

HOPE
of
Glory

A Study of EZEKIEL
for ADVENT

BY DR. JOHN D. MORRISON
DR. TYLER SMILEY, SENIOR PASTOR

 Lakewood
PRESS



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Designed by Joy Willis

& MEDITATE MEMORIZE



*And I will give you a new heart,
and a new spirit I will put within you.
And I will remove the heart of stone
from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.
And I will put my Spirit within you,
and cause you to walk in my statutes
and be careful to obey my rules.*

EZEKIEL 36:26-27

LETTER FROM OUR SENIOR PASTOR

In the Bible, the presence of God is often described by the word “glory.” We know that this word connotes ideas like “magnificent, brilliance, and splendor,” but it can be hard to capture all that the word glory expresses when applied to God. Yet one thing is clear—God’s presence is the fullness of glory. That’s why when people in Scripture encounter the glory of the Lord they often fall down. The presence of God is that powerful. God’s presence is true glory. And in the book of Ezekiel, the prophet is taken up with the hope of God’s glorious presence dwelling among his people again.

Ezekiel writes to a people in exile, who once dwelt among the presence of the glory of the Lord in the temple, but now have lost their homes and that sense of God’s glorious presence among them. But God wasn’t done with his people. Through Ezekiel he promises that his presence among his people will be restored, and that his people, having rejected the Lord, will once again see the indescribable glory of God descending among them. In fact, this is a major theme that spreads throughout Ezekiel’s prophecy (Eze. 1:28; 10:4; 43:1–5).

Indeed, what the prophet announced we still await — a day when the Lord returns and establishes the new creation where there is “no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb” (Revelation 21:23). Even so, as Christians we have seen God’s glory in a way that Ezekiel could only anticipate. The birth of Jesus was announced by angels while “the glory of the Lord shone around them” (Luke 2:9). Then, Jesus himself, we are told, is “the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being” (Hebrews 1:3). Having

been with Jesus, the apostle John described, “we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father” (John 1:14). God’s glorious presence had finally come again, in the person of Jesus, and this time in a more amazing way than ever before.

In a word, that’s what advent is all about: God’s glorious presence dwelling among his people. Advent literally means “coming,” and this is when we celebrate the fact that Jesus Christ came to earth to save God’s people. And in his coming, God’s glorious presence was established on earth in a new and fresh way. Ezekiel’s prophecy is already coming to fruition. At the same time, we wait for the second advent, the second “coming,” when we will be amazed even more by the culmination of God’s glory dwelling among his people, even as Ezekiel saw in his vision — “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” (Eze. 43:2).

Thus, Jesus is described as the “radiance of God’s glory” and also to us as “the hope of glory” (Col. 1:24). In Christ we have the true hope of one day experiencing God’s glorious presence in all of its fullness. Christ has come; Christ will come again! Rest in his glory.

This advent, join us as we consider the Hope of Glory that we have in knowing that one day Jesus will come and make all things new. Through the prophet Ezekiel God leads us into beholding the glory of the Lord in a way that shapes how we see the world around us.

God bless you as you celebrate His coming,



Dr. Tyler Smiley, Senior Pastor



WEEK 1

WEEK 1 * DAY 1 * READ EZEKIEL 1:1-3

The first four verses of Ezekiel set the stage for what is to come in the rest of this book, telling us the who, what, when, and where of the prophecy. It is the where that proves particularly important. Ezekiel is with God's people in exile. He finds himself in Babylon with many of God's people. They were conquered, far from home, and questioning God.

In his thirtieth year, Ezekiel felt this anguish of exile in a particularly strong way. At this age, a priest like Ezekiel would have begun his service in the temple, entering into the glorious presence of God. However, rather than being at the temple, he finds himself on the banks of an irrigation canal in the midst of a pagan nation. For many of us, we know what it is to feel isolated. Over these past two years, there have been times of literal, physical distance from others. We have grown disconnected from friends and family and, perhaps, even feel distant from God. This anguish and isolation may mirror Ezekiel's own feelings.

Just as "the word of God came to Ezekiel" in exile (1:3), Advent reminds us that the Word of God, Jesus Christ, comes to us even when we are far from God. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth" (Jn 1:14). The Word of God comes and shows us his glory.

Even now, as we look forward to his second coming, Jesus remains, "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col 1:27). This is our hope in Advent, the hope that Ezekiel foretold: God in all his glory has come to us and remains with us by his Holy Spirit.

PRAY Father, I confess that often I have felt far from you, and like your people in the Old Testament, this distance was my own making. Yet, you have not left me. You sent your Son, your Word in flesh, Jesus Christ for me. Even now, your hand is upon me as you dwell in me and all who believe by your Holy Spirit. Please use this study of Ezekiel to grow me and our church in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who is the hope of glory. Amen.

WEEK 1 * DAY 2 * READ EZEKIEL 1:4-21

These verses overflow with imagery. Bright and shining lights abound. Amazing creatures fly to and fro, and then there is a wheel that is within a wheel. Ezekiel seems to barely be able to find the words to express what he is experiencing. At the end of the chapter, we learn that Ezekiel is seeing “the appearance of the likeness of the glory of God” (1:28). We are reminded through these images that God is at once everywhere and all knowing. He sees all and can go wherever he wills. The storm and the coals are images of his righteous judgment. The bright and shining lights speak to his glory. These images highlight God’s transcendence and his sovereignty. He is God over all. He is the creator and the ruler of all the earth. When Ezekiel sees him, he falls flat on his face (1:28).

Ezekiel’s vision challenges our small view of God. We want a God whom we can wrap our minds around—a God we can explain and who is at our beck and call. We conceive of him as our celestial grandfather who doles out great gifts if we can just ask the right way. We think he is a tame and predictable God.

God is at once God with us and God over all. He is, as we celebrate in Advent, Immanuel, which means God with us (Matt 1:23). He has entered into our lives and into our suffering to redeem us. He is our God who reveals himself in the cross. Christ Jesus is also the risen and exalted Lord over all. He is ruling and reigning over all things as he sits at his Father’s right hand. He is both Immanuel and the Lord Almighty.

PRAY Gracious God, please give me a greater grasp of your glory as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit through your word to us through Ezekiel. May I remember that you are at once God over all and God with us. May you comfort and challenge me with these truths. Amen.



