-66); God's anger against Jerusalem (4:1-22); a plea for restoration (5:1-22).

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

"The Lamentations of Jeremiah" as the title states, is the expression of Jeremiah's incredible sorrow over the sins of God's people that had resulted in the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, and the entire kingdom of Judah. These five chapters are kind of like a postscript to the Book of Jeremiah. They are obviously a separate Book in our English Bible, but are contained in the third section (called "the Writings") in the Hebrew Bible. Like we saw in Psalm 119, this Book employs acrostic poetry. In chapters 1, 2, and 4, each succeeding verse begins with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Chapter 3 actually has three acrostic poems.

From an historical standpoint, the Book deals with the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. From a doctrinal (or prophetic) standpoint, the Book deals with the events during and surrounding the Tribulation Period.

In chapter one, Jeremiah likens the city of Jerusalem to a grieving widow. She once was a *"princess,"* but now has become a slave (*"tributary"* – 1:1). At one time she was surrounded by *"friends"* (1:2) and *"lovers"* (1:2), but now everyone has forsaken her, leaving her to grieve and weep alone. In verse 4 of chapter 1, Jeremiah even gives human attributes to the roads leading to Jerusalem, saying, *"the ways of Zion do mourn."* Whereas at one time, they had been filled with incoming worshippers, now they are totally desolate. The picture Jeremiah describes in this chapter is heartbreaking and pitiful. Having to actually put the reality of Jerusalem's condition into words becomes more than Jeremiah can handle by the time he gets to verse 16: *"For these things I weep; mine eye, mine eye runneth down with water."* Oh, that our hearts would break and our eyes would leak as did Jeremiah's for the condition of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Laodicean church period (Rev. 3:14-22).

When God called His son, Israel, out of Egypt (Hosea 11:1), He led them with the cloud of His glory. Chapter 2 begins by explaining that at this point in their

history, the Lord likewise covered them with a cloud. Sadly, however, it was the *“cloud of his anger.”* Whereas in times past, the Lord fought on Israel’s behalf against their enemies, now the Lord, Himself fought against Israel like one of their enemies (2:2-5). Again, Jeremiah “laments” as he is forced to describe Israel’s awful condition: *“Mine eyes do fail with tears, my bowels are troubled, my liver is poured upon the earth, for the destruction of the daughter of my people”* (2:11). Jeremiah recognized, however, that they had gotten exactly what they deserved (2:19), because they listened to their false prophets (2:14), and stubbornly refused to repent of their idolatry. Verse 15 is perhaps the saddest of all the tremendously sad verses in this Book: *“All that pass by clap their hands at thee; they hiss and wag their head at the daughter of Jerusalem, saying, Is this the city that men call The perfection of beauty, The joy of the whole earth?”* While Christians all over our country are “whooping it up” about all of the so-called “wonderful” and “spiritual” things that are taking place in the world, does the world not look at Christianity and say, “Is this the glorious church of the Lord Jesus Christ, the beautiful, chaste virgin Bride that is without spot or blemish or any such thing?” (Eph. 5:27; II Cor. 11:2) God give us Jeremiahs in Laodicea who will lament our grievous condition.

After two and a half chapters of simply focusing on the pitiful condition of the land, in the middle of chapter 3, Jeremiah lifts his eyes to the Lord. In the midst of sorrow and ruin, he is reminded of the mercy and compassion of the Lord, and the incredible fact that *“His compassions fail not”* (3:22), and *“they are new every morning”* (3:23). It brings Jeremiah to declare *“Great is Thy faithfulness!”* In other words, “We have certainly failed Him, but He will not fail us!” Praise the Lord for His marvelous, infinite matchless mercy and grace!

In the remainder of chapter 3, Jeremiah calls upon the people to stop their whining, to search their hearts, confess their sin, and get right with God! He then calls upon God to bring punishment upon those He used as the instrument of His wrath against Jerusalem.

Chapter 4 lets us know just how horrendous the situation in Jerusalem actually had gotten. Children were being mistreated and abused by their parents, and believe it or not, some mothers were actually eating their own children! God says that His punishment against this city would even be greater than His punishment of Sodom!

Chapter 5 continues the description of the deplorable situation in Zion, and ends with Jeremiah crying out to God, *“Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old”* (5:21). The good news is, in the very near

future, God is going to answer Jeremiah's prayer!

