

RESTORATION THROUGH REPENTANCE

EZEKIEL 33:1-20

INTRODUCTION:

1. The book of Ezekiel was written during a time when God's people were in Babylonian captivity. (Ezek. 1.1-3)
2. The book of Ezekiel can be divided into two major sections.
 - a) Chapters 1-32: The Retribution of God.
 - b) Chapters 33-48: The Restoration of God.
3. God offers you restoration through repentance.

I. DANGER

- A. Ezekiel is made a watchman to warn Israel.
 1. There is an illustration. (Ezek. 33.1-6)
 2. There is an application. (Ezek. 33.7-9)
 3. God is longsuffering and patient with Israel giving them time to repent and avoid destruction. (Ps. 86.5,15)
- B. In the New Testament, God is patient with us.
 1. When we sin, we put ourselves in salvation in jeopardy and our souls in danger of judgment. (Heb. 10.27)
 2. What seems like a delay in the coming of Christ is the longsuffering of God toward us. (2 Pet. 3.9,15)

II. DESIRE

- A. In the message God sent through Ezekiel, God expresses His desire for His people.
 1. Suffering the consequences of their sins, the people were in despair. (Ezek. 33.10; cf. Lev. 26.39)
 2. What was God's desire for His people? (Ezek. 33.11)
- B. In the New Testament, God expresses His desire for us.
 1. Being separated from God as a consequence of our sins can leave us in despair. (Rom. 7.24)
 2. What is God's desire for us today? (2 Cor. 5.20)

III. DECISION

- A. Man will be judged by the decisions he makes.
 1. The decisions of the righteous. (Ezek. 33.12,13)
 2. The decisions of the wicked. (Ezek. 33.14-16)
- B. In the New Testament, we will be judged by our decisions. (Rom. 2.6-10; 2 Cor. 5.10)

CONCLUSION: Restoration comes with repentance.

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"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature"
-Mark 16.15

August 1, 2021

MEETING TIMES:

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS : 9:00 AM
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP: 9:50 AM
SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP: 6:00 PM
WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS 7:30 PM

YOUR ENEMY THE DEVIL

The Bible defines an enemy as one who seeks to cause you harm. In Matthew 5.44, Jesus tells us to love our enemies, and then describes them as those who *"curse you," "hate you,"* and *"spitefully use you and persecute you."* Does that not just fit perfectly the description of the devil?

He is described as *"your adversary the devil"* who *"walks around like a roaring lion seeking to devour you"* (1 Pet. 5.8). In Matthew 13, Jesus tells the parable of the tares. In this parable the enemy sowed weeds among the crops which represented evil men within the church. Jesus then says that *"the enemy who sowed them is the devil"* (Matt. 13.39).

It is the devil who places temptation in your path (Matt. 4.1-3). It is the devil who gets into your mind to convince you that assembling with the saints is not important (Heb. 10.25). It is the devil who comes to you accusing God of withhold from you the things you want and need (Gen. 3.4,5).

How do we fight against such an insidious and cunning foe? The answer lies in 2 Corinthians 2.11. In this passage, it says, *"lest Satan takes advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of his devices."* It is our knowledge of the devil and his tactics which helps us to bring him out of the shadows and resist his wiles. Where can we find such knowledge? The Bible is our weapon of warfare (Eph. 6.17). CLP

COMFORT IN OUR PRESENT DISTRESS

REVELATION 1:17

INTRODUCTION:

1. Would you say that we are living in very strange times? Have these times brought fear and distress to your life?
2. In the first chapter of Revelation, Jesus offers comfort during difficult times. (Rev. 1.1,4,9,18)

I. LESSONS ABOUT JESUS

- A. While the apostle John was exiled on the island of Patmos, he heard a loud voice. (Rev. 1.9-11)
 1. **REVELATION 1.12:** *“Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me... I saw seven golden lampstands.”*
 2. **REVELATION 1.13:** *and in the midst... One like the Son of Man”* (Matt. 16.13,16; Dan. 7.13,14)
- B. The description of Jesus.
 1. **REVELATION 1.13:** Wearing the robe of a High Priest.
 2. **REVELATION 1.13:** His purity. (Isa. 1.18)
 3. **REVELATION 1.14:** His judgment. (Rev. 19.11,12)
 4. **REVELATION 1.14:** His power. (Job 40.15-18)
 5. **REVELATION 1.15:** His deity. (Ezek. 43.1,2)
 6. **REVELATION 1.16:** His message. (Rev. 1.20; Eph. 6.17)

II. LESSONS FROM JESUS

- A. Jesus is there.
 1. In the midst of this pandemic, many are afraid.
 2. **REVELATION 1.5:** *“Jesus Christ, the faithful witness.”*
 3. **REVELATION 1.5:** *“To Him who loved us.”*
- B. Jesus is aware.
 1. **REVELATION 2.9:** *“I know your works, tribulation”*
 2. **REVELATION 2.13:** *“I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is.”*
 3. Know (oida): To know completely. Jesus knew all about them and how they handled their challenges.
- C. Jesus cares.
 1. **REVELATION 1.5:** He has always cared.
 2. **REVELATION 1.17:** *“Do no be afraid.”*

CONCLUSION: In radiant glory, power, and authority, Jesus comforts John. In the same way, we can be comforted.

OUR GREATEST WEAPON

As we fight the good fight of faith, the devil employs a variety of tactics against the people of God. From placing temptation in our path, building arguments that can be hard to counter, bringing tragedy into our lives, and even hardening our hearts, many have succumbed to the *“wiles of the devil”* (Eph. 6.11). How can we overcome such a cunning enemy?

The apostle Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 10.4 that we have *“weapons of our warfare.”* Ephesians 6.17 identifies our greatest weapon as *“the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”* Our greatest weapon to ensure our ability to *“stand against the wiles of the devil”* is knowledge. Specifically, the knowledge of God that comes from His word. Through this word, *“we are not ignorant of his devices”* (2 Cor. 2.11).

Watch what the word of God as the sword of the Spirit enables us to do. With the word, we can *“cast down arguments”* (2 Cor. 10.5). Using the word of God, there isn’t a single argument that we cannot encounter (Acts 6.9,10). It also casts down *“every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God”* (2 Cor. 10.5). In other words, there is nothing the devil can throw at us that the knowledge from word of God cannot overcome. No temptation can hold us captive using the knowledge of scripture. No bitterness or anger can enslave our hearts when we have the knowledge of scripture.

There is one caveat. Having the knowledge that comes from the word of God is a great start, but it is not enough. Knowledge by itself will not gain us victory. It is only when we use that knowledge can it be useful to overcome the wiles of Satan. In Matthew 7, Jesus describes those who hear. Some hear and obey. Jesus calls them wise. Some hear and do not obey. Jesus calls them foolish (Matt. 7.24-27). James puts it this way: *“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves”* (James 1.22).

If you keep reading 2 Corinthians 10, the text goes on to mention one additional benefit that comes from the word of God. As our weapon, the Bible brings *“every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ”* (2 Cor. 10.5). When we wield the powerful sword of the Spirit (Heb. 4.12), it has the power to change hearts and lives. It pierces the heart (Acts 2.37), and often turns enemy combatants into faithful followers. Never underestimate the power of your Bible to help you in the spiritual struggles. CLP