



Ezekiel 31-32

Tape #7328
Ezekiel 31-32
By Chuck Smith

Let's turn in our Bibles now to Ezekiel, chapter thirty one, as we continue our journey through the scriptures. Let me just say that you that have hung on through these middle chapters of Ezekiel, a special blessing for you. It's not always easy to relate to these things in the past. However there are certain eternal principles that are involved in these things. To learn those principles has tremendous value.

However, good news! Starting next week, as we move into chapter thirty three, thirty four, and then the following weeks, thirty five, thirty six, thirty..., we're getting into some exciting stuff! As we move on into Ezekiel, it becomes a very relevant and exciting book as Ezekiel's prophecies go out beyond the contemporary period, and on into the future, as Ezekiel begins to prophesy of those things that are not yet fulfilled. But it would appear that we are on the verge of seeing the fulfillment of some of these later chapters.

So I can promise you some really exciting times ahead, as we move on in the prophecies of Ezekiel, and as we look at the future of our world, as Ezekiel was able to so clearly see, through the knowledge imparted to him by the Holy Spirit. So as we get into chapter thirty one...

It came to pass in the eleventh year, and the third month, [Which would be the month of June.] on the first day of the month, [So you're looking at 586 B.C., June the first.] that the word of the Lord came unto me, saying (31:1-2),

Now again, I want to point out how over, and over again, the Bible declares that it is the word of the Lord. There is one thing that you cannot escape, and that is, the Bible's claim to be God's word. That claim is either true, or false. It should be rather simple to prove whether or not it be true, or false. If you can find flaws, if you can find errors, then it must not be true, because God would not make an error.

But if it is proven to be true, if the predictions that were made came to pass, then there is good reason to believe that, yes, it is the word of the transcendent God, who transcends time. Who can speak of the end things from the beginning. For, He knows the end from the beginning. The eternal God who dwells outside of time, and it is thus able to speak of any period of time, even before it happens. So over, and over throughout the book of Ezekiel, we have the affirmation that it is the word of the Lord that came to the prophet.

Son of man, [A typical appellation for Ezekiel, from God.] speak unto Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and to his multitude; [The question is...] Whom art thou like in thy greatness (30:3)?

"What will we liken Egyptians, Egypt, and the Pharaoh to?" The greatness of Egypt, and the Pharaoh.

Now at this point, Egypt has had a skirmish with Babylon, and was defeated. However, Nebuchadnezzar has not yet invaded the land of Egypt, which he later did, and conquer it. So God is saying, "What shall we liken Egypt to?" He likens it unto Assyria. A great nation, a powerful nation that was conquered by Babylon, prior to the greatness of Babylon, the Assyrian nation was the nation that brought fear into the hearts of the nations of the world. It was Assyria that conquered the northern kingdom of Israel. Had it not been for God's intervention, and the destruction of the Assyrian army when they sought to take Judah, and Jerusalem, Assyria would probably have remained one of the major world powers.

But God destroyed the power of the Assyrians, when they came against Jerusalem, when the angel of the Lord went through the Assyrian camp and smote a hundred and eighty five thousand, Assyria never recovered from that. Thus, was defeated by Babylon, as Babylon began to emerge as the world power.

So He likens Egypt unto Assyria, which He likens unto a great cedar tree in Lebanon with beautiful branches, with a shadowing shroud, [The great cedar tree, the branches reaching out and it becoming like a canopy over the rest of the forest.] of high stature; his top was among the thick boughs. [Or some prefer, "thick clouds", in other words it reached up into the clouds, into the heights, into the heavens.] And the

waters made him great, the deep set him on high with her rivers running round about his plants, and set out her little rivers unto all the trees of the field (31:3-4).

So Assyria set there in the Tigris valley, with the, the waters, the abundance of waters. Thus Egypt, with the Nile, and the little irrigation canals that had been developed. So there was this analogy, the likeness of, of the greatness of Assyria. It is likened unto the greatness of Egypt.

Therefore his height was exalted above all the trees of the field, [It was the world dominating power at that time.] his boughs were multiplied, his branches became long because of the multitude of waters, when he shot forth. And all of the fowls of the heaven made their nests in his boughs, and under his branches did all the beasts of the field bring forth their young, and under his shadow dwelt the great nations (31:5-6).

So Assyria became a dominant world power. Subjugating, conquering, and making vassals of the other nations. Much as did Egypt.

