

I. Introduction to Ezekiel: A Priest Called to Be a Prophet

Good morning. I want you to turn to the book of Ezekiel. As you know, last week we came through the book of Lamentations, and we talked about that book, how it really fits in and lays itself out as the second book that Jeremiah writes. Today, we're going to move into the book of Ezekiel.

The book of Ezekiel is probably one of my favorite books in the Bible just because of how it lays itself out. I enjoy books in the Bible that are a challenge to get and understand, and the book of Ezekiel is certainly that way. The book of Ezekiel has 48 chapters. Ezekiel bridges the gap between Jeremiah's ministry and Daniel's ministry, overlapping both, but he is certainly in the middle of the two.

I think one of the things that I like about the prophets is that we know how they operate historically. We've seen it before. We've talked about how the doctrinal application all fits toward the Second Coming of Christ. But on a practical side, they're great sermons for you and for me. I'll tell you why: because it really shows us what our life should be as a child of God.

Ezekiel here is a priest who was called to be a prophet. A priest called to be a prophet or a preacher is an exact picture of what your life and my life should be. Once you get saved, God says you and I are part of an eternal priesthood, the priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. As a priest, God has called us or ordained us that we might go forth and preach the Word of God. We also are priests that are called to be prophets.

Where Ezekiel was called out to preach against the sins of the nation of Israel and convey God's message to the nation of Israel, you and I are called out to take God's message to the church. It's an incredible aspect. Most people fall into the trap that they think the job of preaching is only for the pastor. Of course, that's not true. Preaching is everybody's job. Prophesying, teaching the Bible, telling people about God's coming judgment is everybody's responsibility and everybody's job. Certainly, the story of Ezekiel and the study of Ezekiel is a great study and a great story because it lays out and shows for us the great concepts of everything that you need.

His name means "God's strength." In his life and ministry, you see exactly what your job and my job is to be. God uses his ministry during the exile. He writes during the exile. As I told you when we started to look at the prophets, God called these prophets to do some incredible things. We talked about how Jeremiah was called to walk around three years preaching naked. In the book of Ezekiel, Ezekiel was told not to weep when his wife dies. It's an incredible story in his life, and it's one of my favorite books in the Bible.

II. The Three Stages of Jerusalem's Destruction

Last week, I told you a little bit about Nebuchadnezzar and the siege of Jerusalem. I showed you in the book of Lamentations how he comes down and attacks Jerusalem. I want to give you a

little closer look at that because we need to look at that now in the book of Ezekiel. Nebuchadnezzar destroys Jerusalem in three stages. We've only talked about one aspect of it because we were just focusing on the generalities. But when we get into the book of Ezekiel, we need to see this to understand what we're going to look at.

1. In 606 BC, he defeats Jehoiakim and carries off some of the key people. It's Daniel that goes in this captivity and the chosen seed. They go in in 606 BC.
2. Then in 597 BC, Jehoiakim, who was left to be king—him and Jehoiachin, one with an "M," one with an "N"—leads a rebellion and tries to overthrow Nebuchadnezzar. Of course, Nebuchadnezzar comes down and he whacks them again. This is where Ezekiel goes into captivity.
3. Then in 586 BC, he comes back the third time. This is where he lays siege. We talked about this aspect last week. This is where he lays siege for two and a half years, and then he goes in and destroys Jerusalem, burns up the city, and really destroys everything in the third and final stage.

Throughout all the book of Ezekiel, as I guess all of the prophets, there's one great theme. That theme is simply this: that a sovereign purpose of God through judgment and through blessing will bring His people back to Him, and they will know that He is Lord. It's an incredible thing. God uses the judgment and God uses the blessings, both the same way, to show His people that He made a covenant with them, and He is going to keep that covenant and bring them back to Him. It's incredible.

III. Doctrinal Breakdown and Practical Application

From a doctrinal standpoint, the book of Ezekiel deals with the end times again, as all the prophets do. You'll find these events dealing with the nation of Israel and the Tribulation Period, the Second Coming, and the Millennium. You'll find again the concept, "the Day of the Lord," 56 times in this great book.

The breakdown of the book comes into four areas:

4. The first area is chapter 1 through chapter 24. That deals with the judgment and destruction of the nation of Israel.
5. The second section deals in chapter 25 through chapter 35, and that deals with the judgment of the Gentile nations.
6. The third section is chapter 36 through chapter 39, which deals with the restoration of the nation of Israel.
7. Then the last section is chapter 40 through chapter 48, which all deal with the millennial reign of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This book is absolutely loaded. This book is one of the greatest practical books in all of the Bible. We have a tendency, because of the way we look at the Bible, not to see and understand the Bible any more than from the historical perspective. Most people think the Old Testament is very dry and very boring. They don't see the application to the Second Coming of Christ, and they certainly don't see the application to their own selves.

When we look at this book of Ezekiel, I can't help but be reminded of one of the Psalms that the Psalmist wrote in Psalms 137. In the first four verses of that great Psalm, he talked about the captivity of the nation of Israel. I think it is probably one of the saddest Psalms in all of the Bible because it really lays out the despair and the heartache and really shows you what the nation of Israel must have been feeling. I think it's one of the most descriptive Psalms in all of the Bible. It's one of my favorite Psalms because not only does it display what the nation of Israel must have felt, but I think it also displays exactly what you and I feel when we really become a long way from God and we really don't have the relationship with God that we should.

We all go through times in our lives where we don't do what's right with God. I'm never going to be somebody as your pastor that's going to get down on you because you don't necessarily have the right relationship with God that you should. I'll keep you accountable. I'll love you no matter where, no matter what. My love for you is as unconditional as I can make it. I only want one thing for you, and that is for you to stand at the judgment seat of Christ and have everything that God died for you to have. My job as pastor is to help you get there. I may not like all the things that you do. I may not like all the things in life that you're involved in, and I may tell you that they are a detriment to you, but the bottom line is never confuse that for a lack of love for you. My job is to love you unconditionally. I just don't love you because you're a Christian. I love you because you are a human being with flesh and blood, and I try to identify in everything in my life where you're at.

I've been out of fellowship with God before, just as all God's people have, and I can understand that feeling. When I look at Psalms 137, I know that as the Psalmist writes this, he's talking about the nation of Israel in their captivity. But at the same time, it's showing me the captivity of a child of God that is out of fellowship with God, and it so is a verse that fits this great book of Ezekiel because it's written during Ezekiel's time.

The Psalmist says this:

Psalms 137:1-4

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.

We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.

For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion.

How shall we sing the LORD'S song in a strange land?

Verse 4 is probably the greatest verse that lays out the heartbreak that's going on in the nation of Israel and yet says the heartbreak that must be going on in so many of God's people's lives because the Psalmist simply says, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"

You know that's so true. How do we sing the joyous songs of God when we're out of fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ? Israel couldn't do it. The Bible said that they're down there by the river Chebar in captivity by Babylon, the nation of Israel. They've lost all of the rewards. The Bible said last week they lost their crown. They're in total disarray and they're in total breakdown

in a backsliding condition toward God, and the nation of Israel has ceased to be what God wanted them to be. How many times we've been in that same situation, and I look at that and I think how much despair they must have been. We talked about last week how that we sit down sometimes and ask ourselves, "How did this happen? How did I lose what I had with God? How did I lose my fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ?" Yet I see here in this great Psalm so clearly laid out what must be in every child of God's heart when they get away from the Lord Jesus Christ. "How shall we sing the songs of the Lord when we're living in a strange land?"

