



my grandma time

...doing simple things together!

Week 37, Day 1 --- Ezekiel 42-43

Week 37, Day 2 --- Ezekiel 44-45

Week 37, Day 3 --- Ezekiel 46-48

Week 37, Day 4 --- Ezekiel 46-48

Week 37, Day 5 --- Joel 1-3

Week 37, Day 6 --- Daniel 1-3

Week 37, Day 7 --- Daniel 4-6

Week 37, Day 1 --- Ezekiel 42-43

The outer measurement of the temple that Ezekiel describes is 500 cubits square. This is about 300 yards on each side. The size of the temple would be a little larger than one of the new football stadiums. This was supposed to be a big building. The precise measurements and symmetry in the building were all to illustrate the holiness of God. The basic meaning of the word holy is separate or distinct. It also includes the concept of purity. God is different from us and still this passage tells us that God desires to live with us. The problem is that His holiness cannot come in contact with sin. The sacrifices of animals work to temporarily cover the sin of the people so that God can live with them.

There is much speculation about the temple that Ezekiel describes. I wonder if God was giving Ezekiel plans just as He gave Moses plans for the tabernacle. What we know for sure is that this wasn't the temple that the Israelites rebuilt when they returned to Jerusalem. I wonder what would have happened had they been determined enough to build this temple.

Week 37, Day 2 --- Ezekiel 44-45

God doesn't go into as much detail as He does in the first 5 books of the Bible, but much of the ceremonial law from Leviticus and Deuteronomy is repeated here. It may not sound like it, but this is a message of hope. God is saying that the temple will be rebuilt and that priests and Levites will again serve Him in the temple. Unfortunately, there was only one family of priests who had remained faithful to God. They would be the priests who would be allowed to make the sacrifices and enter the most holy place in the temple.

Week 37, Day 3 --- Ezekiel 46-47

Week 37, Day 4 --- Ezekiel 48

"The LORD is there." This is the really important point that God is trying to communicate through Ezekiel to all Israel. God desires to be with His people. There are differences, but the instructions in this chapter remind me of Moses' speech in Deuteronomy as he prepares the people to enter the Promised Land the first time. Now God is preparing the people to return to the Promised Land. There are many parts of these instructions that seem like they are for the immediate future. There are others, like the stream of water flowing out of the temple, which seem like they must be for some future time. The big message is that God is returning to Jerusalem and He wants His people to return as well.

Week 37, Day 5 --- Joel 1-3

The prophet Joel repeats in much shorter form the same story that you have heard many times in the prophets. God is bringing destruction on Israel for its disobedience. The people are called to repent. God promises to bring the people back from captivity and to restore Israel. Many prophecies are fulfilled in the New Testament. Some are a little difficult to connect, but some are very clear. Take a look at the passages below. Compare Joel and Acts. What does this tell you about the timing of God's commitment to bring Israel back together?

The Day of the LORD

²⁸ "And afterward,
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your old men will dream dreams,
your young men will see visions.

²⁹ Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

Joel 2:28,29 (NIV)

¹⁷" 'In the last days, God says,
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your young men will see visions,
your old men will dream dreams.

¹⁸Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
and they will prophesy.

Acts 2: 17,18 (NIV)

Week 37, Day 6 --- Daniel 1-3

Daniel is one of my favorite books of the Bible. It provides us with great examples of how to live in a culture that does not follow God. Each chapter of Daniel contains a different story. In the law God provided very clear instructions on what to eat and what not to eat. It is clear that Daniel and his friends would have been sinning against God if they ate the food that the king provided for them. What did they risk by not being willing to eat the food? How did they convince their guards to let them eat the food that was acceptable to God?

The second story is about Daniel and the king's dream. What kind of person is the king? Why does he make such extreme decisions? The dream itself is going to be a consistent theme in Daniel and the last half of the book will expand on the predictions that come out of this dream. We know now looking back that what Daniel predicted is true. The Babylonians were followed by the Median/Persian Empire which then fell to the Greeks which then fell to the Romans. During the time of the Romans Jesus came and established His kingdom that eventually crushed all the others.

The third story is about a fiery furnace. Have you ever been faced with a life or death decision where doing the right thing would lead to death? That is what Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were faced with. They knew that God was powerful enough to save them, but there was no guarantee. They still chose to do the right thing.

Week 37, Day 7 --- Daniel 4-6

There are three more stories today. At the center of each story is the issue of pride. In the first story Nebuchadnezzar is a great and powerful king. He has conquered many other countries and everything seems to be going well. In fact, things are going so well that he thinks he can take credit for everything that has happened. God sends him a dream to let him know that this is a dangerous thing to do since it is really God who has made his success possible. Nebuchadnezzar doesn't listen to the dream or its interpretation. He gets to spend 7 years living just like a cow. The amazing thing is that after this time God restores his kingdom. One of the things that God is doing is providing a stable environment for the people of Israel who are in captivity.

In the second story Nebuchadnezzar's son Belshazzar has become the king. He didn't learn anything from his father. He throws a big party and decides to use the holy things captured from the temple at a very unholy party. God sends him a message in a very spectacular and frightening way. It turns out that when he receives the message that the army that will kill him is already inside the city. God once again demonstrates that He is in charge. Once again a king's pride leads to his downfall.

The last story is one of my favorite stories in the entire Bible. The king is a good king and is tricked by his administrators into creating a very bad law. He is tricked through an appeal to his pride. Daniel knows exactly what is going on, but it doesn't change Daniel's habits at all. He knows that God is in charge. Just like his unwillingness to eat the unclean food, Daniel will not stop praying as God has commanded. So, Daniel is thrown into a den of hungry lions. Daniel survives and it is the jealous administrators who die.

This ends the story of Daniel's life. The rest of the book will focus on the future of Israel as Daniel tells of some incredible visions he saw during his life.