Thus he was fair in his greatness, in the length of his branches: for his root was by the great waters. And the cedars in the garden of God could not hide him: the fir trees were not like his boughs, and the chestnut trees were not like his branches; nor any tree in the garden of God was like unto him in his beauty. [It had emerged as the world dominating power at that time, but then, God declares,] I have made him fair by the multitude of his branches: so that all the trees of Eden, that were in the garden of God, envied him (31:7-9).

Made great by the power of God.

Now what is not always easy for us to recognize and receive is that God does reign as King over the world. Whom He will, He sets up, and whom He will, He brings down. This was a lesson that God taught Nebuchadnezzar, who was filled with pride because of the glory of Babylon. He had this dream of this tree, great tree. Birds of the air nesting in it and all, and the tree was cut to the ground, just the stump remaining. Great tree, cut down and then, out of the stump there came forth new little shoots, new little branches.

Troubled by this dream, he came to Daniel who said, "Oh Nebuchadnezzar! Not good! Your enemies are gonna like this one. You are the great tree. Babylon, the great empire. But you're to be cut down, but yet out of the roots, God will rebuild. But it's because of your pride! The watchers of heaven are watching you and your heart's been lifted up with pride, and therefore God's gonna cut you down. So take it easy Jake-Go easy!"

So for a year he behaved himself, and one day, as he was walking in the beautiful hanging gardens of Babylon, looking over the glory of that city, he said, "Is this not the great Babylon which I have built?" The watchers from heaven said, "That's it. You've had it man!" He went insane. He lived like a beast for seven seasons, till seven seasons had passed over him. Out in the field with the cattle, eating grass like the cattle. Then, God gave him his sanity back again, at which time he made an interesting proclamation, that would indicate that he came to recognize the true God, and commanded the people to worship God.

But the recognition was that God ruled, and God set up those kingdoms, and those people over the kingdoms whom He would, and whom He would, He could exalt, and whom He would, He could abase. But the greatness comes not from man's genius, not from man's abilities, but the greatness comes from God. It is God that has made you great. It is God that has established you. It is God that has established your kingdom. Thus he commands the people to give glory unto God.

What an important thing for us to learn! One of the greatest dangers of being an instrument that God uses, is the praise and the glory, the adulation that comes to you from man, as they see the work of God in your life. Unfortunately they cannot always distinguish between God, and the instrument that God has used. Thus they often times exalt the instrument, rather than exalting God.

In Romans, chapter one, Paul speaks about them worshiping and serving the creature, rather than the Creator. That's just a part of man's nature. He wants to see what he worships. There is built into man that innate need to worship. So often when God has anointed a man, and using a man, people will then begin to hold that man up and worship the man rather than God. The danger for that man that is used of God, is that of receiving the worship.

You remember when Peter and John were going into the temple in the hour of prayer? The lame man was seeking alms. Peter said, "Hey look at me!" The man turned, expecting to receive something, and Peter said, "I don't have any silver or gold, but what I have I'll give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of

Nazareth, rise to your feet and walk!" He took him by the right hand, and lifted him to his feet. Immediately he was healed! He received strength. The man began to walk, and leap, and praise God, and he went through the temple walking and leaping, and praising God! The people in the temple said, "Who was that man? That looks like the lame man! He looks just like the fellow who's been there at the gate all these years!" "Sure did look like him." "How come he's walking?" "Don't know, let's find out!"

They followed him back out to Solomon's porch, where he grabbed hold of Peter, so that the people suddenly related this marvelous miracle to Peter, of this man forty years old who had been lame from birth, now walking. They are relating this marvelous miracle to Peter. They begin to look at Peter in some kind of awe like, "the gods have come down". Peter said, "Ye men of Israel, why do you marvel at this?", or, "Why do you look on us as though we, through our own righteousness, or holiness, have done this good deed to this lame man? Be it known unto you that it is by the name of Jesus Christ!" Or, "God has exalted His Son, and it is by His name, and through faith in His name, that this man stands here before you whole!" Peter went on to point, "Don't look at me!", Peter is saying. "Don't think that I'm some kind of a holy, righteous person and this is a result of my righteousness, or my commitment!" He pointed them immediately away from himself to the Lord!