That is so true, but this book is absolutely loaded. In the time that we've got this morning, I'm going to try to lay it out for you as far as historically and doctrinally, and show you some great concepts, some things that we need to see, some things as we see this great nation—a nation that God had purposed, a nation that God had a plan for, a nation that God called to go and carry His word to the end of the world—now sitting captive by a river with a burden in their heart, and their captives coming up and saying, "Hey, sing us one of those songs of Zion. Give us one of those 'I got the joy, joy, joy, joy down in your heart.'" And they look up from the captivity of that river to their captives and they say to them, "How can we sing the Lord's song when we're living in a strange land?"

Father, help us today. Help us to see the parallels of this great book. Help us to be everything that we need to be today as we open up the Word of God and look at it. Thank You, Father, for today. Thank You for the time that we can spend. Lord, You know that I have nothing to say. Lord, You know that I have no revelation except what comes from God. Father, I pray today that You'll focus it all together, pull it all together, give us the understanding today as we look into Your Word that we might see those things that You have for us, and we'll thank You and praise in Jesus' name for Your sake we ask it, amen.

IV. Section 1: Judgment and Destruction of Israel (Ezekiel 1-24)

Now I'm going to break this down by the sections, and we're going to look at it and we're going to go through. Obviously, in a book with this kind of magnitude, it's going to be tough to get everything that we can, and really that's not my goal. My goal is not to get everything that we can. My goal is to give you a concept of how when you study the book yourself, you know what you're looking for. That's all I can accomplish to do in this.

In Ezekiel 1-24, we see the continuation of God's judgment on the nation of Israel. But within this negative theme, within chapter after chapter, God pouring out His judgment, all the despair, all the brokenness, all the things that they're going through, we find some incredible great truths that'll help you not only put the book of Ezekiel together and the whole format of your Bible, but to help you put it together in your own practical life and everything that you're doing.

➤ Ezekiel 1 and 10: The Second Coming of Christ

Ezekiel 1 goes along with Ezekiel 10. You need to put that in your notes. In Ezekiel 1, we have them sitting down by the river Chebar. Ezekiel 1 has always been one of my favorite chapters. As

you know, I have been involved in astronomy, outer space stuff, and all that stuff for a long, long, long, long, long time. I like to take pictures, and we have fun. We're going to do a thing on the gospel and the stars here coming up as soon as we can get some things worked out, and it'll be a fun time.

Ezekiel 1 has always been an incredible chapter because all the unsaved world, all the unsaved men that write books on UFOology and all the men who want to prove that UFOs have been around forever outside the Bible, they always go to Ezekiel 1. Back in the 70s, there was a book put out by a guy by the name of Von Däniken, and Von Däniken wrote a book called *Chariots of the Gods*. In that book, he talked about UFOs being around in biblical times. His proof text for it was Ezekiel 1, and in Ezekiel 1, he talked about this "wheel within a wheel" here and how this thing was really a UFO.

In fact, I don't know if you saw it yet, but last evening on the History Channel, they had a story, a thing on UFOs then and now. No, no, not with the other one, this one's called *UFOs in the Bible*, that's what it was. What they came through and they came through and showed you all the UFOs in the Bible. Now they take the position that back then man was stupid, and he was still trying to figure out that fire's hot. He's still working through those things, you know what I'm saying? And so when he sees these extraterrestrials coming down here, dumb man who's still saying fire's hot, he does not understand what he's seeing, so he scribbles down and writes down to the best of his peanut brain what he sees. But oh, thousands of years later, us great minds of the 21st century, we now know what he was really talking about. This man who was running around grunting, burning his fingers, and finding out that fire is hot, suddenly now we can interpret for him that those were extraterrestrials coming down and all of the things. In other words, man doesn't have a brain, and we'll interpret for you what man was writing. Forget the fact that the Bible's God's Word. Forget the fact that man who didn't know fire was hot or not has nothing to do with the Bible, that the Holy Spirit of God wrote it, and Ezekiel was seeing what he was seeing from God. Forget all that, and we'll take the position that those are really UFOs, and dumb man really didn't know what he was seeing or understand what he was seeing, so therefore he just records these things, and they are really UFOs. They talk about Elijah. Remember when he goes up in a fiery chariot? It wasn't a fiery chariot; he was in the first alien abduction with Elijah in the Bible. And Ezekiel, he's standing here by the river Chebar, and he sees this "wheel within a wheel," and of course, when you draw it out, what do you get? Well, you got a flying saucer, and here it comes. We talk about the fact that we have been visited down through the centuries, and when we come to the Bible, we have a book of dumb, deluded, stupid man who says fire is hot writing down for us what he doesn't understand.

Let me tell you something. I come down in Ezekiel 1. I only got to go through verse 4, and I know what I'm dealing with. It says, "and heaven opened." That phrase is only found eight times in the Word of God, and every time you find it, the context is the Second Coming of Christ. Every time you find it, he says down there in verse 4, look at your keywords on the back of your little bookmark that we pass out all the time here. You find the word "whirlwind," "north," "cloud," "fire," "brightness"—all pictures of the Second Coming of Christ. That "wheel within a wheel" in verses 15, 16, and 17, you'll find it in Daniel 2, Revelation 14, Isaiah 28, Isaiah 63,

Habakkuk 3. It's a threshing machine that comes down and beats the armies of the Antichrist. It's the "wheel within a wheel." It's a picture of a threshing machine. Why? Because Matthew 13 says when Christ comes back, He separates the wheat from the tares at the time of harvest. So what you got in Ezekiel 1 is a picture of Christ's Second Coming like a threshing machine coming down to separate the wheat and the tares at harvest time. You got four beasts in verses 13 and 14, just like you got them in Revelation 4, and you got everything you need to understand before you go four verses what you got in Ezekiel 1 and Ezekiel 10 is a picture of the Second Coming of Christ. Sorry, Von Däniken, you're out of the ballpark. I'm telling you, the Bible interprets itself. It lays itself out, and there are no UFOs in the Bible in the sense that this is God doing something. This is one of Ezekiel's visions where he sees the coming Christ, and all the elements here point you and show you that what you're dealing with is the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ by the words themselves.

➤ Ezekiel 2-7: Ezekiel's Commission and the Remnant

Then we find in Ezekiel 2-7 another great principle: Ezekiel's commission to the nation of Israel and the beginning of his ministry. In Ezekiel 3, what's the progress? The Bible says that he's told to eat the book. Historically, that's the book of Ezekiel. He's told to eat the book, and when he eats the book, the Bible says it's like honey to his taste, just like Psalms 119. Then after he takes the book and he eats it, then he goes out and he preaches the message that God has given him, the priest, to the nation of Israel. Well, that's an easy one. That's why the Bible says:

1 Thessalonians 2:13

For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

When you eat the Word of God, when you study the Bible, you digest it. It goes inside and it gives you strength. Only after you take the book in, only after you eat the book, only after you digest the book, are you ready to go out and give the message that God wants you to give. That's why you study the Word of God.

In Ezekiel 4 and 5, we find the terrible conditions of the siege. It's terrible. We talked about the siege last week. Here's a picture of it. It talks about a third of the people being killed. It talks about making bread from cow's dung. It talks about there's nothing to eat. It talks about all the destruction that comes down. And yet, in spite of it all, in Ezekiel 6 and 7, just like I told you last week, Ezekiel 6:8 talks about there's a remnant. There's always a remnant. There's a remnant that holds the line. There's a remnant that stays true. There's a remnant that goes through that captivity that are the very best. We're going to see it next week. Next week, when we get into the book of Daniel, I'm going to show you how to be part of that remnant. I'm going to show you how to deal with the world. I'm going to show you young kids how that you don't have to be part of the world system. I'm going to show you moms and dads that are raising your kids exactly how to absolutely guarantee your kids turn out the way God wants them to turn out. No problem with it at all if you just understand how to be a remnant within the captivity. Oh, what a great

practical application it is, and we see that there's a remnant that takes place in this time that stays true to God.

