

Open My Eyes

Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your Law. – Psalm 119:18

Through the Bible in a year reading guide – Abiding Savior Free Lutheran Church

November – Week 46

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We read God's Word:

To know Him better

To love Him more

To walk in His ways

To be conformed to the image of His Son

This week's reading: Ezekiel continues to prophecy against Jerusalem. **God** said Jerusalem is "at the center of the nations" (5:5). This statement was made long before Lief Erikson and Christopher Columbus set foot in the Americas. On a map with the International Date Line on each side (east and west), and pushing the land masses together, we see that 5:5 is amazingly accurate! **In** 5:7 God says, not only have they not obeyed His statutes and ordinances, but they were lawless even by the standards of other nations. **In** chap. 8 God brings Ezekiel in visions to Jerusalem and shows him a series of horrible sins, saying, "you will see still greater abominations". **In** 9:1-6 we have another example of God delivering the righteous before wrath. **The** sin was so great in Jerusalem that God had to leave (chapters 10-11), but not before He gave a promise of regathering Israel and giving them a new spirit and a new heart (11:17-20). **False** prophets (chap. 13) were seeing falsehood and lying divination, and said, "Yahweh declares" when He had not sent them; yet they "hope for the fulfillment of the word". If they were true prophets, hope was not necessary, because God's Word never fails. **The** wickedness of Jerusalem was so great that God said even if Noah, Daniel, and Job were there, they would be spared for their own righteousness, but they would not be able to deliver the city (14:13-21). Nothing less than the sacrificial death of Jesus is enough to save others. **Please** do not misunderstand the sexual language and imagery in Ezekiel. God is communicating His hurt as the "jilted husband"; His "wife" (Israel) is unfaithful by worshiping idols. It hurt (crushed, broke) God's heart (6:9). How awful it is to put anything on the same level as (or higher than) God. Chap. 16 graphically contrasts God's faithfulness to the wickedness of Israel and Judah. The splendor of Israel's "golden years" was Yahweh's splendor (16:14). **Do** not be fooled by some people's agenda in using 16:49 to undermine the truth of Sodom's sexual perversion; yes, the things in verse 49 are true, but so are the "abominations" in v.50 (described in Gen. 19, and is, therefore, where we get the term "sodomy".) As horribly as God has been treated in chapter 16, He promises a New Covenant in which His love endures to restoration and forgiveness (60-63). **God** addresses the idea of "generational sins" (chap. 18). Each person is responsible for their own sins and choices (compare to Deut. 24:16). **Contrasting** God's love and faithfulness to Israel's disobedience (chap. 20) includes an interesting statement, "And I also gave them statutes that were not good and ordinances by which they could not live;" (20:25) - what does that mean? Jesus gives us a good example in Matt. 19:3-9 where He makes it clear that, God gave a law regarding divorce, but, it was not His will, it was because of the hardness of their hearts. God regulated it (and slavery and other issues). A difficult "visual aid" is the loss of "the delight of your eyes", Ezekiel's wife (24:15).

Insights from the Original Biblical Languages (Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic):

Most English translations use "LORD" to indicate when the name "Yahweh" (יהוה) is in the Hebrew text. "Lord GOD" is used when the Hebrew word "Lord" (אֲדֹנָי "Adonai", "ah-dough-nigh") is used with "Yahweh" (אֲדֹנָי יְהוה - Adonai Yahweh); so "GOD" also signifies "Yahweh". The Masoretes also adjusted the vowels in Yahweh to reflect this. **Most** versions say God made Ezekiel "a sign" (12:6,11). The common word for "sign" is אֹת ("ot"), but in these verses the Hebrew word is מֹפֶת ("moe-fate"), a "wonder". (One translation, the LSB, appropriately says, "I have set you as a wondrous sign".) **Another** interesting word is in 20:46 and 21:2; some versions say, "speak" or "preach". The Hebrew word is נָטַף ("nah-tahf") "cause to drip". Oholah means "Her Tent". Oholibah means "My tent (is) in her" (23:4).

How has God revealed Himself in this week's reading? What has He shown me this week?

God disciplines so His people would not stray from Him, nor defile themselves with their transgressions, that they will be His people, and He will be their God (14:10-11,23). He does not take pleasure in the death of the wicked; but God's desire is that the wicked would turn from their ways and live (18:22,32). He looks for a man in the gap (22:30).