Much the same with Paul and Barnabas, when they were in Lystra. Paul was preaching, there was a man again about forty years old who was lame. As Paul was preaching, he looked at this fellow, and he perceived that this man had the faith to be healed. He said, "Brother, Jesus Christ makes you whole! Stand up and walk!" The man stood up and walked, and the people said, "The gods have come down!" They ran down to the temple of Jupiter, and they got hold of the priest of Jupiter, and said, "Get out here quick! Jupiter is here! He's come down, and he brought Mercury with him!" They thought because Barnabas was taller, he must be Jupiter, and Paul was Mercury, the little shorty. The priest grabbed an ox, and started dragging this ox down the street to sacrifice the ox to Paul, and to Barnabas. When they saw what was going on, they ripped their clothes, and they said, "Hey don't do this! We are men just like you!"

People are always ready to put God's instrument on a pedestal. "What do you have but what you have received? If you have received it, then why do you boast as though you didn't receive it?"

I was sharing with our school of ministry this past week, how that there are times when the pulpit is a delight. There's an anointing of the Spirit, there's a quickening of the mind, and even as you speak, there are thoughts, there are concepts that come to you that are just rich, and full, and they are as fresh to you as they are to the people that you're bringing them to. There's an anointing of God's Spirit, and a flow, and it's always so joyous to speak when that flow is there!

Then there's times when the pulpit is a pain. There's no flow. It's sort of like God leaves you on your own, and says, "Okay, you think you're developing something? Try this!" And, oh, it's, it's hard! The interesting thing, some of my best outlines, some of my best sermons fall flat. They're a pressure, they're a push, and you push all the way through. It's just a hard, hard push, and you go away just, down, because you've been pushing all the way, and you feel nothing. It's just, nothing. I think the Lord does that just every once in awhile, and thank God not too much, but every once in awhile, just to keep reminding you that it is not of you, but of Him.

I used to have one woman in my church years ago, in Huntington Beach, who was very discerning. She would come up to me after a service and she'd say, "Pastor Chuck, I really enjoyed that message. But", she said, "somehow I feel you enjoyed it just as much as I did". I said, "You're right!" It was one of those where it just flowed you know, and the thoughts, and the, and all were just, just fresh, and, and powerful! I listen to my tapes sometimes, and I say, "Did I say that? That's great!" "That's really good!"

There was one of those Sundays that it was one of those special Sundays when it really cooked. I mean, it was dynamic. I felt it, the people felt it! There was, you know, the whole place, you could feel it, it was one of those that just really flowed! As I was walking at the end of the service, toward the back door, Satan spoke to me and said, "Tremendous message! Great! Powerful! Dynamic! Boy you've blessed the people today! When they shake your hand at the door, there'll be just an effusion of, of praise and all!" "That was powerful, that was dynamite!" About three quarters of the way back, the Lord spoke to me also, and He said, "What do you have but what you have received?" I said, "Nothing." He said, "Then if you have received it,

don't boast as though you didn't receive it. Don't act like it was something you did. Some intelligence that you have. It was the anointing of God's Spirit, give glory to God. Turn the people to God. Don't let them come up to you, and tell you how marvelous you are. But, turn them to God."

So it was God who had made them fair, but now they are taking credit for their greatness, for their power, as though it was something that they had developed apart from God. But remember always the words of Jesus, "Apart from me, you can do nothing. You can't bear fruit of itself. A branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine. Neither can you, except who abide in Christ. For apart from Him, you can do nothing."

There is a converse to that in Philippians, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me". But when it is His strength, His ability, His anointing, then we dare not touch the glory. We dare not take for ourselves the credit for what He has done! "I have made him fair", God said, "by the multitude of his branches; so that all the trees of Eden that were in the garden of God envied him".

Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Because you've lifted up yourself in height, ["You've exalted yourself, I was the one that gave you the position, but you've exalted yourself!"] and you have shot up his top among the thick boughs, his heart is lifted up in his height; [Or lifted up in pride.] I have therefore delivered him into the hand of the mighty one of the heathen; [Which was of course, Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon.] and he shall surely deal with him: for I have driven him out for his wickedness. [The wickedness of pride.] And strangers, the awesome of the nations have cut him off, and have left him: upon the mountains and in all of the valleys his branches are fallen, and his boughs are broken by all the rivers of the land; [This great tree was felled, the branches broken.] and all of the people of the earth are gone down from his shadow, and have left him. [No more influence or power upon the earth.] And upon his ruin shall all the fowls of heaven remain, and all of the beasts of the field shall be upon his branches: [Where they used to receive shelter, now tramping it down.] To the end that none of all of the trees by the waters exalt themselves for their height, neither shoot up their tops among the thick boughs, neither their trees stand up in their height, and all that drink water: for they are all delivered unto death, [God has brought them down to destruction.] to the [underworld, the nether world] the nether parts of the earth, in the midst of the children of men, with them that go down to the pit. [Down to destruction.] Thus saith the Lord God; IN the day when he went down to the grave I caused a mourning: I covered the deep for him, I restrained the floods thereof, and the great waters were stayed: and I caused Lebanon to mourn for him, and all of the trees of the field fainted for him. [They thought, "If Assyria can't stand against the power of, great Assyria is destroyed by Babylon, then who are we to stand against the power of Babylon?"] So I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to hell with them that descend into the pit: and all of the trees of Eden, the choice and the best of Lebanon, and all that drink water, will be comforted in the nether parts of the earth. They also went down into hell with him unto them that be slain with the sword; and they that were his arm, and dwelt under his shadow in the midst of the heathen. To whom art thou like in glory in greatness among the trees of Eden (31:10-18)?