➤ Ezekiel 8: The Problem of Imagination

Then we come to Ezekiel 8. Ezekiel 8 is the greatest chapter in all the Bible that shows you the real problem with us, the real problem with man, the real problem with us, saved and unsaved: our imagination. He says in Ezekiel 8:6:

Ezekiel 8:6

He said furthermore unto me, Son of man, seest thou what they do? even the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary? but turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations.

Now watch this:

Ezekiel 8:7-10

And he brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, behold a hole in the wall.

Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall: and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door.

And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here.

So I went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, pourtrayed upon the wall round about.

I want to tell you something. I don't know if you know it or not, but the Bible tells you that you were to cast down imaginations and every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God, and you're to bring every thought into captivity under the obedience of Christ. The Bible says you'd let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. I'm telling you something, the greatest problem that man has, and you know this from Genesis 6. In Genesis 6, in Noah's time, it doesn't talk about all the wicked things that they did, and they did every wicked thing. He doesn't focus on the things that they're doing. He says in Genesis 6 that the wickedness of their thoughts and their imagination was continually evil. It was their imagination he focuses on. In Romans 1, that great chapter that talks about the Gentiles and their depravity and how wicked they are, it focuses on their imagination, the thing that they think about. You know why? Because you are what you think about.

When you don't discipline your mind, when you don't discipline your imagination, when you don't think on the things that are lovely, and you do what the nation of Israel did, and look what they did. Oh, this thing is so practical. He's talking about the temple, the sanctuary. When you walked into the sanctuary and looked, just like everything that was right, but suddenly he looks over in the corner, and there in a very spot, unsuspecting, he finds a little hole in the wall of the sanctuary. He opens up that hole, and he walks in, and what is there? A secret door. He walks

into that secret door, and he opens up that door, and while there in a dark room is an art gallery. Portrayed on those walls are the filthy abominations that destroyed the nation of Israel.

Now what's he talking about?

Ezekiel 8:12

Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth.

The imagination of the nation of Israel there in the temple of God was a hole in the wall, and in that hole, a hidden door, and in that hidden door, a hidden room where all the filthy thoughts of this world found their way in. Do I have to make the practical application for us? I'll tell you what it is anyhow. God's people, your body's the temple. Your imagination is the key of what you think on and what you dwell on and what you think about. I'm telling you, you are what you think about. This morning, when you let your mind think on the things of God, you'll become godly. When you let your mind think on the things of the world, you'll become worldly. The reason I harp on biblical principles all the time, all the time, is to show you that you've got to keep the Word of God into your heart and into your mind because your mind is an art gallery this morning, and the paintings you got hanging on it, the question is simply this: Would you show them to your kids? Would you show them to your wife or your husband? Would you show them to your family? Would you show them to your friends? That's what we're talking about this morning. Israel portrayed to be something, but in the sanctuary, in the temple, there was a little hole with a door hidden, and it shows you and me many times we go and put things into our minds where nobody else knows. Let me tell you something, I learned a long time ago, I take my mind places I never think about taking my body. That's why it says over in the Song of Solomon 1:4, I don't know if you remembered when we went through that, I made a reference to it knowing I was coming here in time. The Bible says here in verse 12, "every man in the chambers of his imagery." Yet the Bible says in Song of Solomon 1:4, when it's talking about the bride of Christ today, God saved me, it said, "He brought me into his chambers." God wants you to think the things that He thinks. He wants you and me to dwell on the things that are lovely, the things that are right, the things that are perfect. But we as human beings, we struggle with it. John 3:19 says, "men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." That's why I'm telling you, you got to get into the Word of God. It paints the pictures for you. It lays out in your mind and your heart all day long. You ought to think about the pictures of the Word of God, pictures of God, pictures of the things of God. Your mind is an art gallery this morning, and you decide what paintings are put up and looked at.

➤ Ezekiel 9-13: Tribulation and Rebellion

In Ezekiel 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13, it all deals with the Tribulation Period. Ezekiel 10 is the chapter that I told you about that goes along with Ezekiel 1. In Ezekiel 12:2, it talks about the rebellious house of the nation of Israel. These chapters simply, if you read them, you will find more of the destruction, more of the negativism, more of the problem that Israel's had.

➤ Ezekiel 14: God Will Give You a Lie to Believe

Then we come to Ezekiel 14. I can't pass Ezekiel 14. Ezekiel 14 is one of the greatest chapters in all the Bible that gives you one of the greatest truths you'll ever understand, and it simply says in Ezekiel 14:1-9. I don't think we have to read all of it, but it comes down and it says this:

Ezekiel 14:1-5

Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me, and sat before me.

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face: should I be enquired of at all by them?

Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols;

That I may take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all estranged from me through their idols.

I want to tell you something, my friend, and the greatest truth you'll ever get: God will give you a lie to believe if you want one. God will absolutely, unequivocally, He will give you the lie for you to believe if you want to believe it. He said down there in verse 9:

Ezekiel 14:9

And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the LORD have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand upon him, and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel.

I want to tell you something, friend, you can be led astray from God quicker with the Bible than any other book in print. You know why? And I'm talking about God's people. I'm obviously saying people can. I'm talking about God's people. You know why? It's the only book ever written that absolutely requires the right attitude of heart to get truth. You come to that book with a preconceived idea, you come to that book with conditional clauses of what you will do and what you won't do, and you'll get exactly what you come to look for. I promise you, that Bible is written in such a way that it'll deceive you. That's why there's some of those. I've had people ask me in Bible study before, a one-on-one Bible study, "Why did God write it that way? Why did He say it that way? That looks like it can be taken another way. It looked like it could be confusing." That's exactly the way God intended it to read. You know why? Because God, what if a man comes to that book with a right attitude of heart, and he comes to that book with everything that he says, "God, I don't believe anything. I'm stupid. I'm so dumb. I don't even suspect anything. Just show me what You want, and I'll believe it." He'll get the truth no matter what the book says. But oh, you come to that book with what you already want to believe, you come to that book with how you already want to live your life, you will find exactly what you

want, and you will go home with exactly what you want to justify your lifestyle, saved or unsaved.

Years ago, I had a guy take me out to lunch, and he wasn't always an idiot type of guy anyhow. He's one of these weirdo guys, and he takes me out to lunch, and he says, "Bob," he says, "I've come to a great reality truth." And I said, "Bud," his name was Bud, I said, "Bud, what is that?" And he says, "I've come to the truth that the church is going through the Tribulation Period." He says, "Bob, before you say anything, I want you to know I have studied this out over 1,000 hours." Like, I'm impressed, Bud. I said, "What do you think?" And I said, "Bud, all that does is prove to me you're as crooked as a dog's hind leg." He said, "What do you mean?" I said, "Anybody who studies the Bible for 1,000 hours and still gets the wrong answer, you're in trouble, pal. You're in trouble. You're going to tell me you take something of that Bible and study it 1,000 hours with God, 'Show me what You want, not what I want,' you're going to come away with the wrong answer? I don't believe that." Oh, Bud, he wanted to come away with what he believed. He thought we were going through the Tribulation Period. I don't know where he's at today, probably some mountain top down in southern South Carolina someplace, but he's still waiting for it to come.