WEEK 1 * DAY 3 * READ EZEKIEL 1: 22-28

Ezekiel records his vision of God seated upon his throne. There's fire and brightness and gleaming metal and a rainbow. This is "the appearance of the likeness of the glory of God" (1:28). The Hebrew word for glory is *kabod*. As biblical scholar Christopher Wright explains, "The word essentially has to do with 'weight' or 'substance.' It portrays the sense of God's majestic reality, the overwhelming power of his presence, and the 'weight' of his eternal Being." What Ezekiel sees is God's glorious presence.

We were created to worship God in all his glory. Our fundamental problem is that we have "exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things" (Rom 1:23). We have come to worship creatures rather than the creator. We seek our own glory, rather than God's.

God's solution is, as it was with Ezekiel, to show us his glory. The Father has sent the Son, who "is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature" (Heb 1:3). When we see Jesus, we see the glory of the whole Trinity (Jn 1:14). God does not just call us to stand from afar and gaze at his glory, but he invites us into his glory to enjoy the love and communion that the Father, Son, and Spirit have shared from eternity past (Jn 17:22-23).

This hope of God's glory is to go into all the world. We wait with eager longing for the day when "the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (Hab 2:14). When Christ comes again, God's glorious presence will cover the whole earth, and we will worship and enjoy him forever.

PRAY Gracious God, truly you are the God who dwells in unapproachable light (1 Tim 6:16). While, we could not approach you, you have come to us in Jesus Christ so that we might see and share in your glory. Help me to see and to savor your glory in Jesus Christ this season. Amen.

"And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you."

EZEKIEL 36:26a

WEEK 1 * DAY 4 * READ EZEKIEL 2:1-10

In the second chapter, Ezekiel begins to learn why the Lord has appeared to him. He has come to send Ezekiel back to his people with a message from God. His people are “impudent and stubborn” (2:4) and “a rebellious house” (2:5). Furthermore, the Lord gives Ezekiel a message of “lamentation and mourning and woe” (2:10). Understandably, Ezekiel is fearful, and so two times the Lord exhorts him “be not afraid” (2:6).

Like Ezekiel, all those who have trusted in Jesus are a sent people. “As the Father has sent me,” Jesus commissions us, “even so I am sending you” (Jn 20:21). Often, being sent conjures up images of distant lands and new languages, but for many of us, we are sent, like Ezekiel, to our own people—to our neighborhoods and our workplaces. And like Ezekiel, this commission can overwhelm us and lead us to fear. We are afraid to take the good news of Jesus Christ to those around us.

Our hope is that we do not go alone. We are empowered and accompanied by the Holy Spirit. Notice in Ezekiel 2:1 how the Lord commands the prophet to stand up on his feet, but he cannot do it; so in the next verse, Ezekiel records, “The Spirit entered into me and set me on my feet” (2:2). The Spirit strengthens Ezekiel and will prove central to his fulfilling God’s calling throughout this book. When Jesus sends us, he does not send us alone; but he sends the Holy Spirit with us. Just after Jesus commissioned the disciples, “he breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit’” (Jn 20:22). Jesus sends us to declare and to display his gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit.

PRAY Father in heaven, I know that your Son Jesus sends me day after day into my community, and yet, if I am honest, I am afraid. I fear I will not recognize what you wish for me to see. I fear how others will react. Father, I confess that these fears arise from a lack of faith in you. May you forgive me and then comfort and strengthen me by God the Holy Spirit to be a faithful witness to you. Amen.



WEEK 1 * DAY 5 * READ EZEKIEL 3:1-27

As the Lord sends Ezekiel to his people, he sends him with his message. Ezekiel must consume God's words and then proclaim them to his people (3:1). The prophet does not get to choose his message, but he must speak what God gives him (3:17, 27). In turn, God will judge Ezekiel based upon his faithfulness to proclaim this message (3:16-21).

As followers of Jesus, we have been entrusted with the message of how God in Christ is reconciling sinners to himself. Proverbs teaches us, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits" (18:21). We have the power through the Holy Spirit to give life with our words. When we proclaim the good news of what God is doing through Jesus, we offer life and hope to our world.

With a message from God and empowered by God the Spirit (see 3:12, 14, 24), we might expect that the results will come easily. We assume that surely people will listen and respond in faith. Yet, Ezekiel is warned that he is going to need a hard head to be God's messenger (3:8). The results are not guaranteed (3:16-21). Faithfulness, not fruitfulness, will be the true measure of success.

In the face of such a difficult task, it is God's glorious presence that sustains Ezekiel. Once again, the Lord graciously appears to him (3:23), and God's presence keeps him going. Our faithfulness to live out our calling as followers of Jesus will depend upon our communion with God. We must continue to seek the Lord through his Word, prayer, and the worship of his church, so that we will be sustained in our Spirit-empowered mission to proclaim his message to the world.

PRAY Lord Jesus, with Peter we confess, "You have the words of eternal life" (Jn 6:68). Please forgive us as we offer people so many other ways to find hope, security and peace outside of your gospel. Please forgive us for thinking our opinions are as important as your gospel. Please empower us by your Spirit and sustain us by your presence, so that we can be faithful witnesses to your words of life. Amen.

★ DISCUSSION QUESTIONS ★

1. 2 Kings 24-25 helps explain Israel's exile. Why were God's people in exile? Why is the context important for understanding Ezekiel?
2. How do you imagine Ezekiel and the other Israelites felt in exile? What might they have been thinking about God?
3. Peter describes New Testament believers as exiles (1 Pet 1:1, 17). How is this a fitting description for believers in this world? How does it sometimes feel like you living in a foreign country? How does Hebrews 11:13-16 help us think about how to be sojourner in this life?
4. Why would God's glory appearing in Babylon have been such a shock to Ezekiel? Where would Ezekiel have expected God's glory to be? How did God's appearing both comfort and disturb him?
5. Read Hebrews 1:1-4. How is Jesus's incarnation like the appearance of God's glory to Ezekiel? How is it different?
6. As we live in this world now, how do we experience the comfort of God's presence?
7. As those who have experienced God's glory in Christ, we are also sent with his message. See John 20:21. What do we learn about our being sent by Jesus when we look at Ezekiel's sending?
8. How can we use this season as an opportunity to tell others about the good news of Jesus? For whom are you praying that they would come to experience the love and grace of God in Christ?





