

Ezekiel 36: 28-38 ‘Blessings of the New Covenant/ Covenant of grace

- We are blind until God opens our eyes to sin.
- Sin is our reality until God releases us from our idolatry for His glory vs.25
- God must recreate us, make us new creatures, resurrection form dead vs.26
- God must put His Spirit in us to follow and obey willingly vs.27
- God’s new covenant promise reverses the effects of the curse of sin
- Given a new heart, a new mind, we are prepared for a new kingdom

I. God’s Constant Personal Presence (36: 28)

- Ezekiel’s language is covenant language of redemptive fullness - not literal
- Church is God’s new redemptive community “**you shall be my people and I will be your God**”
- Foundation & capstone of believers happiness realised in heaven: Rev 21:3,7

II. God’s Promised Constant Presence (36: 29-31)

- The result of God’s presence with his people will be constant blessing: **Vs 29 – see also Jer.31: 12; Zech 9: 17**
- Old Testament: famine was physical as well as spiritual – it spoke of abandonment and disgrace: **Deut 29: 23-29; Amos 8: 11**
- This famine will not be experienced by God’s redeemed community the church – Jesus Christ is the fulfilment of God’s promise: **Jhn 6: 57,58**
- Vs 29 “**I will call for corn & will increase it**” God commands His blessing, he reverses the curse. Plenty comes at God’s call and will continuously flow.

III. A New Heart Response New Covenant Mercies (36: 29-31)

- They will “remember their own ways” that were of their own choosing.
- The work of the Holy Spirit produces in us a right response from a broken heart, a response to forgiveness not to terror: Rom 2: 4; Matt 5: 4; Zech 12:10.

Jonah 1: 11: 16 ‘Into the Deep’

- Jonah’s confession didn’t mean instant forgiveness and reconciliation.
- The storm grew rougher and rougher (1:11) God’s mercy is not given at the expense of His justice. Jesus died on the cross to satisfy God’s justice
- Jonah confessed His sin very sincerely but he still suffered the consequence of sin. He learned personally that the wages if sin is death.

I. Discerning God’s Justice (1:11-12)

- Even though Jonah knew the Lord, he wandered and brought back. There are three outstanding qualities which highlighted a true return to God:
 - 1) He defended the anger of God and accepted the blame: vs. 12c
 - 2) He accepted unquestionably the consequences of his actions: vs. 12a
 - 3) He anticipated the grace of God toward sailors: 12 a

II. Submitting to the Consequence of his sin (1: 13-15a)

- Jonah came to the end of his self-sufficiency and cast himself on the justice of God which also meant he unreservedly cast himself on the mercy of God
- Sailors respond with a new found tenderness of conscience: **vs.13**
- They felt guilty about their sin, and tried to row back but couldn’t: **vs. 13**
- Reluctantly and with a plea to the Lord that they would not be held accountable, they comply to Jonah’s instruction and the result: **15b**
- God’s justice is done. The sailors believe Jonah’s dead. Jonah is cast upon the sovereign grace of God. The sailors are delivered.

III. First Glimmers of Grace (1: 15b-16)

- It takes an act of faith to accept God’s interpretation of your life like Jonah
- It takes a humble heart to submit to his judgements and confess Him holy
- Note how the sailors differed from their first cry (1: 5) now they feared the Lord and sacrificed and made vows to Him (1:16)
- What a large view of God’s grace here, he loves the unlovable, Gentile dogs
- God demonstrated his great love to the sailors in one of his prophets perishing for them, so that they would be saved. Isaiah 43: 2
- Looking forward: God’s Son would suffer and die for rebels and sinners.