I'm telling you, that Bible is the greatest book in the world. It is the greatest book in the world. Again, that's why I harp on learning Bible principles. Learn the principles of the Word of God because the world revolves on them. The sun comes up on them. The moon sets on them, and the moon shines at night by them. You've got to have those concepts, and you'd never come to the Bible with "I want to believe this, and I'm going to find verses." I talked to a guy one time down in Wichita, Kansas. They had me down there, and I was preaching, and they wanted to have a Bible study afterwards, and somebody asked me a question about the gap thing in Genesis 6. You know, I was pretty stupid, naive down there, and I just caught what I knew. I didn't, I wasn't smart enough to know when to keep your mouth shut. So, and boy, I had about three or four guys tackle me right in the middle of the Bible study, about 200 people, and God always teaches me things from that. One, be a little smarter next time. Two, listen to what people say. And I'm right in the middle of the study. We're going back and forth, and they're hitting me with this, and I'm just giving the Bible. They're going to this guy's book. I'm just giving the Bible. They're pulling out this statistic. I'm just giving them the Bible. And finally, the guy looked at the one guy, and he says, "You know what? I don't care what that Bible says. I know what I believe." I said, "Thank you for that testimony, brother." And that's exactly right. "I don't care what the Bible says. I know what I want to believe." That's where it's at.

I'm going to tell you something today, and it better be your mindset: I don't care what I want to believe. I just want to believe what the Bible says. You think I care there's a gap between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2? You really think I care? It would, if it wasn't, it'd just make me getting through the Bible a lot quicker. I wouldn't have a lot of other places to go to reference it out. I don't care. I don't care about anything. I don't. God could change. I have no pet doctrine. You think I care the King James Bible is the absolute Word of God? I wouldn't care if they all were. I'm not getting paid by the ounce for every time I preach that. I just believe what God says. I don't really care what it is. If God said, "You know what, Bob, I want you to go out and show me this," I believe

Him. When God shows me something, I don't have any preconceived ideas about the book. You know what it is? God's book. He wrote it. He preserved it. He inspired. Who am I to tell God what His book means? And when you take that attitude, you'll get some truth. You'll get some truth. You don't, you'll be deceived just like that prophet was because I'm telling you, you want a man wants to believe you go through the tribulation, God will give you the verses. You want to believe you can lose your salvation, God will give you the verses. You want to believe that predestination, God will give you the verses. You want to believe in speaking in tongues, God will give you the verses. He'll give you whatever you want when you come to say, "I've seen people want to believe something about the Bible so desperately." I never understood that. There is nothing in there that I have to believe desperately enough that if God showed me something different, I wouldn't say, "Good with me, Lord, just go." I don't care. I don't care. I just know it's His book. And that's one of the greatest truths you'll ever find.

➤ Ezekiel 14: Noah, Daniel, and Job

Along in that chapter, down in Ezekiel 14, you'll find three names popping up: Noah, Daniel, and Job. You'll find that those three men are three of seven men in the Bible that God sets them out by name for specific purposes. You know, when you start studying through the Bible, you're going to find a key word pop up. It's the word "overcome." That word's going to pop up in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John. The Bible says, if you're saved, you have overcome the world. When you look at these seven men in the Bible, each one of them have overcome something different. When you take all seven of them and study them in your life, what you have are the things that you and I have to overcome and have in our lives by what these guys went through. None of these guys had an easy time. All these guys struggled. I'll tell you something else. All these guys had failures in their lives. But the bottom line is at the end of the day, they got through the things of life. They overcame what was in their life that the devil was trying to stop them, and they became in a relationship with God. My goodness, they are the seven same things that you've got in your life that you've got to deal with. When you get them down and when you understand their lives, it shows you how to do it. You want to be complete in Christ. You want to be the man that God, the woman God wants you to be. There's your example. Seven men in the Old Testament, and Daniel, Noah, and Job are three of them.

You ever look at it? You know what Noah overcame? He overcame the world. You know what Daniel overcame? He overcame the devil. I mean, Job overcame the devil. Noah overcame the world, and Daniel overcame the flesh. Three areas in our lives right there that we have to struggle with. If you study those lives, you'll find out how they did it, how you got to do it. When you get all seven together, perfect number perfection, you'll understand what it means to overcome.

➤ Ezekiel 15-24: Continued Judgment and the Antichrist

Ezekiel 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. Back to the judgment of God falling on the nation of Israel. There are great verses in here. We don't have time. You're going to have to go through it on your own. I'm just trying to tell you where you're at, what you're looking for. I'm telling you, in this section, you've got the judgment of God again, falling on the nation of Israel with different great

concepts. I'm just trying to point some out. I could spend the next year coming through Ezekiel verse by verse.

Ezekiel 21:9. Oh, what a great study this is. Three swords in the Bible. He says, "a sword, a sword." Three swords in that Bible. One's the Word of God, one's the sword of pestilence, one's the sword of the king of Babylon. In Ezekiel 21, you've got the key how the Antichrist is going to attack Jerusalem. He comes at the top of Jerusalem. The Bible says he looks down at that city, and then he stopped before he attacks. You know what he does? He calls for a diviner. He gets a hold of a witch. Happy Halloween. Just like Saul did with a witch at Endor. And he inquires at that witch, just like Saul did, a type of the Antichrist, which way he should attack. You know what happens? God intervenes with this witch, just like He did with the last witch. He gets the wrong way down, and whichever way he got from the witch that he went, the witch got him because the witch went the wrong way when he should have went that witch way. In other words, he went the wrong way. He got clobbered. Exactly how the Antichrist is going to do it. Ezekiel 22, 23, 24, more of God's judgment to Jerusalem. It all speaks for itself.

V. Section 2: Judgment of Gentile Nations (Ezekiel 25-35)

Then we come to the second section. The second section is very important. I don't have to go through this in great detail because this is one that if you just know what I'm talking about, it'll help you. Ezekiel 25-35, this new section, the second section, it all deals with the judgment of the Gentile nations, the Second Coming of Christ.

In Ezekiel 25, you have the Ammonites. Ezekiel 26, 27, and 28, Prince of Tyre. Now let me just say this. Ezekiel 28 is the second greatest chapter. Remember when we came through the book of Isaiah? I told you, I showed you Isaiah 14, the fall of Satan, Lucifer. Well, I told you then, and I'm telling you now, Ezekiel 28, the other chapter that matches up to it, read it sometime, ask your questions on Thursday night, be glad to answer them. Ezekiel 29-35 deals with Egypt, and Assyria, and the Edomites.

Now let me just say this. When you come back to Revelation 13, Daniel 11, you're going to find that there are nations that are connected with the Antichrist during the Tribulation Period. He says that there's seven heads with 10 horns over there in Revelation, and you find them again in the book of Daniel. You'll find that these nations are connected with those 10 nations. You'll find those 10 nations laid out for you in Psalms 83. We talked about it Thursday night a little bit. When you go through there, these nations, the Gentile nations, are nations that are over in the Middle East right now, and they are lined up against the nation of Israel. At a certain time, they're going to attack the nation of Israel. They're going to align with the Antichrist, and they're going to come in and come down and try to destroy Jerusalem, and they're going to be destroyed. This is the judgment that they're talking about. Now I just gave you all the information for the next six months of your life if you want to study them out. Then you can ask me about it from time to time, and I'll help you figure it out. But that's what we're dealing with. These are the judgment of the Gentile nations at the Second Coming of Christ that have aligned themselves with the nation of Israel. All of these were Israel's enemies in the Old Testament. There ain't no one of them that helped them out. And they're all the enemies of the nation of Israel at the Second Coming of

Christ. They've just transferred themselves. Where they went through the Amorites, now they're the Iraqis, they're the Iranians. Where it was Tyre, now it's Iran. That was Persia. It's Egypt. The Edomites, all of them are a hodgepodge mixture of the nations now that have amalgamated together through the hundreds of years that stand on this end of history to destroy the nation of Israel.

