

## **REVISITING OUR LIVES WITH TRUTH WE'VE NEVER FULLY UNDERSTOOD BEFORE**

Ezekiel 44: 1--46: 24 – Pastor Richard P. Carlson

Last Tuesday night, Jinny and I read aloud to each other Ezekiel 44 through 46. She asked me a probing question that God used to be the springboard for today's message. She asked me a probing question that you may have as well. Here it is: "Why do you think God after sending His only begotten Son incarnate to earth, after Jesus died in our place, fulfilling the law and the prophets, why would He come back in the millennium and set up a ritual of millennial sacrifices and a temple and so many other rituals that seem so much like a return to the law?" Now I don't claim to have all the answers to her question or your questions, but I have searched out the answer from the Lord in meditation and studying the Word this week. I believe the answer to this probing question is found, in germ form, in the title of our message today. The answer is, "God often revisits our lives with truth we've never fully understood before." Is there biblical precedence for such a view? The resounding answer is, "Yes!"

God points to this very basic principle of revisiting us by scriptures such as Hebrews 5: 12 where we read the reproof of the Lord to the readers of Hebrews. The reproofing words are: "And though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food." The writer is saying to his readers. "You may have been told the elementary principles of the oracles of God, but you didn't get it. You need to go back to a 101 course again and drink milk for a while. You need a revisitation on truths you've never fully understood before. Peter, after 3 and a half years of intense years of discipleship from the Lord Himself, didn't get the biblical truth of John 15: 5, where Jesus taught the boiled down essence of His discipling, saying, "For apart from Me you can do nothing." Peter had heard teaching like this before, but it escaped him and passed him by. In fact, the very night that Jesus was betrayed, and the very same night Peter denied Jesus 3 times, do you remember the interchange Peter had with Jesus? Turn to John 13: 36-38. Peter added in Matthew 26: 33, "Even though all may fall away because of You, I will never fall away." And just moments after this interchange, Jesus spoke John 15: 5—"For apart from Me, you can do nothing." Peter should have known he had no power in himself to stay true to Jesus. Yet, in John 18: 15-27, we read the troubling saga of Peter's denial, all within a short time as he warmed himself at a charcoal fire. That

night Peter knew the smell of a charcoal fire, and now that smell was still on his clothes as he went out into the night and wept bitterly, Matthew 26: 75.

Beloved, was it by accident that Jesus showed up after the resurrection? Why there? Read John 21: 1-17. Was it by accident that Jesus had another charcoal fire prepared Himself? We read in John 21: 9, “And when the disciples got out upon the land, they saw a charcoal fire already laid, and fish placed on it, and bread. For all you may hear about warming yourself by the enemy’s fire, be certain of one thing. It was not a bad fire that Peter warmed himself by the night Jesus stood trial. What was bad was Peter’s confidence in the flesh as he warmed himself, and Jesus had to expose him. Why else did Jesus schedule a revisitation of having Peter by a charcoal fire and how many questions--? Three questions, three times, “Do you love me, love me, even like me? When this revisitation was over, do you think Peter understood John 15: 5--“Without Me, you can do nothing?” Oh yes! He did.

My declaration to you today is that the Lord will revisit not just the saved Gentiles, His Bride, in the Rapture, but will also revisit the Jews, who will finally look upon the One whom they have pierced. This time they will come to understand who Jesus is as He stands before them in His glory in the millennial temple with His nail-scarred hands and feet and spear-pierced side. This revisitation will be a time of going back and relearning what the Israelites missed for centuries. This time for Israel, it will be as if Jesus will appear to them on the Emmaus Road. Do you remember how they spoke of their hearts burning within them as He spoke to them on the road, Luke 24: 13-35? Do you remember what Jesus told the two disciples? Luke 24:27 tells us, “And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, Jesus explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.”

