

Sermon I: Foundations of the New Birth (ch. 36:22-25)

- The heart of the matter – men have no heart for God (Gen 6: 5)
- God will not be worshipped unless we have a heart to worship Him (Deut 6: 5)
- Israel – religious/ ritualistic, nationally chosen by God as his people – no relationship.
- All -outward trappings, external blessings -no change of heart= increase culpability
- God’s anger burned against them, idolatry, adultery, apostasy from the living God.
- God’s threats to them don’t stop their rebellion only intensify & aggravate it.
- Yet, God speaks of true deliverance in the face of their whoredom & rebellion. Why?

I. For the Glory and Holiness of God’s Name (36: 22-24)

- Ch. 20 – climax: God’s anger burns against Israel for her apostasy and adultery
- God says repeatedly, “I should have destroyed you Israel” vs 6-8; 10-13, 15-16, 18-21
- They prostituted themselves- now they wanted God: 20: 31- their sin is so vile: 17b
- God’s hatred of sin is well documented in Scripture- the sin of his people: Isa 1: 5, 6
- Why does God restrain His anger & wrath? Vs 9, 14, 22, His covenant name & glory
- Would God allow His name to be dishonoured, defamed in the world?
- God delivrd Israel=would their faithlessness break His covenant faithfulness? **Vs22**
- Though Israel is a faithless whore, the holy God will uphold His holy name
- He will rescue them & bring them back into a land that they deserve 2 b cut off from
- When Israel returned from Babylon, forsook their idols this was partially fulfilled
- Why did God do this? Since God cannot stand the sight of sin. Hab 1:13
- How does v 23 answer this question? **And the nations will know that I am - LORD, declares - Lord GOD, when through u I vindicate my holiness before their eyes.**
- God announces to His people I will do this great work for my own glory
- Key reason for God showing mercy 2 Israel= uphold -sanctity/holiness of His name

- Throughout the formula “will know that I am the Lord” found throughout Ezekiel
 - Through God’s mercy on Israel, He will teach the nations to hallow his Name
- 2 God Himself will Cleanse His People (vs. 25)**
- Restoration of God’s reputation first requires the external renovation of His people
 - God’s actions are naturally ordered: a gathering vs.24 precede cleansing (25)
 - Purification “**clean water**” echoes God’s earlier cleansing of His people: **Ezek 16: 4**
 - Clear reference to cleansing the law of Moses: **Numb 19:13**
 - **God’s point = clear → worship of Idols, any form of idolatry is death**
 - Sin is death=root idolatry ‘spiritual death’: God’s verdict on world: Rom 3: 10, 11;
Rom 5: 12
 - The spiritually dead – such as Israel are doomed, helpless, hopeless – Ps. 49: 7
 - Sinners are hopeless before God! Hope alone is found in - New Covenant “I Will”
 - This work that only God Himself will do! His people can claim no glory!
 - How will God do this? His promise of the Messiah who will serve Him faithfully
 - Jesus the Messiah speaking to Nicodemus expounds Ezek 36→ John 3: 5
 - From Jehovah’s own mouth the Gospel is spoken “I will sprinkle clean water on you”
 - If he doesn’t do it, we must forever be damned under His eternal wrath
 - New Testament tells us how Messiah Jesus absorbs the wrath of God away: Heb 9: 13
 - This is God’s righteous way of dealing with our sin, our idolatry
 - Here are two cleansing for the lost sinner: blood of Christ & work of the Holy Spirit
 - God does not attempt cleansing but accomplishes it.
 - Clean water is provided, it must be sprinkled by another hand if we are to be cleansed
 - Every tree that is not planted by my Heavenly Father will be uprooted on the last day