VI. Section 3: Restoration of Israel (Ezekiel 36-39)

Then we start the third section. Ezekiel 36-39. Without a doubt, the most detailed account in all of the Bible on the end of the Tribulation Period and the restoration of the nation of Israel. There is so much in these chapters. There is so much on these chapters. You got to be careful with these chapters. Some of these chapters have double applications. Some of these chapters, like when you come down here to Ezekiel 38, it looks like everything is talking about there as the Second Coming of Christ. A lot of it is, but there's things that don't match up to the Second Coming of Christ. Why? Because you got to remember, there's two great battles of Armageddon. Not one, two. There's one at the end of the Tribulation Period, and then there's one at the end of the Millennium. You've got to be able to discern where these chapters fit in. Some of these chapters have a double application. We don't have to get into that this morning. I'm just putting that, put that into your notes. Sometime when you have some time one-on-one or you want to ask it on Thursday night, I'll walk you through it and show you how it works as you get to that point in your life. But Ezekiel 36-39, incredible chapters.

➤ Ezekiel 36: Preparation of the Jew

Ezekiel 36, you know what you've got? You've got the preparation of the Jew. Folks, I'm not kidding you. You can come down in that great chapter there in Ezekiel 36, and you'll find the Jew going back just like he did in 1918 with Ezra. You'll find them rebuilding just like they did in Nehemiah and Esther in 1948. You'll find the Tribulation Period, and you'll find the Second Coming of Christ just as laid out as clearly and neatly as you ever saw in your life. I'm telling you what, there's places in those prophets where it talked about somebody putting those Jews in ovens and burning them. I wonder who that was in history. I'm telling you, when this man writes, he's looking ahead, and he's seeing events that you and I are living through, and your moms and dads live through right now. He's sure he's talking historically. Yes, there's great inspirational applications, but we are living in the day and age that we are fulfilling and seeing the fulfillment of these great prophecies. I'm telling you, they're incredible. In Ezekiel 36, we see the preparation of the Jews. We see what's going on right now. We see what is taking place in the 20th century and then moving into the 21st century. I'm telling you, you know this is true. If you know anything about the Bible at all, you know where we're standing in respect to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

➤ Ezekiel 37: The Valley of Dry Bones

Then in Ezekiel 37, oh, great chapter in the Bible on the Valley of the Dry Bones. The Valley of the Dry Bones. You've heard the song before, you know, "the hip bone connected to the knee bone and the knee bone, them bones, them bones, them dry bones." You know, in Halloween

time, a little skeleton popping around. That song was originally a spiritual song written about the restoration of the nation of Israel. It's Ezekiel 37. You find the bones down there in that valley, a valley of dry bones. That's a picture of the nation of Israel all down through history. She was dead. She died in 606 BC. She's dead. She's down in the dust. Nothing but bones. And yet, believe it or not, something happens. Something happens. Oh, something happens, and those bones begin to come together. The bones begin to regenerate. The Bible says that the meat, the muscles, all of the parts become to come together as the bones. Suddenly, standing before you is a complete person. Yet the Bible tells you that that person is the whole house of Israel in verse 11. Then it comes alive.

You know what? I love the Bible. There are men today, and preachers today, who spend their whole lives arguing with somebody when life begins. You realize that the Christian church, Christianity, gets in some of the stupidest things just because they just can't believe the Bible. Well, you know what? The real issue in everything in the Bible is when, not only is when life start, but when life end. That's why you got all these people that take these extracurricular activity visits, you know, they die, go up to heaven, check it out for a while, and decide to come back. You know what? Those things don't, you know why I know those don't happen? Because I got a Bible that tells me when you die. Well, you said, "Well, yeah, I read so and so's book, and the doctor couldn't find a pulse." I'm sorry, the doctor's not God. "Well, yeah, but there was no heartbeat. The brainwaves are dead." I know people that are walking around that are like that. I got God, I know God's people that have no heart. I know God's people ain't got sense. God gave a goose, and they're walking around. "But yeah, but just so he went up and saw a bright light." I had read this story one time, and this guy was, I heard him say it. All these people were just yucking this up like it was, oh, the greatest thing in the world. And he says, "You know what?" He says, "I'm going to tell you about my out of the body experience." He says, "I was laying there in the hospital." And he said, "I was laying there." And he said, "I died." And he said, "All of a sudden I stepped out of my body." And he said, "I looked around," and he said, "I was like I was over top, and there I was laying in a bed, and my wife was crying, and all the doctors were over there, and they were putting them shocker things on me." And he says, "I was standing up, and suddenly I looked up, and I was moving through space." And as I was moving through space, stars and galaxies were spinning by, and then I saw a light, and it got brighter and brighter and brighter. And I said, "Oh, I'm going to heaven." And it got brighter. And just as I got close to it, I heard this voice that said, "Not ready yet." He said, "I woke up in a hospital bed, and I came back from the dead." I looked at that guy, and people were saying, "Oh boy, well, that's marvelous. I wish I had one of them experiences." And I thought to myself, that is the biggest idiot in all the world. I mean, let me tell you, you got big light and a big voice said, "Not ready yet." Let me tell you something. You're not dead till God says you're dead. And the Bible defines what God constitutes as dead. And when you're dead, you are dead. And anything before that is insanity or your own imagination, or you had too much pizza and beer before you went to bed at night. But I'm telling you, when you're dead, you don't come back. When you're dead, when God says you're dead in the Bible, defines for you what dead is. At the same time, Bible defines for you what life is. You don't have to run around getting in some movement someplace and getting you, you know what? The Bible covers all the bases. You know, here I am in Ezekiel 38, or Ezekiel 37 and 38. And I say to God, it tells you where life began. But that's a really a kind of a

half truth because he told you where life started in Genesis 2. He didn't want you to read all the way to Ezekiel before you found it out. He told you the beginning exactly where life begins. I mean, it's so simple for anybody who just believes. But you see, when you come with a preconceived idea, because you've got an ulterior motive behind what you want to do, God will give you whatever you want. God will give you whatever you want. Me, I'll just stick with the books. When I go to the Valley of Dry Bones, I know how Israel comes alive. When I go to the book of Genesis, I know how Adam came alive. And you know what? When I go to several places else, I know how I came alive. When I go to the book of Job, I know how the book come alive. It's all in there. It's all in there. It's all in there. Everybody, "dem bones, dem bones, dem dry bones." It's there. It's all right there. It's all there.

> Ezekiel 38-39: The Battle of Armageddon

Then you come to Ezekiel 38 and 39. Detailed account of the Battle of Armageddon. Ezekiel 38:1, the man and his nations against the nations of God. Gog, Magog. There's where you got to watch your double application. Ezekiel 39, the battle and his destruction. Ezekiel 39:11, seven months to bury the dead after that great battle. Let me tell you something. This thing brings you through. It shows you Israel's condition, God's judgment on him. The whole book of Ezekiel up to Ezekiel 36 is a picture of the Tribulation Period and God's judgment on him. In Ezekiel 36, you see God calling him back. Ezekiel 37, you see him bringing him life. Ezekiel 38, Ezekiel 39, you see the Battle of Armageddon. It's all right there. The end of that great battle, seven months to bury the dead. Ezekiel 39:17 says, "the supper of our great God," he calls all the birds to eat, just like Alfred Hitchcock did. Revelation 19:17-18. What do you think he got it? All those things come from the Bible.