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and a new spirit I will put within you.*

*And I will remove the heart of stone
from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.*

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EZEKIEL 36:26-27



WEEK 2

WEEK 2 DAY 1 READ EZEKIEL 5:5-9

This week takes us through the middle section of Ezekiel from chapter 4 to 33. These chapters prove crucial to understanding the prophet's message, for it is in these chapters he unpacks why and how God will judge his people. Our reading today picks up after a series of sign-acts that Ezekiel has performed to demonstrate the coming judgment. Chapter 5 explains these acts.

God is judging his people because they have responded to his grace by rejecting his rule and not walking in his statutes (5:6). In fact, their actions have been even worse than the surrounding nations (5:7). Israel's rebellion against the Lord is so heinous because God had chosen this people as the special object of his grace.

We do not have to stretch our imaginations far to see ourselves in these verses. We have experienced God's grace in a myriad of ways; his giving us life, sustaining that life, and offering us redemption in Christ. We have experienced his grace, and yet we have rejected his rule. Surely, we too deserve this kind of judgment from God.

Yet, it is precisely as we come face-to-face with our own disobedience and the demand for judgment that we see the beauty of the gospel. Christ Jesus is our hope of glory because he fulfills all of God's righteous requirements. Jesus perfectly obeys all of God's rules and completely walks according to his statutes. When we trust in him, his perfect obedience is counted as our own. What is more, even though he was sinless, he bore God's judgment for our sin so that we could be forgiven. Through the gospel of Jesus Christ, we have complete forgiveness and are counted as perfectly righteous in God's sight.

PRAY Gracious Father, we thank you that your steadfast love endures forever and that your faithfulness knows no end. Thank you Jesus, for your perfect obedience and atoning sacrifice for us. Holy Spirit, thank you for applying this work of redemption to our lives and for being the channel of God's love into our lives. Amen.

WEEK 2 DAY 2 READ EZEKIEL 10:1-22, 11:14-23

In these chapters, the Lord's judgment culminates in the removal of his presence from the temple in Jerusalem. God's glory departs from the midst of his people in the promised land.

The loss of God's presence as the peak of God's judgment reminds us that the true blessing we receive from God is life with him. Often, many benefits flow to us from faithfully following Jesus. Relationships are restored. Our lives are filled with joy, peace and purpose. Yet, when such blessings are not present—when following Jesus brings turmoil and fractures relationships (Jn 16:33, Matt 10:34-39)—we are reminded that the greatest gift of God's grace is God himself. If we have God, we have everything.

We see this hope in Ezekiel 11:20, when the Lord himself promises, "And they shall be my people, and I will be their God." Our only hope is acceptance before God and life in his presence. This acceptance into his presence comes through the rejection of his Son. We are accepted because Christ was rejected by the Father on the cross (Matt 27:46). Now, Christ in us is the hope of glory, because in union with Christ we are brought into the communion that the Father, Son, and Spirit have shared from eternity past.

In Christ, we experience the blessing of life in God's presence. We are accepted by God and adopted into his family. No longer do we fear rejection by others or need to seek their acceptance. We can say with Paul, "For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ" (Gal 1:10).


PRAY Lord, we pray with the psalmist, "Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever" (Ps 73:25-26). Please help us to live in the reality that you are all we need. Amen.



WEEK 2 DAY 3 READ EZEKIEL 16:1-63

Ezekiel 16 pictures God as a faithful husband and his people as an unfaithful spouse. It is a difficult chapter to read because it exposes sin in all its ugliness. We should be disturbed by this chapter. We should be uncomfortable because in this chapter we are confronted with the repulsive nature of our sin.

Far too often, we see our sin as a trifling matter. We see our disobedience as minor infractions. We consider sin to be like a minor illness; we just need a little help recovering. Yet, the Bible teaches that apart from Christ we are dead in sin (Eph 2:1) and enemies of God (Rom 5:10). To draw on the analogy of marriage that Ezekiel uses, we treat our sin against God as if we merely forgot to take out the trash like we promised; in actuality, it is like repeated and unabashed adultery.



The abhorrent nature of our rejection and rebellion against God makes the cross of Christ shine all the more beautifully. The cross displays God's love, holiness, justice, mercy, and grace flowing harmoniously from him to redeem his people. This is the New Covenant that Ezekiel records at the end of chapter 16. In the cross, God remembers his past promises and establishes this everlasting promise (16:60). He himself will atone for our sins and make us his own (16:63).

Christ Jesus fulfills this vision as he “loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish” (Eph 5:25–27).

PRAY Lord Jesus, we thank you that you have set your love upon us to cleanse us and to redeem us so that we might enjoy life with you forever. Amen.

WEEK 2 DAY 4 READ EZEKIEL 25:1-7; 28:24-26

In chapters 25-32, God turns his attention to the surrounding nations. Not only do his people, Israel, deserve judgment, but so do all the nations. God is just, and his justice will flow to the nations both through judgment and salvation. Notice the Lord's refrain throughout this section, "Then they will know that I am the Lord their God" (28:24, 26; cf. 25:7). Our God is the creator, sustainer, and redeemer of the entire world. He will make himself known among all peoples.

Far too often, our view of God's work in the world is too small. He is working out his plan to redeem "a great multitude, that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes, and peoples and languages" (Rev 7:9). This vision comes to be through the work of Jesus Christ,

who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Php 2:6-11).

Since Christ took on a nature like ours and was crucified, he has now been exalted to the glory of God the Father. God's plan to make himself known among the nations comes about through Jesus Christ.

PRAY Gracious God, may your will be done and your kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. Our prayer today is that your name will be exalted in all the earth. May the peoples praise you. May the nations be glad and sing for joy. Amen.

WEEK 2 ✪ DAY 5 ✪ READ EZEKIEL 33:21-33

Ezekiel receives word from someone who has escaped from Jerusalem that the city has fallen (33:21-22). Ezekiel's prophecies have come true. Then, the Lord speaks again through the prophet, first addressing those who remain in Jerusalem (33:23-29) and then those who are in exile (33:30-33). Those who remain in Jerusalem presume upon God. They think that they will be safe because they are in the land promised to Abraham. Those in exile hear God's word, but they do not obey because their hearts are far from God.

Those in Jerusalem put their trust in the blessings of God, rather than God himself. They found their security in what God had given them, not in the Lord. Today, we face the similar challenge of finding our security in God's blessings, rather than in God himself. We feel secure because our relationships are healthy or there is plenty of money in the bank. We find our security in our ability to provide for our families or create a good home for them. While these are all good blessings from God, they provide no lasting security. When we start to look to these blessings for our security, we have elevated them to idols.