SPECIFIC REFERENCES TO "THE DAY OF THE LORD":

2:1 – *"In the day of his anger."*

2:22 – *"In the day of the LORD's anger."*

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

Through JEREMIAH'S SORROW OVER JERUSALEM – Lam. 1:12-22 (Matt. 23:37; Luke 13:34)

As the MERCIFUL SAVIOUR – Lam. 3:22 (Jude 1:21)

Wednesday – August 30, 2017

TODAY'S READING: EZEKIEL 1-5

OVERVIEW:

Ezekiel receives a vision of God's glory; Ezekiel receives his commission; Ezekiel is instructed to physically typify the siege and judgment of Jerusalem.

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

Ezekiel chapter 1 records one of the most incredible visions in the Word of God. The vision includes four living creatures flying through the air like a flash of lightning, a crystal sea, creatures with multiple eyes and faces ushering in a throne, and an appearance of the pre-incarnate Christ. Ezekiel is ushered into the presence of the Lord and sees a glimpse of the Second Advent. Just like Isaiah (Isa. 6:1-8) and the Apostle John (Rev. 4-5), Ezekiel is overwhelmed by the revelation of Christ in all of His glory. Ezekiel's response will be the response of every person when they see Christ in all of His glory. He falls on his face! What a contrast to the nonchalant way much of Christianity approaches the Lord Jesus Christ! There is no room for pride or selfishness in the presence of God Almighty. One day every knee will bow to the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 14:11).

Chapters two through three record God's commission for Ezekiel. He is to prophesy to the nation of Israel during the seventy year exile. Ezekiel paints a picture for every Christian of what it really means to be a witness for Christ. The picture begins with an encounter with Christ. In chapter one, Ezekiel comes face to face with Christ (1:28). However, the encounter didn't just involve what Ezekiel *saw*, but also what Ezekiel *heard*. Speaking in the first person, Ezekiel says, "*and I heard a voice of one that spake.*" Our effectiveness as a witness for Christ must begin with a daily encounter with Christ. How can we encounter Christ if He doesn't (and won't) appear to us in a vision like Ezekiel's? We encounter Christ by listening to His Word. It is God's written revelation that gives us a glimpse of Christ in all of His glory!

However, it isn't enough just to *hear* God's words. We must also *receive* that word in our heart. God instructed Ezekiel, "*all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart*" (3:10). We must receive God's words into our heart in such a way that they change the way we think, behave, and live. It is interesting that God tells Ezekiel to receive "*all*" His words. Over the course of this prophecy, God is going to give Ezekiel some very difficult things to do and say. When it comes to God's written revelation, we can't be choosey. Sometimes the Word will

be sweet. Sometimes it will be bitter. Sometimes it will comfort and sometimes it will sting. We must receive it all regardless. This also serves as a warning to those who would tamper with the Word of God, and preachers who would fail to teach *“all the counsel of God”* (Acts 20:27).

God then instructs Ezekiel to speak His words (2:7, 3:23-27). Ezekiel spoke as a prophet of God when he uttered the phrase, *“Thus saith the LORD GOD.”* Our counsel to others should not be conclusions based on our own life experiences and opinions. We must share what we have received in our heart -- God’s words. It is interesting to note that Ezekiel’s *actions mirrored his spoken words*. God continually asks Ezekiel to demonstrate His truth to Israel by the way He lives (as seen in the sign of the tile, shaving, burning hair, lying on each side, and imprisonment). Our life must reflect the truth of God. Our actions will speak louder than our words!

You would think that Ezekiel was ready to so speak. However, God gives a couple of other instructions. Ezekiel was to go and identify with the people (3:15). How can we share the love of Christ with people with whom we aren’t willing to identify? Before Ezekiel spoke, he sat quietly with those who would be the recipients of his/God’s message. We must be willing to spend time with people and to listen. Ezekiel waited for God’s direction before he spoke. The cliché is true — “People won’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.”

Finally, God gives Ezekiel a warning. Ezekiel will be held accountable. He isn’t accountable for the response of the people, but He is accountable to hear, receive, and speak the words of God (3:15-21). God doesn’t ask us to change the hearts of men, but He does require that we hear the Word of Christ, receive the Word of Christ, and share the Word of Christ (Col. 3:16; I Tim. 4:16).

Are you encountering Christ daily by meeting with Him in His word? Are you listening to His words and receiving them in your heart? Are you identifying with those around you and speaking God’s Word to them, both audibly, and in the way you live?