Well then, the end of that chapter. Ezekiel 39:29, he says this, and this ushers us into the last section. Called "the times of refreshing" in Acts 3. The Millennial Reign of the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh yeah. All of Ezekiel up through Ezekiel 35 and 36 deals with the Tribulation Period. Ezekiel 36, he shows you God calling him back. Ezekiel 37, he shows you God restoring him for bringing a nation and giving him life. Ezekiel 38, Ezekiel 39, he shows you the Antichrist and the Battle of Armageddon. In the last verse, or last verses down there in Ezekiel 39:29, he says this:

Ezekiel 39:29

Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD.

Just like I taught you in Matthew 13, for I have poured out my spirit just like Joel 2, Acts 2, upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God.

VII. Section 4: The Millennial Reign of Christ (Ezekiel 40-48)

You know what you got in the last section, Ezekiel 40-48? I'll tell you what you got. You got in the first part of Ezekiel up to Ezekiel 35, you've got the picture of the Tribulation Period. Ezekiel

36, 37, 38, 39, you've got everything dealing with Israel, God restoring them, the Battle of Armageddon. In Ezekiel 40-48, you got the eight greatest chapters anywhere in the Bible on the Millennial Reign of the Lord Jesus Christ. Write everything in its progression. You couldn't beat it if you wanted to.

Yet, you know what? Now here's what Bible teachers do. You couldn't find any book in any Christian bookstore, anywhere on the face of this planet, except three that I know of, and probably two of those are out of print, that correctly puts Ezekiel 40-48 where they belong. The one you can probably still find today is Clarence Larkin's Dispensational Truth. I've never found a book anywhere in my life that detailed it out and drew it out and showed you every aspect of what I'm going to give you. In my Bible, some Thursday night, if you want to see something, come up to me and ask me to see my notes on Ezekiel 40-48. I'll show you a detailed outline of the Millennial Temple and the structure of what's going on that he walks you through piece by piece that is the most unbelievable. If you're ever going to understand it, you got to get it from his book. I'm telling you, he's got it. I don't even know if you can find it anymore, but he's got it. I know some of you got the book. It's incredible. It's incredible. He deals with every detail.

But let me show you what the Bible teachers have done. They painted themselves into a small corner. They come to the place where all through the Bible, they were teaching you that people in the Old Testament look forward to the coming of Christ like we look backward to the coming of Christ. Now we look backward to the cross, so they must have looked forward to the cross. That kind of heresy being taught, and the kind of heresy being taught that they teach, when they get to Ezekiel 40-48, they don't have a clue what to do with it. You know why? Because if you believe what they teach, and you take the standard Baptist teaching of the way God is dealing with people in the Old Testament and the New Testament, and you think they're the same, and the same thing happens, and it all works the same way, and they're all looking for the same thing. When you get to Ezekiel 40 and 48, you're as blind as a bat trying to back in backwards. You cannot figure out what he's doing. So you know what you do? You make it eternity. Every book you're going to read, you're going to pick up, and it's going to tell you that the temple in Ezekiel 40-48 is the one in Revelation 22. Who cares that when you study the dimensions, they aren't the same? Don't confuse me with facts. It says, "I don't know what to do with it, so when I don't know what to do with it, I'll make up something to do with it, and I know that I'm the scholar, you're the idiot, so you'll buy it because you're still walking around going, 'Ooh, that's hot fire.'" No, no, those of us that believe the Bible understand the Bible. I know exactly what I got in Ezekiel 40-48 because I know the seven people groups that go into that millennium. I know the constitutional structure from Matthew 5-10. I know the constitution from Matthew 5. I know in 6, I know how it's laid out from Revelation 20. I got it from Isaiah 66, who's in it and what they're doing, and Ezekiel 40-48 just shows me the structure and how it lays out in one of the most incredible understandings of the greatest period of time, the fulfillment of the kingdom of heaven on planet Earth. Maybe that's part of the problem. Those boys believe the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven are the same thing.

Ezekiel 40, every chapter. I mean, how could you miss it? How could you come through and see Ezekiel 1-35 as the tribulation? How could you miss 36 and being called back like they were in

1918, 1948 tribulation? How could you miss the reconstruction and the dry bones in Ezekiel 37? How could you miss in Ezekiel 38, 39, the Second Coming of Christ? Then how in the world if it follows that progression, what, did we just leap over the millennium and now we're in eternity? Crazy. I've told you once, I've told you a thousand times, the key about that Bible is its absolute consistency. It is absolutely finer than any atomic structure watch you can find because the planets run by it. Somebody said to me one time, "Well, you know what? I heard you say that that Bible was more absolute than time." He says, "I just can't buy that." I said, "Oh, really?" He says, "Yeah." I said, "Well, where'd you get your time?" "Is it from my watch?" "Is it accurate?" "Yeah." "How is it accurate?" "Well, I set it out in Denver with a, you know, you call it there, there's a number you can get." Oh, y'all know that, I'm impressed. How many knew that? Call out in Denver, you can get the right time. I said, "Where do they get it?" "Well, they get it from Greenwich, England." I said, "Where do they get it?" "Astronomers get it from the stars." And I said, "Well, who made the stars?" "Fire is hot." Yeah. Tell you something, one thing I've learned in life in 54 years, all the clowns are not in the circus. Let me just tell you that.

He says in Ezekiel 40:1:

Ezekiel 40:1

In the five and twentieth year of our captivity, in the beginning of the year, in the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after that the city was smitten, in the selfsame day the hand of the LORD was upon me, and brought me thither.

I mean, how could you miss this? We just came through all of that stuff in a sense, and the visions of God brought he, me and the land of Israel and set me upon a very high mountain by which was as the frame of a city on the South. You know what Ezekiel has done? God's picked him up, put him on a mountain, and said, "Let me show you that city, Jerusalem. Let me show you, I brought you through the tribulation. I brought you through God bringing the Jews back. I brought you through the restoration, the dry bones. I've showed you the Battle of Armageddon and every detail. Now I'm going to set you on a mountain, and I'm going to show you the city. I'm going to show you the city that Abraham looked for, that Moses looked for."

➤ Ezekiel 41-46: Millennial Temple and Offerings

In Ezekiel 41, he goes through the gates of that city. We studied them when we came through how to build a church a while back. The key of Ezekiel 40 is the measurements of the temple because they're not the same measurements that you find in Revelation 11 and Revelation 20 that Dr. Fine, Dr. Howard, Dr. Fine missed. Ezekiel 41, he deals with the ornaments of the temple. Within that, he'll talk about the chambers for the priests, the doors, the posts in the outward court. Larkin lays this out. Oh, I can't wait for you to ask me, and I'll show you Thursday night, how you lay this thing out. It is the most, I'll show you the neatest, easiest way that anytime anybody asks you a question about anything in the millennium in those eight chapters, you got it. It breaks it down incredibly. I wished I'd have thought of it, but I didn't. Now I could have told you I did, and you wouldn't have known the difference, but I'm not.

Ezekiel 42, the levels of the temple. There's three of them. We don't have time to get into it, but they match the three levels of the ark in Genesis 5 and 6. They match the three levels of the heavens in Hebrews 12. The tabernacle as the ark is a type of the universe, three heavens, first heaven, second heaven, and third heaven where Paul was caught up to in the book of Corinthians. Remember that ark, Noah on the ark had three stories. In the top of that third story, there was a window. On the side, there was a door. That ark's a type of the universe. That ark's also a type of Christ. You know how everybody got in that ark? They got in through the door in the side. You know how you got into Christ? You got in through his death, through a hole in his side. Now when it says over there in the first part of the book of John at the door in heaven and the windows are open and Noah let those birds go through that window. Oh man, you're into it.