Often, the greatest blessing God gives us is to shake these false foundations of security, causing us to cling to him. As the psalmist testifies, "It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes" (Ps 119:71). Hardships often prove to be true blessings, as they lead us to the "rock that is higher than I" (Ps 61:2). Our true security comes when we realize that Christ alone is our rock and our refuge.

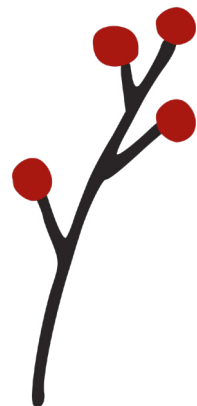
PRAY Gracious God, with the psalmist we pray, "In you, O Lord, do I take refuge; let me never be put to shame! In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me; incline your ear to me, and save me! Be to me a rock of refuge, to which I may continually come; you have given the command to save me, for you are my rock and my fortress" (Ps 71:1-3).



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



1. Why is so much of Ezekiel's message filled with God's judgment? What good does it do us to remember our sins? How does hearing such bad news sweeten the good news?
2. Where in the reading this week did it seem as if God was speaking directly to you? Where did you see yourself in Israel's sin?
3. In Ezekiel 33, those left in Jerusalem assume they are safe because they are in Jerusalem. They are trusting in a blessing of God, rather than God himself. As you consider your own life, where do you find yourself trusting in God's gifts, rather than in God himself? Another way to ask this is to consider: what can I not live without?
4. The peak of God's judgment is leaving his people. He takes his presence from them. Do we live as if God's presence in our lives is the greatest blessing he can offer? Reflect on Psalm 73:25-26. What is there on earth that you desire besides God? What do you allow to rival God in your heart?
5. How do we experience the blessing of God's presence today? How can we grow to enjoy his presence more?
6. Considering God's judgment on human disobedience, why is Christ's perfect obedience so important for us? Consider Philippians 3:9. Why is it such good news that Christ's righteousness is counted as ours? How do we receive that





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EZEKIEL 36:26-27



WEEK 3

WEEK 3 • DAY 1 • READ EZEKIEL 34:1-10

In chapter 34, Ezekiel's message turns to the hope of what God is going to do for his people. He prophesies that the Lord will give his people a new David, a new shepherd king to rule and to care for his people.

This message of hope begins with a message of judgment against the current leaders of his people. They were to be shepherds, but instead of feeding the sheep, they fed themselves (34:2-3, 10). What makes this all the more objectionable is that these people are the Lord's sheep. Eight times in the first ten verses, God calls them "my sheep." The leaders used God's people for their own gain and comfort; they failed to care for them.

For all who have the opportunity to lead—whether at home, school, work, or church—these words should give us pause. How do I lead those entrusted to my care? Peter issues stern warnings for those who pastor, that is shepherd, God's people in the church: "Shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock" (1 Pet 5:2-3). What is true of pastors is surely true of all believers, as we seek to follow Jesus Christ, our chief Shepherd, in caring for those entrusted to us.



Our hope is not ultimately in human shepherds but in "our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep" (Heb 13:20). He is the one who has given himself for his sheep, that we might have life forever with God.

PRAY Gracious Father, we thank you for sending your Son Jesus to be our shepherd who perfectly leads and care for us. Amen.



WEEK 3 • DAY 2 • READ EZEKIEL 34:11-16

The hope that God promises through Ezekiel is that he himself will shepherd his people. He will search for his sheep (34:11). He will rescue them (34:12). He will bring them home and feed them (34:13). He will give them rest (34:14-15). He will heal the injured, strengthen the weak, and rid the flock of all those who would harm them (34:16). “I myself,” the Lord declares, “will be the shepherd of my sheep” (34:15).

God’s shepherd-like care for his people has always been our hope. So often, we look to other people to provide what only the Lord can. Remember how the people of Israel wanted a king like the other nations (1 Sam 8). They rejected God as their shepherd-king, for the sake of a human king like the nations around them. We do the same thing in church when we long for and follow celebrity voices like the culture around us. We are also prone to do this on a more personal level as we look to those nearest to us to bring fulfillment and meaning to our lives. We put messianic expectations on spouses, children, and friends, thinking they can fill what we are lacking.

King David helps us see a better way. He was called to be the shepherd of God’s people, as king over Israel (2 Sam 5:2), and yet he understood that the Lord was the true shepherd of his people. He penned Psalm 23, reminding himself and his people that God was their true shepherd. True and faithful shepherds of God’s people will always be pointing beyond themselves to the chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ (1 Pet 5:4). To care for those entrusted to us, we will point them to Christ himself.

PRAY Lord, we thank you that you indeed are our shepherd. You make us lie down in green pastures. You lead us besides still waters. You restore our souls. Thank you that you lead us in paths of righteousness for your name’s sake. May you give us courage and strength as we face the difficulties of life. May you comfort and sustain us. May you lead us to dwell with you forever. Amen.



WEEK 3 • DAY 3 • READ EZEKIEL 34:17-22

God's care for his flock involves protecting them from danger. He will care for his sheep by driving out injustice. This means that he will also judge between his people. He will judge those among his people who oppress the poor and the weak. He will judge between his sheep, and he will stand with the marginalized.

Christ shares in this shepherding work of judgment (Matt 25:31-46). Like the Lord in Ezekiel 34, Jesus Christ will separate the sheep from the goats based upon those who cared for those in need, welcomed the stranger, clothed the naked, and visited those in prison. As the chief Shepherd, he cares how his sheep treat one another. He is the true shepherd king who will execute justice as he reminds us, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me" (Matt 25:40).

To follow Christ as our shepherd and our king means that we will share his heart for the downtrodden and the hurting. We do this because we recognize that he showed his love for us while we were far from God. He came to serve us by giving his life as a ransom for us, even when we wanted nothing to do with him. We were spiritually poor; however, he has made us spiritually rich, so that we can use whatever material riches we have for the good of others and for his glory. Out of the love he has shown us, we are able to love others.

PRAY Father in heaven, thank you for your care and provision for us that includes your heart for the poor and needy. Truly, we were poor and needy apart from you, and you sent your Son for us. May you conform us to the image of Christ, so we might share in his heart for the downtrodden. Amen.