Remember the words of Jesus spoken to Jerusalem in Luke 19: 42, 44, “If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes...because you did not recognize the day/time of your visitation. Beloved, for 1000 years in the future, Jesus has scheduled a millennium, a honeymoon for us, His Bride, and a revisitation to Israel to fulfill His promises to Abraham and to explain to the house of Israel truths that they missed for centuries. Now it will no longer be hidden from their eyes. This time as Jesus stands with wounded hands and explains the law of Moses, the prophets and all the Old Testament, He will show them that it was all about the One whom they rejected as a nation-Himself. This biblical principle of revisiting a situation or a teaching that is

misunderstood, introduces us to what God has placed on my heart today to preach. As we study Ezekiel 44-46, what will Jesus teach the twelve tribes of Israel, as well as us His Bride, when He returns again to earth and revisits the Mount of Olives from where He ascended? What truths will Jesus teach Israel when He returns with His Bride in His Glory? I observe especially three truths that no one will ever miss again. What are these three truths Jesus will teach in the millennium? In essence, Jesus will be telling the Jews,

**YOU NEVER FULLY UNDERSTOOD THE PRIESTHOOD, ITS PURPOSES AND ITS PRIVILEGES. IT ALL FORESHADOWED**

**ME!** (I.) Turn to Ezekiel 44: 6-15. Imagine all Israel getting to learn as Mary at the feet of our great High Priest, about what the Levitical priesthood is about, what its purposes and privileges were about, and that it all foreshadowed Jesus who is both the great High Priest and the Lamb of God. One day soon, our Lord Jesus will explain His response following the Levitical priests going astray from Him and into debasing idolatry. Notice the order of the words about circumcision of the priests, in verse 9—“No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, of all the foreigners who are among the sons of Israel, shall enter My sanctuary.” The millennial temple Jesus will call “My sanctuary.” Do you remember when Jesus came incarnate, twice He cleansed the temple? Jesus words were biting then, for even after the captivity of 70 years and all Israel’s idolatry, foreigners were allowed again into the holy temple in Jesus’ day. We read in Mark 11: 15-17, “And Jesus entered the temple and began to cast out those who were buying and selling in the temple and overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of those who were selling doves. And He would not permit anyone to carry goods through the temple. And He began to teach and say to them. “Is it not written, ‘My house/sanctuary shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations? But you have made it a robbers’ den.” You remember the chief priests and scribes were incensed and were seeking thereafter to destroy Jesus. Imagine this revisitation when Jesus says, “This temple is My house, My sanctuary, and you Levites have defiled My temple in the past. Thus, the majority of you will not serve me in the inner court. You will not be excluded from ministry, but you will not enter into the holy place to serve Me.

Ezekiel 44:11 states—“The Levites will be ministers in My sanctuary, having oversight at the gates of the house and ministering in the house. They shall slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people. (In Mosaic times, the worshipper killed the victim himself.) Jesus will go on—“You

Levites will slay the sacrifices of the people.” Jesus will stand there to declare that only one branch of the Levites will stand before Him to minister to Me, to offer Me the fat and the blood, only they can come near to My table to minister to Me and keep My charge.” There are rewards in heaven and there will be this special reward for the sons of Zadok during the millennium. Jesus will stand there in His sanctuary and declare His order---the sons of Zadok. Remember, Zadok was the son of Ahitub, of the line of Eleazar. He was faithful to David during the rebellion and insurrection of Absalom. He anointed Solomon king after the abortive attempt of Adonijah to seize the throne. These Zadokite priests kept themselves from idolatry. Jesus says—“Your special reward is to minister to me in the inner court of the millennial temple. It pays to serve Jesus. It pays not to bow down to idols. Because you stayed true to Me in the days of king David, you now may enter the inner court and minister to Me.” There will be no debate. All the Levites will know the truth of the Lord’s words in His revisiting of the privileges and purposes of the priesthood. They will rally to the joy of being forgiven and given a fresh chance to minister in the Lord’s temple. They will finally get the meaning of their idolatry and how it hurt the Lord Jesus who will stand there with His nail-pierced hands.