Ezekiel 43, a great chapter on the glory of God, the Eastern gate, the throne room, the altar. You find all the offerings. Now here's where the brethren have a tough time. They just cannot fathom that in the millennium, somebody is offering up sin offerings for sin. Not you and me. They don't know who. They ain't got a clue. If you know your Bible, you know how the order breaks down. But they just can't grasp it. Here it is, Christ died on the cross 2,000 years ago, paid for everybody's sins, right, right? You and I are in Christ because we're saved, right, right? Well, how come we got people after Christ died on the cross and shed his blood and paid for sin supposedly? How come we still got people in the millennium that are offering sin offerings of lambs and bullocks and all of these things for their sins? I don't know what to do with that. Well, yeah, and the reason why you don't know what to do with it, because you think the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven are the same, and you don't know what to do with it. So you take it and you put it into eternity someplace, and you just have a heart attack that goes on belief when you come to Revelation 22:14, it says in eternity, there's a tree of life, just like there was in a garden, and somebody's partaking of that tree. You don't know what to do with it. It doesn't fit into your theology. So what do I do as a PhD when I find something in the Bible that I don't really understand and I don't really agree with and it's not from my school of thinking? Oh, I know what I do, I know what I'll do. I'll put a footnote in and I'll take it out all in the new Bibles and tell you that that verse of the tree of life shouldn't be in the new manuscript because the best manuscripts don't have it in. That's how we deal with it. That'll work, that'll work. That'll work. Oh no. That's what Colossians 2:16-17 is all about. It says right now in the church:

Colossians 2:16-17

Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:

Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

Right now in the church, don't man any judge you. We don't do it, but there are shadow of things to come. But right now the body is of Christ, but they're going to be back in effect for the Israel and the millennium. Now I don't have time to explain all that, but I'm telling you that's the way it lays out. Most of you grasp it if you don't, Thursday night, seven o'clock, raise your hand. I'll lay the whole thing out for you.

Ezekiel 44, gate of the prayer. If you don't want to come Thursday night or you can't come Thursday night, hey, invite me over. Better yet, I'll invite you over. Come over to my house, Saturday morning, whenever you want, come over, sit down. Better yet, let me come to your house. Oh, dinner time. I always think better with a full stomach. Let me help you, let me help you. You want to learn the Bible, let me help you. I'll help you, I'll help you. What I'm here for, I'll tell you, lay it out for you.

Ezekiel 44. The gate for the prince, the inner court. David in the millennium is the prince. He sits on the right hand of Christ, who's the king. He has a gate that he goes in. That gate faces the Mount of Olives. Yes, it's the Eastern gate. The one that was walled up with the great Ottoman Turk. You've heard the story of the Eastern gate, how it got walled up. We've talked about it before.

Ezekiel 45, the Lord's portion, the Levite's portion. All these portions are the city itself, the New Jerusalem and the Holy Oblation, which is the area around it. It's all divided up. You need to understand how it's divided up. In Ezekiel 46, he talks about the place of the sacrifice, the animals for sin offerings, sin offerings in the millennium. You see, this leads people to get confused because they think, "Well, that's me." They don't understand that in the Bible, there's called the family of God. The family of God has seven members of that family. You and I, as the body of Christ, the church, are just one part of that family. That family of God runs from Genesis before the law, up through Exodus under the law, in the intermediate time with Christ, through the church age, up through the Tribulation Period, up through the millennium, and up through eternity. They make up the seven household family of God talked about in the book of Ephesians. You have to be able to place them. If you don't know how to place them, and they're all built around the kingdom of God versus the kingdom of heaven, and you don't know how to place them, let me tell you something. You're going to get confused. My job is not to confuse you. I'm not saying all this stuff so you go out here and say, "Now I am confused." I'm telling you all this stuff so it gives you a format by which to study the book of Ezekiel. Then you have a pastor, if you don't understand it, you come and sit down with me, and I'll figure it out for you on Thursday night or whatever the case. My goal is for you to understand it, but I'm going to lay it out to you the way that it is. You need to understand how this land is divided up.

➤ Ezekiel 47-48: The River of Life and Inheritance

Then in Ezekiel 47 and 48, let me talk about 48 first. Ezekiel 48 goes through the 12 tribes. The original land grant that was given to Abraham, this is called the Royal Land Grant, Genesis 15:18. I don't know if you know how it works or not, but the dimensions of it are given to you throughout the Bible. One side of it goes to Egypt. The other end of that baseline goes to what we commonly call today Baghdad. That's where the hop fest over there, boys and girls, it's running from Egypt to Baghdad. Israel's land is from Egypt to Baghdad, and then it goes northward up to Turkey or Mount Ararat. Now that covers everything that the Muslims have today, and that is Israel's land grant. I don't care who says it, read the book of Galatians who it belongs to, and read the book of Galatians to find out what's going to happen. We've already saw the Gentile nations getting whacked. Those are the nations that are getting whacked. Those are the nations that are already over there. They are going to give up that land. When this thing takes

place, that land grant goes from Egypt to Baghdad or Babylon, and then straight up about 1,200, 1,400 miles up to almost a point up to Mount Ararat in Turkey, which is Persia. You're going to find that the nation of Israel, you're going to find that this thing that we've been talking about is centered around Jerusalem. In the middle of this thing, if I could draw it like this, the middle of that thing is a square about that big. Right smack dab in the middle of that thing is Jerusalem. Around that thing is the temple, which is called the Holy Oblation. Then you've got the prince's portion and the priest's portion, which basically takes the middle section of that land grant. On either side of that land grant, each tribe gets an inheritance. They get a strip of land, that's their inheritance. That is the land grant that was promised to Abraham. I don't even have time to get into all of those things. They're going to take place out in eternity. But I'm telling you that royal land grant was given to them. The Jews don't have it right now. They got Jerusalem by a fingerhold. But when the Lord comes back and he kicks out them nations and he wipes those nations out, that's what this whole thing is about. This whole thing is about that. When he takes those nations out and he restores the nation of Israel, he's going to put the Lord in the middle, on a throne in Jerusalem, David as the prince, the Holy Oblation is going to be around that. Then on both sides, in strips, there's going to be the land given to each tribe. It's all laid out for you in Larkin's Dispensational Truth. It's all laid out for you, exactly the way that it is. Not only does he lay that out, he goes through every little detail within that Holy Oblation that he shows you everything drawn out, laid out that you can understand it and put it in your Bible. Because at some point in your life, maybe not now, but at some point in your life, you need to understand it to understand your Bible. That's Ezekiel 48.

Ezekiel 47. This was Danny's song, "There is a River," made famous by Jimmy Swaggart. There is a river that flows from the throne of God. Here's how it works. Here's how it works. Well, that Holy Oblation's in the middle. In that middle, that is the temple and the throne. A river in the millennium comes out of that throne. It runs down through the altar. It comes down, the Bible says, into the Dead Sea. The Dead Sea is dead right now. Nothing can live in it. Salt content, absolutely incredible. In fact, you can't drown in the Dead Sea. If you jump in a Dead Sea, you float because it's salt. Nothing can live in it. That's where Sodom and Gomorrah were, but that's another message, don't get me into that. That's where God burned it all out, with fire and brimstone, that's why it's dead. During the millennium, that river comes out of the water down there, and it comes down, and the Bible says, it goes into the Dead Sea, and the Dead Sea comes alive. It comes out of the Dead Sea, and it goes down through the desert. This is where Isaiah 35:1 says, "the desert shall bloom like a rose." Right now, it looks like a cat's litter box over there. I don't know what else to tell you. It does. But in that day, it's got water, it's going to come down to the Dead Sea. The Dead Sea is going to come alive. That river is going to go down through the desert, and everything in that desert is going to bloom. It's going to be like the Garden of Eden, you know why? Because that's where the Garden of Eden originally was. Oh, ho, ho, ho, ho, ho, ho. And it goes down into the Mediterranean. The Bible says, wherever the water goes, things come alive, and dead things come alive, and it brings life. You know what it's a picture of? That water is a picture of the Holy Spirit of God.