*“And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh
and give you a heart of flesh..”*

EZEKIEL 36:26b

WEEK 3 • DAY 4 • READ EZEKIEL 34:23-24

This new David is none other than Jesus Christ. He is the new and better David (Matt 1:1; Lk 1:32). He is the one whom David himself calls Lord (Matt 22:44-45; Ps 110:1). He is the good shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep (Jn 10:11).

It is in Jesus Christ that we see how the Lord himself will shepherd his people (Ezk 34:15) and that he will give them a new David to shepherd them (Ezk 34:23). For Christ is the Son of God and the Son of David. He is the fully divine Son of God, who from eternity past has existed with all glory and power. By his grace he came to us, and he united himself through the Holy Spirit to our human nature. He was born of the Virgin Mary, as one physically descended from David, who would come to fulfill the everlasting covenant made to David. The risen Christ has now been exalted to the Father's right hand, where he rules and reigns over all things (Eph 1:20-23).

The promise of Ezekiel, indeed the promise of the whole Old Testament, is that God would create for himself a people for his own possession and that he would dwell in their midst. In Jesus Christ, this promise has come to fruition; because of Jesus, God has come to dwell among us. Even now, Christ, our hope of glory, dwells in us. We look forward to when he returns as the conquering king to make all things new, so that we can dwell with him forever. Jesus is our great shepherd king who lays down his life for his sheep, that we might have everlasting life with him.

PRAY Jesus, you are worthy of all glory and honor because you are our redeemer king. Truly, there is none like you. You laid down your life for us, your sheep. Please help me to continue to trust in you as we wait for your return. Amen.





WEEK 3 • DAY 5 • READ EZEKIEL 34:25-31

Through Jesus Christ, the new and better David, God brings to fulfillment his promise of a covenant of peace (Ezk 34:25). “Therefore,” Paul encourages us, “since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom 5:1). This peace means that we can now dwell securely with God (Ezk 34:25). It is in and through Christ that God declares, “You are my sheep, human sheep of my pasture, and I am your God” (Ezk 34:31).

Jesus’s work as the new and better David, the true shepherd of God’s people, makes it plain that he is God’s provision for us. Consider how Jesus describes his relationship to his sheep, “I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep” (Jn 10:14–15). Notice the intimacy between Jesus and his sheep: just as the Father knows the Son, so the Son knows his sheep. It is through Jesus’s laying down of his life for his sheep, that we can have life.

We will only find true rest, true comfort, and true peace with Christ Jesus our true shepherd. We must enter the sheepfold by him, the true door of the sheep, in order to find rest (Jn 10:7). He is, as he declares himself to be, the only way to the Father: “Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (Jn 14:6).

PRAY Father, thank you for your gracious provision of Christ our true shepherd. Thank you that through him we can know you and have true and everlasting peace. May you fill us with all joy and peace in believing so that by the power of the Holy Spirit we may abound in hope (Rom 15:13). Amen.

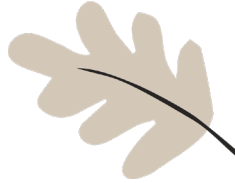
*“since we have been justified by faith, we have
PEACE WITH GOD through our Lord Jesus Christ”*

ROMANS 5:1



• DISCUSSION QUESTIONS •

1. What was God's judgment against the leaders of his people in Ezekiel 34:1-10?
2. As you consider those entrusted to your care, how would your care measure against the standards of these verses? Is your care truly loving and selfless?
3. Why is it such good news for us that God himself will be our shepherd (34:15)? How does God describe his shepherding of his people?
4. Consider 34:17-22. Why does God's care for his people include judging between them? How is his justice part of his care? What distinguishes between the faithful and the unfaithful sheep?
5. In 34:23-24, the Lord speaks of a new David. How does Jesus show himself to be the fulfillment of this promise? What NT passages would you point to in order to support this answer?
6. Read and reflect on John 10. What truths about Jesus, as our good shepherd, stand out to you?
7. How does the work of Jesus make Ezekiel 34:30-31 possible?
8. How does the truth of Jesus's work as our shepherd grow your love for him? How will this growing love be expressed in your life this week?



*And I will give you a new heart,
and a new spirit I will put within you.*

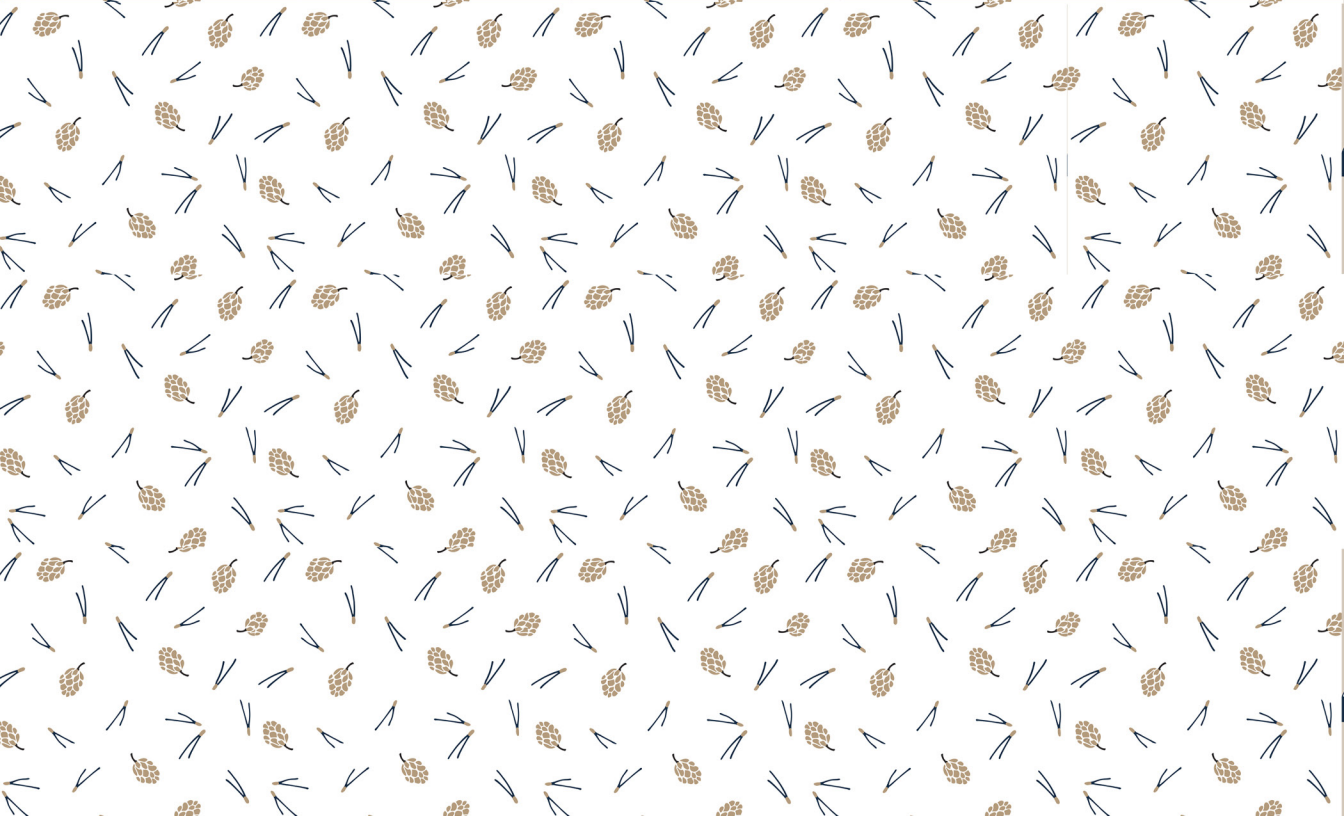
*And I will remove the heart of stone
from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.*