Beloved, the temple of the Lord Jesus Christ is a holy temple. Whether we are speaking of Jesus’ body, or our body being a temple of the Holy Spirit or whether we are speaking of the millennial temple, God’s sanctuary is not a house like any other house. This revisitation will all be to point Israel back to Jesus as He will stand in His temple before them. All Israel will look upon the One whom they have pierced. They will look at their temple, the Levitical priests, the sacrifices, and the special privileges for Zadok’s sons. It will now be fully understood. The whole millennial world will know that it eternally pays to faithfully serve Jesus.

The priesthood, its purposes and privileges will then be described to the Jews in the millennial temple. The great “I AM” will say, “I am the House not made with hands—the Temple of God, whose hands were pierced for you. This temple points to Me.” “I am the Sabbath Rest for you, My people. I am your daily Hotel. My Sabbaths are to be kept holy as I am holy.” “I am the Doctor, the Great Physician, who circumcises your hearts to minister to Me...” “I am Holy, no profane thing or abominable thing can come near to Me; I am the Middle Holy in the cherubim’s cry of Holy, Holy, Holy.” “I am the Bridegroom who makes the rules for the marriages of My priests.” “I am the grain offering, the kernel of wheat that falls into the ground and dies and

does not abide alone.” I am your thank offering, your burnt offering, and your sin offering. I am your spotless Lamb, your atonement, your only Sacrifice for sins.” “I am your feast, your Feast of tabernacles, your manna in the wilderness, your Bread of Life.” “I am your rule-maker, your Lawgiver in My house. I design the discipline for each of you even as a father disciplines his son as seems best to him. I am your Atoning Chastisement, for the chastisement of your peace fell upon Me.” “Look through My Law Book. All five books, including every utensil, every candlestick, the showbread, the mercy seat, the ark, and altar all point to Me. So why will Jesus bring back the priesthood and a temple and the sacrifices? He will revisit the priesthood, the temple and the sacrifices to point back to Himself as our High Priest. Jesus will stand in His holy temple holding up His wounded hands. There will be no doubt. Here’s the 2<sup>nd</sup> truth Jesus will teach:

**YOU NEVER FULLY UNDERSTOOD THE PASSOVER. I AM YOUR PASSOVER AND YOUR PASSOVER LAMB.** (II.)

The Jews will now remember that Jesus came to His own, John 1: 11 and His own received Him not. They will remember the words of their Elijah who was to come, John the Baptist, who cried out to them as Christ’s forerunner, saying, “Behold, the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world.” So why will Jesus return to Israel the keeping of Passover? Turn to 45: 21-25. For once all Israel will know that Jesus is their Lamb. There will be no debate. Ezekiel 46: 13 declares, “And you shall provide a lamb a year old without blemish for a burnt offering to the Lord daily, morning by morning you shall provide it.” The significance of a passover lamb, this type of Christ, pointing back to His death for us all at Calvary, will now be understood. In that coming day, the Lord will revisit Israel and show them Who He is. Turn to Zechariah 12: 8-13: 1. When Jesus returned to revisit Peter, He used a charcoal fire again. When Jesus returns to revisit His people, the smell of freshly shed blood presented to Him in the inner court, will be afresh a reminder that that smell of blood was present at Christ’s scourging. It was present at the cross when His hands and feet were nailed to the cross and after He died for us, when His side was pierced. All of a sudden, the smearing of blood on the lintels and the doorpost so the death angel would pass by the Israelites in Egypt will be understood. People won’t be trying to get the songs about the blood of Christ out of the hymnal. All of a sudden Israelites who rejected the New Testament and the Book of Hebrews will know Hebrews 9: 22 is true—“Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins.”

So why revisit the keeping of Passover? It is to point back to the Lamb of God standing before them in the millennial temple with pierced hands and feet. Now after this revisitation, all Israel will have the scales taken off their eyes. They will fully understand their Passover Lamb standing in their midst. There is a 3<sup>rd</sup> truth Jesus will teach:

**YOU NEVER FULLY UNDERSTOOD THE PRINCE, MESSIAH AND THAT YOUR *beloved prince, DAVID*, PREFIGURED ME. I AM DAVID'S GREATER SON, YOUR FOREVER PRINCE.** (III.)