Asking again the Pharaoh, "Who are you like? You've risen up, you are powerful, but you're going to be brought down!" It's a warning unto the Pharaoh of the judgment of God that's gonna come against Egypt. Egypt also will be brought down, that great powerful nation is gonna be brought down.

yet shall you be brought down with the trees of Eden into the nether parts of the earth: [Or the under parts] and you shall lie in the midst of the uncircumcised with them that are slain by the sword. This is Pharaoh [The message is for Pharaoh.] and for all of his multitude, saith the Lord God (31:18).

This is warning. This is what's gonna happen.

It's important that we learn the lessons that history teaches us, because as we look at history, history is nothing more than God's activities in the past with nations, with empires, with individuals. The principles remain, the work of God is, is the same. "Righteousness will exalt a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." That, that's basic! A nation that exalts God, a nation that will put God in the heart of the nation, worship, serve God is a nation that will be strong, it will be powerful. But a nation that forgets God, a nation that forsakes God will be brought down to the pit!

The history of Israel, especially through the book of Judges, but also through the Kings, over and over

again we see the pattern! It is reflected in the statement of the prophet to Asa the king, when he said to the king, “The Lord is with you if you will be with Him, and if you seek Him, He will be found of you, but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you”. That’s just a principle. The principle is illustrated over and over again, how that as long as they sought the Lord, God made them to prosper. When they forsook the Lord, they went down! When they were lifted up with pride, God brought them down. For God exalts the humble, but He turns, and resists the proud.

So the importance to learn the lessons of history! That’s exactly what the prophet was trying to cause the Pharaoh to see. Here you have the example of Assyria. Great, powerful, exalted above the other nations, higher than the other nations, and yet, brought down. “It’s just like you! For you are to be brought down because of the wickedness of your pride.”

Chapter 32

So in chapter thirty two...

It came to pass in the twelfth year, [584] the twelfth month, [Which would be March] the first day of the month, [So the first day of March, 584 B.C.] that the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, [Again, “The word of the Lord came unto me”, God’s word.] Son of man, take up a lamentation for the Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and say unto him, [This is just now a short time before the fall of Egypt to Babylon, getting close now, “say to the Pharaoh”.] Thou art like a young lion of the nations, [Now rather than using Assyria and the tree, He’s using the lion and the crocodile, translated here “whale”, but most commentators believe it’s the crocodile of the Nile river, “Thou art like the young lion of the nations”.] thou art as the whale [or the crocodile] in the seas: you came forth with your rivers and you troubled the waters with your feet, and you fouled their rivers (32:1-2).

A lion, by the watering holes, and pouncing upon the animals that come to drink. The crocodile, and the action of the crocodile troubling the waters.

Thus saith the Lord God; I will therefore spread out my net over you with a company of many people; and they shall bring you up in my net. [The lions were always captured with a net, and God is declaring He’s gonna use a company of many people.] and then will I leave thee upon the land, [The crocodile being brought out on the land.] and cast thee forth upon the open field, and cause all of the fowls of heaven to remain upon thee, and I will fill the beasts of the whole earth with thee. [Egypt is to be devoured, Egypt is to be brought low, Egypt is to be defeated, and the other nations will feed off of the destruction of Egypt.] I will lay your flesh upon the mountains, I will fill the valleys with your height. I will also water with thy blood the land wherein you swim, even the mountains; and the rivers shall be full of you. [So the blood of Egypt will be spilt filling the valleys, much as you read in Revelation, the battle of Armageddon.] And when I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; [It’s is probably a throwback to the darkness of the plague of Egypt during the time of Moses.] I will cover the sun with a cloud, the moon will not give her light. And the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord God (32:3-8).