*And I will put my Spirit within you,
and cause you to walk in my statutes
and be careful to obey my rules.*

EZEKIEL 36:26-27



WEEK 4





WEEK 4 • DAY 1 • READ EZEKIEL 36:1-15

Our readings this week cover the great New Covenant promises of Ezekiel, where God promises to give his people new hearts and to dwell with them forever. The Lord begins this prophecy not with people or their hearts, but with the land. God promises the restoration of the land in Edenic language. Indeed, later in this chapter the Lord will promise, “This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden” (36:35).

God’s redemptive purposes include both a people and a place. Genesis and Revelation remind us of the truth that “the earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof” (Ps 24:1). In Genesis 1:28, God commissions people to rule and to subdue the earth, and then Revelation closes with a vision of the restoration of the entire cosmos (Rev 21:1-27). The promises of the land here in Ezekiel are expanded to encompass the entire creation, so that “the the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea” (Hab 2:14).

The Incarnation, the coming of Jesus Christ with a complete human nature, reminds us that God cares deeply for this world and our lives in it. Consider that God the Son lived and redeemed every stage of human existence from conception to birth, through childhood and adolescence, and on into adulthood. Christ has redeemed every stage and every aspect of our lives.

Advent and then Christmas should remind us that every part of our lives can be lived for God’s glory. “So,” Paul instructs, “whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor 10:31). Every square inch of our lives has been redeemed by Christ and should be offered unto him as an act of worship.

PRAY Father, thank you that every stage of my life belongs to you and has been redeemed by Christ Jesus. Please give me wisdom and faith to live in a manner worthy of your calling, so that I might honor you. Amen.

WEEK 4 • DAY 2 • READ EZEKIEL 36:16-38

God promises the central hope of this book and the entire gospel in Ezekiel 36:26-28. He promises to give his people new hearts, and to put his Holy Spirit within them; and then they will be his people and he will be their God. The course of the Old Testament has revealed that the fundamental problem with humanity is our hearts. No matter the circumstances or the people, the problem remains that people's hearts are not fully devoted to God. Thus, the Lord promises to rescue us from our own hearts by giving us new hearts and then putting his Spirit within us. From this work of God flows faithful obedience.

Far too often, we live as though the blessings of God depend upon our obedience. We think that God will love and bless us more if we can obey a bit more, pray a little more often, and could just be a little better about reading the Bible. In Ezekiel 36, we are reminded that we must experience the blessing of a new heart before we can ever hope to obey God. For true obedience requires not just outward conformity to God's commands, but a heart that aims at glorifying and pleasing God.

Thus, the Christian life, begins with faith. Heart change that leads to true obedience must be a work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We receive the Spirit by believing the gospel (Eph 1:13), which itself is a work of God's grace in our lives (Eph 2:8-10). We are saved by the grace of God in Christ, we are filled with the Holy Spirit, and then by the Spirit we walk in obedience to God.

PRAY Father, Son, and Spirit, thank you for your incredible grace that has redeemed us and made us your own. Thank you that you do not leave us on our own, but you have come to rescue us and to live within us, that we might live for you. Amen.





WEEK 4 • DAY 3 • READ EZEKIEL 36:16-38

Ezekiel 36 not only tells us the what of the New Covenant but also the why. God offers us a glimpse behind the curtain into his motivation for redeeming his people, giving them new hearts and filling them with his Spirit.

The Lord tells his people, “It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations” (36:22). God’s primary motivation in redeeming his people is that his name would be glorified. Israel did not deserve for God to rescue them, but he rescued them to display his love to a watching world.

As we turn to the New Testament, we see that God continues to act for the sake of his name, but this motivation for his glory takes on a richer texture when we see it in light of the Trinity. In the New Testament we learn that God has always been Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—one God in three persons. The Son delights to glorify the Father, the Father the Son, and the Spirit the Father and the Son. We see this truth clearly in Philippians 2 where the exaltation and worship of Christ is to the praise of God the Father.

Like the God who has redeemed us, our fundamental motivation should be for his glory. As we seek to faithfully live in obedience to God, we do so primarily for his glory. This means that even in missions and evangelism, we are not concerned first and foremost with how others respond but with whether or not we are honoring God with faithfulness in our witness. Such an approach frees us to obey faithfully and leave the results to the Lord.

PRAY Gracious God, we pray that you would be glorified in our lives. “Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness!” (Ps 115:1). Amen.



WEEK 4 • DAY 4 • READ EZEKIEL 37:1-14

The truths promised in Ezekiel 36 are illustrated in Ezekiel 37. The Lord takes Ezekiel to a valley filled with corpses that are nothing more than dry, rotting bones. As Ezekiel obeys the Lord's command to prophesy over these bones, they begin to come to life. The Spirit comes, as he did at creation, and brings new, Spiritual life to these dead bodies.

The miracle of the dead being raised to life is what happens every time someone comes to faith in Jesus Christ. Apart from Christ, we are “dead in trespasses and sins” (Eph 2:1). Apart from God, we are dead in sin. We need to be resurrected. That is what happens through the gospel: “God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Eph 2:4-6). We need to be raised from the dead, and as we are united to Christ by faith, we are raised with him in his resurrection (Rom 6:4-5).