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

As the APPEARANCE OF A MAN UPON THE THRONE – Ezek. 1:26 (Rev. 1:13-17).

TODAY'S READING: EZEKIEL 6-11

OVERVIEW:

God judges Israel for their idolatry (Chapter Six); The severity of God's judgment (Chapter Seven); Vision of Jerusalem's sin (Chapter Eight); Vision of God's judgment on Jerusalem (Chapter Nine); Vision of the cherubim and God's glory (Chapter Ten); Israel is warned about the false security of Jerusalem (Chapter Eleven).

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

The Book of Ezekiel contains an important "title" and a prominent reoccurring phrase. The title "*Son of Man*" is attributed to Ezekiel ninety-three times. This title appears a total of one hundred ninety-three times in the Bible. The prophet Daniel attributes the title to the coming Messiah in Daniel 7:13. The title appears eighty-four times in the New Testament in reference to the Lord Jesus Christ. As seen in their reaction to the title in the Gospel of Luke, the Jews understood that this title has messianic implications.

"And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying, Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe: And if I also ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let me go. Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God. Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am. And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth." – Luke 22:66-71

Ezekiel, a prophet and priest, will prove to be a type of the Lord Jesus Christ in that he will minister to the nation of Israel during the time of exile, just as Jesus Christ will minister to Israel during the tribulation. It is also true that the period of judgment and restoration pictured in Ezekiel foreshadows the judgment and restoration of Israel during the tribulation and the millennial reign of Christ.

The phrase, "*know that I am the LORD*" appears seventy-seven times in the Bible. The phrase appears sixty-three times in the Book of Ezekiel and appears first in Ezekiel 6:7. Israel had forgotten who God was. Israel had continually turned to idolatry (6:4, 8:5-16) and had replaced God with man-made images. Israel had also been trusting in their wealth (7:19) and in the walls of Jerusalem (11:3) for security. Through their exile, judgment, and eventual restoration, God's

purpose is to remind Israel that He is the Lord. What a reminder to us that our security should not rest in our material resources or self-made “walls.” Our true security must be in the only One who can really keep us safe – God!

Ezekiel’s visions of God’s judgment are precise and severe. Israel’s idolatry had begun at God’s Temple causing God to remove His presence (8:6). It is at God’s Temple where judgment will begin (9:6). This is a reminder to the believer of where the war for worship will take place. Throughout the entire Old Testament, Satan desired to destroy the place where God’s glory dwelt. Satan was successful during the exile when Babylon, under the leadership of Nebuchadnezzar, burns the Temple in 586 BC. The temple is later rebuilt only to be destroyed again by Rome in 70 AD. This serves as a warning that our enemy wants to destroy the place where God currently dwells – us! The enemy desires that we would turn to other gods (idolatry) through covetousness. The enemy desires that we would turn away from God in an effort to find security and safety in temporal riches and wrong relationships. Just as God instructed that judgment begin at His sanctuary (9:6), we must evaluate our temple (our heart) to see if we have forgotten who God is.

God appears to Ezekiel for the third time at the beginning of chapter 10 (1:4, 3:23, 10:1). It is during this encounter that God reveals to Ezekiel that Israel would one day be restored (11:17-20). This final restoration will usher in the millennial reign of Christ. Even in the midst of tribulation, God promises deliverance.

SPECIFIC REFERENCES TO “THE DAY OF THE LORD”:

7:7 – *“The day of trouble is near.”*

7:10 – *“Behold the day.”*

7:12 – *“The day draweth near.”*

7:19 – *“The day of wrath of the LORD.”*

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

As the ONE MAN CLOTHED WITH LINEN – Ezek. 9:2 (Rev. 1:13).

TODAY'S READING: EZEKIEL 12-16

OVERVIEW:

Ezekiel's actions typify the exile (chapter twelve); God warns the false prophets (chapter thirteen); God warns Israel that judgment is inevitable (chapters fourteen and fifteen); God reminds Israel of His grace in saving them and their decision to forsake Him (chapter sixteen).

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

God continually asks Ezekiel to picture His truth about the exile through his actions. Leaving with his “*stuff*” through the wall (12:1-16) typifies the captivity of Israel's current king, Zedekiah (II Kings 25:1- 10). Ezekiel's trembling (12:17-20) illustrates the desolation that Israel will experience during the exile. God wants Ezekiel to speak through his actions as well as his words. What a lesson for the Christian to learn. Do our actions speak truth as much as our speech? Do our actions compliment the message we are proclaiming? Ezekiel's message was one of eminent judgment. Our message is *Christ*. Does our life demonstrate Christ?