Now, historically and prophetically, that is exactly what is going to happen. I want you to see the picture. You have the Holy Oblation in the middle of that land grant. You have the tribes divided

out on both sides, and then down through the middle, coming down to the south, that water of life. That river that Danny sang about this morning comes out of that throne, comes down through there. On both sides of that river are trees like the Tree of Life. It comes down into the Dead Sea. The Dead Sea comes alive. Then it turns, it goes out to the Mediterranean, and the whole desert comes into a garden. The Garden of Eden, we're back where we started in Genesis 2 and 3.

Here's what he says in Ezekiel 47:1, because now I'm going to leave you with this. Prophetically, you've got a picture of the Millennial Reign of Christ. In Ezekiel 47, your chapter that talks about the water coming out of the sanctuary. But oh, I want you to see this. Let me read it first. I want to leave you with this. This is probably of all the good things that I've taught you, not because of me or my whatever, because of God in that book. I never take any credit for it. It's as good to me as it is to you, but of all the great things I've taught you about the Bible, not because of my anything I've got, but because of what that book is. This is probably the greatest thing I've ever given you.

Ezekiel 47:1-5

Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down from under the right side of the house, at the south of the altar.

Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward, and led me about the way without unto the utter gate by the way that looketh eastward; and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side.

And when the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the waters were to the ankles.

Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters; the waters were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters; the waters were to the loins.

Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over.

Now that's the great song that Jimmy Swaggart made famous. Yet, Brother Jimmy Swaggart didn't even have a clue what he was singing about. Prophetically, that's true. Prophetically, that's exactly what's going to happen. What I've said two or three times, so you would get the point. But an inspirational application, let me show you something. That water's a picture of the Holy Spirit of God. There's a man here, and he's measuring it. Have you ever measured your spiritual growth? Have you ever stopped and looked at your life and asked yourself, "Are you really progressing the way God wants you to progress?" I'm going to show you how you know to do that. My job is to help you do that. I'll say it again. I'll spend time with any man, any woman in this room that wants to learn the Bible, to get a handle on it. I'll spend whatever time it takes to lay this thing out for you.

But I'm telling you, here's what you got. Remember Ezekiel 48, you got the millennium. Ezekiel 48, somebody gets an inheritance. But I want to show you something. Before you get that inheritance, you got to get through Ezekiel 47. Ezekiel 47, ladies and gentlemen, is the way to your inheritance. God's got an inheritance for you, just like Israel gets one, but the way to that inheritance is through Ezekiel 47. Watch it, watch it. Oh, it's so incredible. You want some way to measure your spiritual growth? You want to measure how you grow? Here it is.

Ezekiel 47:2 says:

Ezekiel 47:2

Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward, and led me about the way without unto the utter gate by the way that looketh eastward; and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side.

You know what? When Jesus Christ hung on the cross and he put that spear aside, John made a great revelation and a great observation when he said water and blood came out. He said that water and blood testified to something, and when you grow into 1st John, the blood testified something, and the water that came out testified something, but that water came out on the right side. Here out of this temple, when the water of life, picture the Spirit of God for you and for me, it comes out of the right side. It comes down through there. Picture the Holy Spirit of God, which comes from Christ, comes from God through the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ. You and I got the Spirit of God in the day of Pentecost because Christ died on the cross. The thing that's significant is death on the cross and that spear in his side, right side, and the water comes out.

Now he says down there in Ezekiel 47:3, there's a man that has a line, and he's measuring something. That water's a picture of the Holy Spirit of God. It says that he brings him through the waters, and the waters were to the ankles. You know what that is? That's a picture right after you get saved. You see, the job of you and for me is to walk in the Spirit. That's what the Bible says. That Spirit's a type of the Word of God. You know what my job is? My job is to get you through that water. It gets you through that water to a place. Where we start is when you get saved is by working with you in the Bible, but coming to church, Thursday night Bible study, working with you one-on-one, having somebody to excite you. When that ankles, that ankles, a picture of your walk with God. Because when you get saved, you get the Spirit of God, but you don't know how to walk in the Spirit of God yet. So you start out your measurement by your walk, and you just start walking with God. You just start walking with Him. That walk suggests learning things about Him. It's like a nice cool autumn afternoon where you just walk down a nice beautiful pathway, and you enjoy, and you don't really get into anything deep, but you just learn through a process of walking. That's what it's like for a young Christian. There's no deep doctrine. Nobody forces all kinds of deep stuff. You just learn. You learn slowly. You learn surely, and you walk.

Then he says again, in Ezekiel 47:3:

Ezekiel 47:3

And when the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the waters were to the ankles.

Ezekiel 47:4

Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters; the waters were to the knees.

You know what? There's only six places in the Bible where the Bible references the knee. Six places in all of the Bible. Every time you find all six of them, it has to do with somebody bending their knee in submission. You see, you get saved, and you start in this new life with Christ, and it's my job, our job to help you. We help you in your walk. We disciple you. We tell you about the Bible. You come to church on Sunday morning. We teach you principles. Hey, I'm not the kind of pastor that just gets up and teaches you things and then lets them hang. I've told you before, and I'll tell you again. That's why I do Thursday night the way that I do it. That's why my door is always open. I'll come to your place. You come to mine. I'll sit down and let you ask me any question about anything in the world. You know why? Because I want to get you into that water past your ankles and get you to your knees because when you get to the knees, then you've turned it all over to Him, and you've come to the point where there's no turning back. No turning back. No turning back. You come to the point when you got water hits your knees that you bow your knee to Him and you say, "Lord, I'm Yours. I'm Yours." The tough time is getting God's people from the ankles to the knees. From the ankles to the knees is the tough time. But once you get them into that Spirit, without waters up to their knees, then the next step he says, Ezekiel 47:4:

Ezekiel 47:4

Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters; the waters were to the loins.

The Bible says in the book of Ephesians, "loins girt about with truth." You see, the ankles is your walk. The knees is your submission. But the loins is your strength. When you progressively get into the Spirit of God, and this, maybe I better say, when the Spirit of God progressively gets in you and brings you through this thing, and your preacher through preaching and teaching and discipleship and working with you, takes you by the hand and walks you into that water. You know, I don't know about you. I don't like first time. Once I get into a swimming pool or water, I'm okay. But I don't like that first step getting in. I try to think everything in the world. I'm the goofiest guy in the world. We ever have somebody, a pool party, somebody else, don't watch me. I'm the goofiest guy in the world. Cold water. I just, I cannot get myself in that first time. I've done stupid things like go into a shower, get wet, turn a shower up gradually cold. Till I get my body all wet and I can jump in like I've already been in. That's stupid. I'll walk around. I'm the kind of walk around. It's cold. I ain't getting in that. You know what? Some of these guys, man, they just dive right in. Not me, man. I got a, ooh, that's cold. And I don't like jumping in. It's all right. You get in and you start walking down. When it gets right about here, it starts going up the middle of your back. Ooh, I don't like that. If for easy, the thing you do is just grab your nose and jump down in the water. The guys that'll do that, it's over in a second. It's like shooting yourself. It's over in a minute. I tell you something. That's the way it ought to be for every child of God. Just jump right in. I know some people are scared to get in it. I know some people are afraid of maybe bad experiences with churches. I know people that are afraid to jump in because they

don't maybe have enough faith. Let me tell you something. The only way now how to say it.
Come on in. The water's fine. But it starts with your ankles. Goes to your knees. Then the water's
up to your thighs, and then that's your strength. Now you're able to walk on your knees.