We must resist the temptation to view Christianity as a self-improvement project. To follow Christ is not something we can do in our own strength; it is not a check-list that we can complete. We need nothing short of a new life. We need to be born again (Jn 3), and when we hear the gospel and trust in Jesus, this is exactly what happens. This new birth is a reality we need to remind ourselves of daily, as we seek to walk by the Spirit in a manner worthy of God.

PRAY Holy Spirit, you indeed are the Lord and giver of life. You are the breath that brought life to creation, and by your work, you breathe life into us as new creations. May we walk in step with you to the praise of Jesus. Amen.





WEEK 4 • DAY 5 • READ EZEKIEL 37:15-28

Chapter 37 concludes with many of the key promises of the gospel repeated from earlier chapters: God will be our God. A new David will shepherd his people. God will establish an everlasting covenant of peace with his people. All of these promises are fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

One promise that we have not seen before, comes in the visual of two sticks being bound together. In this image, the Lord promises to reunite his people who had been divided after the reign of King Solomon. Northern and southern Israel would once again be united as God's people. In this image, we are reminded of the reconciling power of the gospel.

As we turn to the New Testament, we learn that God works through the gospel to not only reconcile his people Israel, but to reconcile all who would believe. All human divisions are reconciled in Christ Jesus. The most profound division in the first-century world was between Jew and Gentile, but Paul reminds these two groups of the reconciling work of Jesus: "He himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility. . . that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility" (Eph 2:14-16). Through the gospel, God reconciles us to himself and to one another.

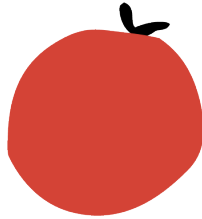
Jesus tells us that our surprising love for one another will testify to his grace in our lives (Jn 13:35). When the church loves each other across all differences that the world says should divide us, we honor and glorify God, displaying his manifold wisdom to the world and to the rulers and authorities in the spiritual realm (Eph 3:10).

PRAY Father, we thank you that through Jesus and by your Spirit you have reconciled your people to yourself. Please continue your reconciling work between us as your people. May you remove my prejudices and soften my heart so I might view my brothers and sisters in Christ as who they are as your children. May you be honored and glorified as you create for yourself a people for your own possession from every tribe, tongue, and nation. Amen.



• DISCUSSION QUESTIONS •

1. Read Ezekiel 36:22-32. According to verses 22 and 32, why does the Lord choose to redeem his people? Why is this God's primary motivation? Why is God's motivation for his glory the best thing for us?
2. How is God's grace evident in verses 22-23?
3. In verse 24, why was the return to the land so important for God's people? How does this return to the land foreshadow what God is doing to make all of creation new?
4. In verse 25, what does the cleansing symbolize? Why is this such an important part of God's promise in these verses?
5. In verse 26, God promises a new heart and a new spirit. Why is a new heart so necessary for us if we want to follow God? What does our need for a new heart reveal about who we are, apart from God?
6. Who is the Spirit in verse 27? What does he do? What does this teach us about Christian obedience?
7. Consider verse 31. Why is it good to remember and loathe our sins? How does this grow our love for God?
8. How does Jesus bring these verses to fulfillment?
9. In light of our reading this week, how is it possible to be a highly religious and ethical person but still not know the Lord? In other words, how do these verses help us remember the difference between moralism and truly following Jesus?



*And I will give you a new heart,
and a new spirit I will put within you.*

*And I will remove the heart of stone
from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.*

*And I will put my Spirit within you,
and cause you to walk in my statutes
and be careful to obey my rules.*

EZEKIEL 36:26-27



WEEK 5



WEEK 5 • DAY 1 • READ EZEKIEL 40:1-4

In chapters 36-37, Ezekiel prophesies about God's redemption and restoration of his people, and then in 38-39, he prophesies God's defeat of evil and the delivering of his people from their enemies. Next, with his people redeemed and sin defeated, God gives Ezekiel a vision of the new temple and the new creation to close out the book.

Ezekiel 40-42 describes in detail this new temple. The promise of God's presence in the midst of his people is fulfilled. God had left the temple earlier in the book, and the temple was destroyed. Now, the Lord shows the prophet a new temple, where he in all his glory, will dwell with his people.

When we turn to the New Testament, we find this prophecy fulfilled, not in a building, but in a person. Jesus himself is the new temple (Jn 2:20-21). He is God's glorious presence in the midst of his people. He is the connection between heaven and earth. He is the way to enjoy life with God.

The New Testament goes on to describe the church as the temple of God. As those united to Christ by faith, believers share in being the temple of God (Eph 2:18-22; 1 Cor 3:16). Together as the church, we are God's temple, "filled with all the fullness of God" (Eph 3:19). We need to gather together as the church to enjoy more fully the presence of God, and we are called to join together to take his presence to the world. While the Old Testament temple was meant to draw people to God's presence, we as the New Testament temple are called to take God's glorious presence to the world by declaring and displaying the gospel.

PRAY Gracious God, what a gift of your grace that we can now enjoy your presence daily through the work of Christ and by the indwelling of your Spirit. May we not hoard this gift! Please work in our lives to help us share the joy of knowing you with others, through the clear declaration of the gospel. Amen.





WEEK 5 • DAY 2 • READ EZEKIEL 43:1-27

After prophesying about the new temple for three chapters, in chapter 43, Ezekiel is given a vision of the Lord's glory filling the temple (43:1-12). When Solomon dedicated the first temple, "fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple. And the priests could not enter the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord filled the Lord's house" (2 Chr 7:1-2). Now, Ezekiel sees God's glory fill the temple (Ezk 43:4), but instead of staying outside, Ezekiel records, "The Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold the glory of the Lord filled the temple" (43:5). Through this temple, the Lord will dwell in the midst of his people forever (43:7).

The Lord commands the prophet to share this vision with his people, so that "they may be ashamed of their iniquities" (43:10). Then, the Lord gives Ezekiel a vision of the altar (43:13-27). The people must remember their sin, but then the Lord will atone for their sin through sacrifice at this new temple. The Lord, in all his holiness and goodness, can only live among his people if their sins have been cleansed.