So this dark period of history is to come upon Egypt. It had been a glorious light. You read the history of ancient Egypt, one of the powers of the ancient world, always a respected power of the ancient world. But God is gonna bring down the glory and the light of Egypt.

I will also vex the hearts of many people, when I shall bring the destruction among the nations, into the countries which you have not known. Yes, I will make many people amazed at thee, and their kings shall be horribly afraid, for when I shall brandish my sword before them; they shall tremble at every moment, every man for his own life, in the day of your fall. [The effect that the destruction of Egypt will have upon the other nations round about.] For thus saith the Lord God; [Again the acknowledgment that God is speaking.] The sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon thee (32:9-11).

Now, if this did not happen, if history didn’t tell us of, of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar coming down and conquering Egypt, you’d say, “That wasn’t the Lord that said that.” But the fact that following this prophecy, Nebuchadnezzar did come down, and did conquer Egypt, again, evidence that this is God speaking. The Bible is God’s word. God has spoken to man. The Bible is the word of God.

By the swords of the mighty will I cause your multitude to fall, the awesome of the nations, all of them: and they shall spoil the pomp of Egypt, and all the multitude thereof shall be destroyed (32:12).

Egypt is to be brought to a base nation, a base condition. No longer one of the great world powers, but to become a base nation.

I will destroy also all the beasts thereof from beside the great waters; neither shall the foot of man trouble them any more, nor the hoofs of beasts trouble them. Then will I make their waters deep, and cause their rivers to run like oil, [After that, there'll be a calm, there will be a peace.] saith the Lord God. But I shall make the land of Egypt desolate, and the country shall be destitute of that whereof it was full, when I shall smite all of them that dwell therein, then shall they know that I am the Lord (32:13-15).

The judgments of God are purposed to turn men to God. To realize that, He is the Lord. God said, "When my judgments are in the land, it'll cause my people to turn to righteousness". God often times uses judgment to wake up the sleeping nation. That the people may know that He is the Lord.

This is the lamentation wherewith they shall lament her: the daughters of the nations shall lament her: and they shall lament for her, even for Egypt, and for all of her multitude, saith the Lord God (32:16).

There will be great lamentation for the fall of Egypt.

Now in verse seventeen, it would seem that some fourteen days later...

In the twelfth year, in the fifteenth day of the month, [So the one came the first day of the month, and now on the fifteenth of the month of March.] the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, ["I'm not quite through with Egypt, and the lamentation for Egypt, not quite over, we're gonna,"] wail for the multitude of Egypt, and cast them down, even her, and the daughters of the famous nations, unto the nether parts of the earth, with them that go down to the pit (32:17-18).

Those nations that have gone down to destruction, those nations that have been destroyed, Egypt is to be cast down with them. The question concerning Egypt...

Whom dost thou pass in beauty? but you will go down, and be laid with the uncircumcised. They shall fall in the midst of those that are slain by the sword: for she is delivered to the sword: draw her and all her multitudes. [God has turned them over to be destroyed.] The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell (32:19-21)

People have an unusual kind of concepts of hell. Here's a little insight into it, and it's not like a lot of people imagine. Some people think of it as a you know, unending party time. "I'm gonna go to hell because all my friends are there." It's gonna be a sobering time. "The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell"...

with them that help him: and they are gone down, they lie uncircumcised, slain by the sword. [The destruction.] Asshur [Or Assyria] is already there and all of her company: his graves are about him: all of them slain, fallen by the sword: Whose graves are set in the sides of the pit, her company is round about her grave: all of them slain, fallen by the sword, which caused terror in the land of the living. There is Elam and all of her multitude [Destroyed, the nation gone down, another example.] all of the slain, fallen by the sword, which are gone down uncircumcised into the nether parts of the earth, which caused their terror in the land of the living; yet have their borne their shame with them that go down to the pit. They have set her a bed in the midst of the slain with all of her multitude: her graves are round about him: and all of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword: though their terror was caused in the land of the living, yet have they borne their shame with them that go down to the pit: and be put in the midst of them that are slain. Then there is Meshech, and Tubal, [According to Herodotus, this is a, a group of Scythian people who occupied the territory between the Black sea, and the Caspian.] her graves are round about him: all of them uncircumcised, slain with the sword, though they caused their terror in the land of the living. They shall not lie with the mighty that are fallen of the uncircumcised, which are gone down to hell the weapons of war: they that laid their swords [So the nations, all nations shall be judged by God, and those nations that forget God will be cast into hell.] Yea, you will be broken in the midst of the uncircumcised, you will lie with them that are slain with the sword. ["Your future is like the history of the past great powers that have forsaken God."] There is Edom, [Now they were the descendants of Esau.] with her kings, and her princes, [The dukes, you remember in Genesis all the dukes of Edom.] which [were, which] with their might are laid by