God promised Daniel that Messiah the Prince was coming. Israel knew of those sacred words in Daniel 9: 25. Israel also knows of Ezekiel's words in 37: 25 where we read, "And David, My servant shall be their prince forever." By rejecting Messiah, Israel for over 2,000 years has rejected her Prince, her Prince of Peace as Isaiah called Jesus in Isaiah 9: 6. The Israelites will remember the prophecy of Ezekiel in 34: 23,24, saying, "Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and He will feed them; He will feed them Himself and be their shepherd. And I, the Lord, will be their God, and My servant David will be Prince among them; I the Lord have spoken." Now it is obvious that this prince in Ezekiel 44-46 is not Jesus. Who is he? Ezekiel 44:3 tells us that he shall sit in the temple as prince to eat bread before the Lord, Messiah, the Prince. In Ezekiel 45: 22, this prince "provides for himself and all the people of the land a bull for a sin offering." We know these offerings are commemorative and not atoning sacrifices. We know these sacrifices commemorate the necessity of Christ's death as a sin offering for our sinfulness. This prince, whoever he is, has sons, Ezekiel 46: 16 that he gives gifts to. Although the Prince of Peace will stand in the temple and rule the temple and the land with a rod of iron, yet we know there is this unknown prince of the seed of David whose presence, even as John the Baptist, will always point beyond himself to Jesus, saying. I am a prince—little p, but I am the Davidic representative of Messiah, the Prince, the Prince of Peace. I, like David of old, am a sinner, whose only forgiveness is found in the death of Messiah, my Prince.

Is this prince the historical David resurrected? Could it be? It could. We don't know. His identity is not clear, but his princely place only points to the Prince of Peace who died for us. Isaiah 53: 6 tells us, "The chastisement of our peace fell upon Him and by His stripes, His scourging, we are healed." Why revisit an earthly prince in the millennial temple? Because--the Prince of Peace is the Son of David. He is the one we cry to today, even as John Huss did as he was burned, martyred at the stake, singing and crying out,

“Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me.” (Repeat.) All an earthly prince can do is to be a power point presentation to us—a red dot in God’s millennial economy, in the millennial temple, who will remove all doubt from Israel—that no earthly prince can give us peace, but only Messiah the Prince. Israel will remember.

This millennial revisitation will confirm the sermon Peter preached to the Jews in Acts 3: 15, saying, “You disowned the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, and put to death the Prince of Life, the One whom God raised from the dead, a fact to which we are witnesses.” Then in Acts 5: 30,31, Peter continued, preaching, “The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging him on a cross. He is the One whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.” This earthly prince who offers sacrifices for himself and his people is only an earthly prince. Listen to Ezekiel 45:8,9. God has a word here for all other princes of Israel, whom God calls My princes. God is saying to the other princes,—“Stop oppressing My people. Give the rest of the land to the 12 tribes of Israel. Princes of Israel, put away violence and destruction. Practice justice and righteousness. Stop extortion and severe levying of taxes on your people, declares the Lord God.” In the face of such other princes, God wants to revisit Jerusalem with an earthly prince, not perfect, but with the heart of David—whose kindness and justice will point everyone to Jesus, Messiah, the Prince, The Prince of Life, the Prince of Peace-standing in their midst. God has eternal reasons for this revisiting of His people. God has many reasons to revisit us today.

I call us today to the God who revisits whenever, whoever, wherever, and however He designs. When God calls us back to something He desires us to relearn or really learn right, God help us not argue with Him about ourselves or others. God forgive us for pointing out that such things are too elemental for us to go back and learn. God help us not point to our age, our position in life, our place in God’s church, and claim to be above or beyond going back. Let’s go back, get it, and, learning, be thankful to Jesus, our High Priest, our Passover, our Messiah, the Prince, The Prince of Life, our Prince of Peace. What is a revival but a revisitation of God. Lord, revisit Your people, Amen.