

‘THEN THEY SHALL KNOW THAT I AM THE LORD’
STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL
Ezekiel 38-48
“THERE IS STILL HOPE FOR THE FUTURE. WILL YOU BE
THERE TO ENJOY IT?”

There are few things in life that are as influential and life-changing as hope. It has been said hope liberates, motivates, initiates, and activates. I have the privilege and responsibility of telling others daily how to find hope.

Our hope is in Christ. (Colossians 1:27) (Romans 5:5) (1st Timothy 1:1) (1st Peter 1:3) Biblical hope is a future certainty, not something that we want to happen, but may never see come to pass. Are you filled with hope this morning, or have you allowed your circumstances to overwhelm God’s promises?

I. THE PEOPLE OF GOD SHOULD ALWAYS BE AWARE OF THE POTENTIAL THREATS OF THE ENEMY WHILE LIVING IN PEACE. THE LORD MAY ALLOW THE ATTACKS TO REMIND US OF HIS PROTECTION. (Ezekiel 38-39)

- A.** A people displaced, defeated, and in exile were being told of a future time when they would be living in peace and safety. Do you miss hearing words of hope because of your present circumstances?
 - i.** Romans 15:13
- B.** The enemies identified in chapters 38-39 were in land areas now identified with Russia, Central Asia, Turkey, Iran, Sudan, and Libya, and likely will be Islamic enemies. Israel has resources that others want, and the enemy of our souls always wants to destroy anything or anyone identified with the Lord.
- C.** The Lord will destroy the enemy invaders by supernatural intervention. It will cause everyone to recognize that He is the Lord. We should always be comforted and full of hope because of our relationship with the God who is Sovereign over individuals and nations!

II. THE LORD WILL RESTORE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HIMSELF AND HIS PEOPLE, AND THE FUTURE TEMPLE WILL AGAIN BE FILLED WITH HIS GLORY. (Ezekiel 40-48)

- A.** It had been 14 years since Jerusalem had been destroyed, and Ezekiel and the people had not received a new word from the Lord. Many had abandoned all hope of a better future. If you belong to the Lord, please do not confuse silence with absence. Live with a sense of expectation!
- B.** When the Lord shows you something, He wants you to observe, listen, concentrate, and remember. (Ezekiel 40) Every word from His mouth is important!
- C.** Ezekiel 47:1-10 describes a scenario that must have seemed impossible to the original audience. Much of what is described in this section is different from current conditions, but no problem for the Creator to change! (Revelation 22)
- D.** Ezekiel is given a vision of a Temple with specific dimensions that have never been met. We believe it is for a future time, symbolizing the restoration of worship. Believers will continue to debate whether or not it is literal or spiritual. There is much to learn either way!

- i. The inner court reminds us that we have access to God and are to separate ourselves from the world. Christ has removed all barriers that separated us from God, and we are now His Temple.
 - ii. The priests are given a unique place, uniform, and responsibility to serve. Every believer today is a part of a royal priesthood. (Ezekiel 44-45)
 - iii. The Temple is large enough to accommodate anyone who wants to worship. The Lord has provided room for everyone who will approach him to worship.
- E.** Ezekiel saw God's glory return from the east and fill the Temple. His presence will never again leave His people, and they will reverence His Name because His Holiness demands it. We have the promise of His presence forever, and we need to keep our temples in a condition that is suitable for Him.
- F.** Any sacrifices made in that Temple will only serve as a memorial, because the Lamb of God has been slain and glorified, and His blood covers all sins for all time!
- G.** Only the priestly line of Zadok will be allowed to minister at the altar. Zadok was faithful when others were not, and all of his descendants will enjoy privilege because of it. Are you doing anything to bless those who will follow you? A good man provides for his grandchildren! (2nd Samuel 15) (Proverbs 13:22)
- H.** Access to the Temple will still be strictly governed by God's rules. We cannot approach God in worship while ignoring His rules. Come as you are is not an invitation to come as you please!
- I.** The Israelites receiving property is a reminder of all believers receiving an inheritance from the Lord. Do you realize how much you will receive, that you do not deserve, because of the gracious provision of Christ?

THE MAIN SOURCE OF HOPE AND COMFORT IN THE FUTURE IS THAT THE LORD HIMSELF WILL BE THERE. WILL YOU BE THERE TO ENJOY HIM?

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BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS

1. The details about the Temple should remind us of how holy God is, and that our love relationship with Him does not mean we can trifle with His holy standards. What needs to change in your attitude towards the Lord and your daily habits?
2. Our individual bodies and our local church bodies are known as the Temple of the Lord. Can you honestly say that others can tell that you live your life with that awareness, and that our church family honors the Lord's presence? What can you improve on to make us all better?