them that were slain with the sword: and they shall lie with the uncircumcised, and with those that go down to the pit. The princes of the north, [Which would be Syria, Tyre, Sidon, all of them, all of the Sidonians.] which are gone down with the slain; with their terror they are ashamed of their might, and they lie uncircumcised with them that be slain by the sword, and bear their shame with them that go down to the pit. [The company that are of the past, and Pharaoh's gonna lie with them.] Pharaoh will see them, and shall be comforted over all of his multitude, even Pharaoh and all of his army that is slain by the sword, saith the Lord God (32:21-31).

Some comfort! You know, "Well I'm not alone." You know, not much comfort.

For I have caused my terror in the land of the living: and he shall be laid in the midst of the uncircumcised with those that are slain with the sword, even Pharaoh and all of his multitude, saith the Lord God (32:32).

God's word. God's word to the Pharaoh, very sobering word of the destruction and the judgment of God that is to come upon the Pharaoh and the people.

As I say, we have now passed the heavy duty. We enter into the next part of Ezekiel, which is instruction to those who have been taken captive and are there in Babylon. Then the, Ezekiel receives the word that Jerusalem has fallen. You remember that God gave, uh caused him to be dumb after the prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, until he received word that the city was destroyed.

So in this next chapter the word comes that Jerusalem was destroyed, God opens his mouth, and now the prophesies concerning Israel, the judgment of God having been fulfilled, now the, God lays out the hope for the future.

That's to me always the glorious thing. You know, the Bible speaks of dark days, but it never ends in the dark days. God never leaves a man in darkness, or without hope. It always goes out to the glorious day of the Lord that is ahead! That to me is the thrilling thing! You'll find that so often that the Psalmist goes through the dark valleys, and it's expressed in the Psalms, but it never ends, the Psalm never ends in the darkness. But it is always that hope, "And I shall yet praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His blessings." It always ends on a high note, it never ends on a low note.

We go through low experiences in life, but God never ends in the depths, but always comes out. The end of the story is always that of glory, of the restored glory, of the restored blessings. With Job, oh what he went through! But how does the story end? "The latter days of Job were greater than the former days." God gave him back everything, plus more, multiplied over!

Sometimes as God deals with us, He finds it necessary to subtract. But I have discovered in God's glorious mathematics, He never subtracts but what He multiplies. He doesn't add, He multiplies. He may subtract, but they're blessed subtractions. Because it always is for the purpose of multiplying His grace, and His love, and His mercy upon us.

So they've gone through the dark hours, the destruction of Jerusalem, the conquering by the Babylonians. Now he speaks of the future, and it just gets brighter, and brighter as we continue through Ezekiel. The future becomes more glorious all the time, until we end in the glorious day of the Lord, the kingdom age, that glorious day of God.

So the child of God is always looking beyond the shadows, into the glorious light of the future promises of God for us. The best is yet to come! Shall we pray?

Father we thank You for that hope that You give to us. That hope that we have in Christ Jesus. Lord we just look to you now, for that work of Your Spirit in our lives, as You, Lord, begin that work of restoring the years that the caterpillar, and the canker worm have eaten. Lord that You will just bless your people in such a glorious wonderful way, as you bestow upon them the richness of your grace, Your mercy, and Your love towards us through Christ Jesus. We thank You, Father, that while we were yet sinners, You loved us, and sent Your Son to die for our sins. How much more shall we be saved through His life! Let that life of Jesus come forth in us, in His name we pray, Amen.

Shall we stand? May the Lord richly bless you as you walk in fellowship with Him this week. May you have a very keen sense of His presence, as He strengthens you by His Spirit in the inner man. May God give to you a fuller, richer understanding of the extent of His love, that you may be able to comprehend what is

the length, and the breadth, and the depth and the height of His love, that passes human understanding! God be with you, strengthen you, make you all that He would have you to be, for His glory.