Jesus is "the radiance of the glory of God" (Heb 1:3), and he is also the sacrifice for our sins that makes his presence among us possible (Heb 9:11-14). It is through him and his work that we can enjoy God's presence forever. Our hope as believers is Christ in us now and life with him forever.

PRAY Jesus, we thank and praise you that you are God; you have become human like us, so we might enjoy life in your glorious presence forever. Please continue to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us of all unrighteousness, so that we can be with you. Amen.

"And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules."

Ezekiel 36:27

WEEK 5 • DAY 3 • READ EZEKIEL 44:1-31

Ezekiel 44 is all about access. Who can appear before the Lord in his temple? God had given his people detailed instructions on building the tabernacle and then the temple, in order to put in place physical reminders of his holiness. Furthermore, he outlined specific ways that his people could come before him. The most significant part of the temple was the holy of holies, where the high priest could enter once a year to be in God’s glorious presence. This vision reminds us that we can only come into God’s presence on his terms.

As Ezekiel’s vision is fulfilled in Jesus, we come to learn that it is only through Jesus Christ that we can have access into God’s presence. Through him, we can come to the Father. Christ is our perfect high priest who has entered “into heaven itself now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf” (Heb 9:24) “He is able,” the author of Hebrews explains, “to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them” (Heb 7:25). He is seated at the Father’s right hand praying for us. It is in and through him, that we can come before God with boldness and confidence (Eph 3:12).



Jesus promises that he is always with his followers (Matt 28:20). He will never leave us. Through his Holy Spirit, he abides with us. At the same time that he is with us, he is at the Father’s right hand praying for us. We can take comfort in Christ’s presence with us and in knowing that he is always lifting us up in prayer to the Father.

PRAY Gracious Father, we thank you that you have made a way for us to know and to enjoy you. We thank you for Jesus, our great high priest, who lives now at your right hand to pray for us. We pray that by your Holy Spirit you would comfort and sustain us, reminding us of Jesus’s continued work on our behalf. Amen.



WEEK 5 • DAY 4 • READ EZEKIEL 47:1-12

As Ezekiel has recounted his visions of the new temple, we have come to see that Jesus is the fulfillment of the whole Old Testament temple system. Christ is our temple, our great high priest, the sacrifice that atones for our sins, and the glorious presence of God with us. In the last two chapters of this book, we see that Jesus Christ's presence among us, as the new temple, will usher in the new creation. Christ's glorious presence transforms the world.

Ezekiel sees a river flowing from the temple. This river brings life: “everything will live where the river goes” (47:9). Just as a river flowed out of the garden temple of Eden (Gen 2:10), so too, a river of life will flow from the throne of God in the new creation (Rev 22:1-5). This river in Ezekiel's vision symbolizes the new creation that Christ will usher in when he returns. Creation will be restored by the transforming presence of Christ our King.

As we look forward to Jesus's return, even now we can experience the blessing of this river of life. We, as followers of Jesus, are the first fruits of the new creation (2 Cor 5:17). We are made new as God pours out his Spirit on us, and Jesus tells us, “Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’” Now this he said about the Spirit” (Jn 7:38–39). When we trust in Christ as Lord, we are filled with his Spirit. As we walk by the Spirit, his work should overflow in our lives to bless others and to point them to Jesus, that they too might experience the joy of new life in him.

PRAY Gracious Father, we praise you that you are good and that your steadfast love endures forever. Even as our sin corrupts the world, your love has never ceased. You have continued graciously to sustain this world, and you are working through your Son to make all things new. You have made me new through Christ and by your Spirit. May your Spirit so work in me that he flows out in all that I do, so that you would be glorified in my life. Amen.



WEEK 5 • DAY 5 • READ EZEKIEL 48:1-35

Ezekiel's prophecy ends with a vision of the land. "The fundamental theme of 47:13-48:35," according to Old Testament scholar Iain Duguid, "is inheritance. For the landless people to whom Ezekiel's vision is communicated, the commitment is made that God's promise to Abraham and Isaac and to Moses will be fulfilled. . . . They will finally enter their rest." This rest is what God's people have been seeking since he rescued them from Egypt and brought them to the promised land.

We, too, are a people who long for rest. We always seem to be striving for rest, and yet are never rested. We long each week for the weekend. We work tirelessly for a vacation. We strive year after year for retirement. Yet, we continue to find ourselves physically, emotionally, and spiritually weary.

Surely, Augustine was right when he prayed, "You made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they can find rest in you." This, in fact, is the offer of Jesus, "Come to me all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt 11:28). The author of Hebrews tells us that the rest God's people sought in the land pointed forward to the rest we find in Christ (Heb 4:1-10). To be with Christ Jesus is to find yourself at rest.



The rest that Ezekiel foresaw is summed up in the name of this city, "The Lord Is There" (Ezk 48:35). We look forward to that day of unending rest when we find ourselves in the new creation, resting in the Lord's presence (Rev 21:1-4). Even now, we can find true rest with God when we rest by faith in the Christ and his finished work.

PRAY Father, we long for the rest that you freely offer us in Jesus. Please free us from our idolatrous striving for acceptance and worth. Please teach us by your Spirit to rest in you and to enjoy the gift of your glorious presence through Christ in us. Amen.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

We have read this week on how Jesus fulfills Ezekiel's visions at the end of this book. Consider how Jesus fulfills the following parts of the prophet's vision. What do we learn about the work of Jesus from these descriptions? How should we respond to Christ in light of these truths?

1. Jesus is our true temple (John 2:13-22).
2. Jesus is our great high priest (Hebrews 9:1-28).
3. Jesus is our atoning sacrifice (Hebrews 10:1-18).
4. Jesus is the glory of God (Hebrews 1:1-4).

As we are united to Christ by faith, we as believers become the temple of God. Consider Ephesians 2:18-22 and 1 Corinthians 3:16. What does our role as God's temple teach us about the nature of the church? Our need for the church? Our role as the church in this world?





Hope of Glory
A Study of Ezekiel for Advent

At Christmas, we remember that the Son of God came to earth for us and for our salvation. Yet, before we turn to the joy of Christmas, Advent calls us to reflect on our need for Christ. Ezekiel helps us see our need for Jesus by lifting our eyes to see the holiness and glory of God and, at the same time, confronting us with the devastating reality of our sin. The hope of Ezekiel is that God does not abandon his people. He promises to give them new hearts and to put his Spirit within them. As we come to Christ, our hope of glory, we see that he fulfills all that is promised in Ezekiel so that God can be our God and dwell among us.



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