

Life-Study of Ezekiel Review – Section 3

God's Recovery by Life

The third section of Ezekiel is concerned with God's recovery of His people by life. After carrying out His judgment, God comes in to recover. Whereas God's judgment is by fire, His recovery is by life.

God's judgment is always with a purpose, and God never executes His judgment without a purpose. **The purpose of God's judgment is to bring in recovery.** In His recovery by life, the first thing the Lord does is to **set the watchman**. A watchman is one who has been commissioned by God to give His people a warning, to sound the trumpet to cause God's people to turn to Him and repent. After setting the watchman, **God Himself came in to be the Shepherd**. How is it possible for us to be here in the church life? This is not of us but absolutely of Him. We are here because as the Shepherd He sought and searched for us. Ezekiel prophesied that as the Shepherd the Lord would **bring His people, His sheep out of the nations and back to their own land**. The Lord promised to bring His people back not only to their own land but also **to the high mountains**. This indicates that the Lord Jesus brings us back to the experience of the resurrected and ascended Christ. The Lord also said that He would bring His people back **to the rivers**. These rivers signify the life-giving Spirit, the living water of the Spirit. Furthermore, the Lord would **feed His flock** by the rivers and the **good and fat pasture**. In the meetings, we have the sense that we are by the rivers and in the pasture, that we are drinking and eating. Whenever the Lord feeds us, shepherds us, and gives us something to drink, He also **gives us rest**. As the Shepherd the Lord will **bind up** that which was broken and heal that which was sick. Praise the Lord that while we are eating, drinking, and resting, we are under His binding, strengthening, and healing.

When we have experienced the Lord's recovery by life—that is, when we have been brought back to the mountains, the rivers, and the pasture and have experienced rest and healing—there can be **righteous judgments** among us. Only the Lord who shepherds us, supplies us, and heals us can make such judgments. Only after He gives us the life supply, binds up our wounds, and heals us can all the unjust things among us be cleared away.

As our Shepherd Christ takes care of us, including all our problems and responsibilities. He takes care of us not only in spiritual things but in all things related to our human needs. Since the Lord Jesus is our Shepherd taking care of us, we should not worry about our problems or about our living. Instead, we need to learn to **put our trust in Him**.

When the Lord Jesus comes as the Shepherd, He comes also as the King. The issue of the Lord's caring for us as our Shepherd is that **we obey Him as our King** and come under His kingship. As we experience the Lord's shepherding and remain under His kingship, we enjoy His peace and are no longer subject to spiritual troubles and disturbances.

The Outward and Inward Recovery by Life

While we are being recovered, we have to judge our old man again and again. This is the lesson of judging Edom. The genuine recovery of the Lord is not simply a matter of repenting, turning to the Lord, and enjoying the blessing of the Lord. There also needs to be a change in our life and nature. In His recovery, **God needs to touch our heart and our spirit and thereby touch our life directly and change us in life and nature**. Therefore, we need both the outward recovery described in chapter 34 and the inward recovery described in chapter 36.

In the Lord's recovery there are two aspects: the **outward and the inward aspect**. Suppose that you have fallen away from Christ, the church life, and the fellowship with the saints. But one day the Lord seeks you out and brings you back to Himself, the church life, and the fellowship with

the saints; this is the outward recovery. However, at the same time the Lord does an inward work.

The inward recovery of life is carried out by God for the sake of **His name** and **returns us** to Christ as our land. The Lord not only brings us back to the enjoyment of Christ, He also **washes us with clean water**. The Lord washes us from **filthiness and from idols**. Filthiness includes all kinds of sinful things, unjust things, unrighteous things, and dark things. After this cleansing, the Lord gives us a **new heart and a new spirit** that we may love the Lord and receive Him.

The Dry Bones, the Two Sticks, and the Army

Before God came in to renew us and regenerate us, we were like dead and dry bones. In the sight of God, when we were fallen, either as a sinner or as a backslidden believer, we were dead and buried in a grave. Because we were dead and dry, we were also scattered. Ezekiel 37 shows us that **not only unbelieving sinners need to be delivered from their graves, but even many brothers and sisters need to be revived and delivered from death and from their graves.**

Praise the Lord that He did not leave us in our situation but came in to rescue us! In Ezekiel 37, the Lord did not come in directly to be our Shepherd, but He came in through the prophesying of His word. When Ezekiel prophesied, he spoke something for God, and God followed him. As Ezekiel was prophesying, God was blowing upon the dry bones, sending the **wind**, the **breath**, and the **Spirit**.

In verses 16 and 17, the two dead sticks symbolize the southern kingdom (Judah) and the northern kingdom (Israel). The way the Lord made these dead sticks one is the way of life. The sticks becoming one is the dwelling place of God. Although we come from many different backgrounds, **we are one**. We are not one by gifts or teachings but by life. Now we are an army fighting the battle and we are a dwelling place for the Lord.

(Life-Study of Ezekiel – Messages 16 to 18)