Even though Ezekiel warns Israel, there are those who still believe that God is not serious. Ezekiel's audience has adopted a proverb (12:22) that says (*paraphrase*), “*With the passing of time every warning of Ezekiel is proven false.*” God has enough of this attitude and tells Ezekiel to give Israel a new proverb . . . “*The days are at hand, and the effect of every vision.*” God is saying, “Judgment starts now!” Man lives believing that there will never be consequences for his sin. However, sin eventually has a payday. It has been said that sin takes you farther than you want to go, keeps you longer than you want to stay, and costs you more than you want to pay. Do not confuse God's longsuffering with apathy towards sin.

The prophets who foretell peace and safety (Ezekiel 13, 14:9) are further demonstrating Israel's arrogance. What a foreshadowing of the Anti-Christ, who will come to power at the beginning of the tribulation by proclaiming peace, when in truth it is God's vengeance and wrath that will be unleashed on the earth (Daniel 8:25). Just as God's judgment was inevitable during the ministry of Ezekiel, so His judgment will be inevitable during the coming tribulation. Chapter sixteen serves as one of the most brutally descriptive images of our original sin condition and God's grace. This chapter is so clear and indicting that

some of the ancient rabbis did not allow it to be read in public.

God likens Israel to an abandoned child (16:4-5), born of a wrong family (16:3), left for dead in a field. God sees Israel lying in her own blood. God says, “*Live.*” (16:6). God then blesses Israel with beauty (holiness), clothing (righteousness), and jewels/crown (rewards). He anoints Israel with oil (type of the Holy Spirit) and makes her His bride (16:7-14). But Israel prostitutes herself to other nations and other gods. She commits adultery over and over again (16:15-59).

Ezekiel 16:60 contains one of the most powerful words in the entire Bible — “*Nevertheless.*” Despite Israel’s broken promises, God still remembers His covenant, and promises an everlasting covenant. What a beautiful, yet solemn picture, of the reality of our life. It is not because of our goodness or obedience that God keeps His word to us. It is because of God’s grace. We continually forsake our God . . . nevertheless.

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

As the BRIDEGROOM in chapter sixteen.

Saturday – September 2nd, 2017

Reflection

This week's reading involved three separate books, however, they involved the same group of people concerning the same message: Repent and "know that I am the LORD". This actually has continued to be the message to Israel for centuries. Through the books we've already read, this should be so very evident at this point. It should really be no surprise that Israel is such an incredible picture of the individual believer. However, that being the case, may our lives never be reflective of Israel's arrogance and "hard-hearted" mindset toward the things of God as we find throughout the books we've recently read.

As mentioned above, part of the message to Israel had been to "know that I am the LORD". So much so, that this phrase shows up 63 times in the book of Ezekiel alone. Quite remarkable, right? Time and time again, God continues to reiterate His desire for not only Israel, but the world as well, to know Him. Understanding the context of the books we've been reading, what we find is that these books, prophetically speaking, are actually writing of day when every one will "know that I am" is the Lord of lords, and King of kings. It's the day "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Philippians 2:10-11) There is no question, nor doubt, that on that day every one will both know and proclaim just Who "I am" truly is. That being the case, however, God's desire is for us to know Him on this day, therefore, making Him known throughout the world. God desires us to learn of His "compassions" (Lamentations 3:22), His mercy and grace, His love, but also His light and His holiness. By doing so, what we'll find is that His attributes will become our attributes. The more we know of Him, the more we'll be like Him. That is His ultimate desire.

This being the case, just as we read in yesterday's devotional, Ezekiel 14:6 states, "Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God; Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations." This would be a good Old Testament parallel to 2 Corinthians 7:1, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Or perhaps even Colossians 3:8-11, "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his

deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.” This is the scriptural pattern prepared for a holy life. Therefore, our responsibility is to read, learn, obey, and apply. It’s really that simple.

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION:

Jeremiah 50:34 “Their Redeemer is strong; the LORD of hosts is his name: he shall thoroughly plead their cause, that he may give rest to the land, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon.”

Lamentations 3:22 “It is of the LORD’s mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.”

Ezekiel 2:8 “But thou, son of man, hear what I say unto thee; Be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house: open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee.”

Ezekiel 11:20 “That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.”

Ezekiel 14:6 “Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations.”