

References for *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook*

AUGUST 7-13

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD | EZEKIEL 28-31

“Jehovah Rewarded a Pagan Nation”

(Ezekiel 29:18) “Son of man, King Neb·u·chad·nez·zar of Babylon made his army labor greatly against Tyre. Every head became bald, and every shoulder was rubbed bare. But he and his army received no wages for the labor he expended on Tyre.

it-2 1136 ¶4 Tyre

Destruction of City. In the course of Nebuchadnezzar's long siege against Tyre, the heads of his soldiers were “made bald” from the chafing of their helmets, and their shoulders were “rubbed bare” from carrying materials used in the construction of siegeworks. Since Nebuchadnezzar received no “wages” for serving as His instrument in executing judgment upon Tyre, Jehovah promised to compensate him with the wealth of Egypt. (Eze 29:17-20) According to the Jewish historian Josephus, the siege lasted 13 years (*Against Apion*, I, 156 [21]), and it cost the Babylonians a great deal. Secular history does not record exactly how thorough or effective Nebuchadnezzar's efforts were. But the loss in lives and property to the Tyrians must have been great.—Eze 26:7-12.

(Ezekiel 29:19) “Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says, ‘Here I am giving the land of Egypt to King Neb·u·chad·nez·zar of Babylon, and he will carry off its wealth and take much spoil and plunder from it; and it will become wages for his army.’

it-1 698 ¶5 Egypt, Egyptian

One Babylonian text, dated to Nebuchadnezzar's 37th year (588 B.C.E.), has been found that mentions a campaign against Egypt. Whether it relates to the original conquest or merely to a subsequent military action cannot be said. At any rate, Nebuchadnezzar received Egypt's wealth as his pay for military service rendered in Jehovah's execution of judgment against Tyre, an opposer of God's people.—Eze 29:18-20; 30:10-12.

(Ezekiel 29:20) “‘As compensation for his labor against her, I will give him the land of Egypt be-

cause they acted for me,’ declares the Sovereign Lord Jehovah.

g86 11/8 27 ¶4-5

Must All Taxes Be Paid?

To answer this, we might draw a parallel with the conduct of the Creator himself in paying a debt to a secular government for services rendered. Righteous indignation prompted Jehovah to decree the destruction of the ancient city of Tyre. In the accomplishment of this deed, God used the military might of Babylon under their emperor Nebuchadnezzar. Although Babylon was victorious, the engagement was costly. Jehovah thus felt that they should be paid for services rendered. His words appear at Ezekiel 29:18, 19: “Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar himself, the king of Babylon, made his military force perform a great service against Tyre. . . . But as for wages, there proved to be none for him and his military force from Tyre for the service that he had performed against her. Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said, ‘Here I am giving to Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon the land of Egypt, and he must carry off its wealth and make a big spoil of it and do a great deal of plundering of it; and it must become wages for his military force.’”

Bible students know that Nebuchadnezzar was a haughty, self-centered, pagan monarch. Babylon and its armies were known for their harsh treatment of captives. Jehovah did not approve of such conduct, yet to him a debt was a debt, and he paid in full.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

(Ezekiel 28:12-19) “Son of man, sing a dirge concerning the king of Tyre, and tell him, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says: “You were the model of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. ¹³ You were in E'den, the garden of God. You were adorned with every precious stone—Ruby, topaz, and jasper; chrysolite, onyx, and jade; sapphire, turquoise, and emerald; And their settings and mountings were made of gold. They were prepared on the day you were created. ¹⁴ I assigned you as the anointed covering cherub. You were on the holy mountain of God, and you walked about among fiery stones. ¹⁵ You were faultless in your ways from

the day you were created Until unrighteousness was found in you. ¹⁶ Because of your abundant trade, You became filled with violence, and you began to sin. So I will cast you out as profane from the mountain of God and destroy you, O covering cherub, away from the stones of fire. ¹⁷ Your heart became haughty because of your beauty. You corrupted your wisdom because of your own glorious splendor. I will throw you down to the earth. I will make you a spectacle before kings. ¹⁸ Because of your great guilt and your dishonest trading, you have profaned your sanctuaries. I will cause a fire to break out in your midst, and it will consume you. I will reduce you to ashes on the earth before all those looking at you. ¹⁹ All who knew you among the peoples will stare at you in amazement. Your end will be sudden and terrible, And you will cease to exist for all time.”’”

it-2 604 ¶4-5

Perfection

The first sinner and the king of Tyre. Human sin and imperfection were, of course, preceded by sin and imperfection in the spirit realm, as Jesus’ words at John 8:44 and the account in chapter 3 of Genesis reveal. The dirge recorded at Ezekiel 28:12-19, though directed to the human “king of Tyre,” evidently parallels the course taken by the spirit son of God who first sinned. The pride of “the king of Tyre,” his making himself ‘a god,’ his being called a “cherub,” and the reference to “Eden, the garden of God,” certainly correspond to Biblical information concerning Satan the Devil, who became puffed up with pride, is linked to the serpent in Eden, and is called “the god of this system of things.”—1Ti 3:6; Ge 3:1-5, 14, 15; Re 12:9; 2Co 4:4.

The anonymous king of Tyre, residing in the city claiming to be “perfect in prettiness,” was himself “full of wisdom and perfect [adjective related to Heb. *ka·lal’*] in beauty,” and “faultless [Heb., *ta·mim’*]” in his ways from his creation onward until unrighteousness was found in him. (Eze 27:3; 28:12, 15) The first or direct application of the dirge in Ezekiel may be to the line of Tyrian rulers rather than to any one specific king. (Compare the prophecy directed against the anonymous “king of Babylon” at Isa 14:4-20.) In that case, the reference may be to the early course of friendship and cooperation followed by the Tyrian rulership during the reigns of Kings David and Solomon, when Tyre even contributed toward the building of Jehovah’s tem-

ple on Mount Moriah. At first, therefore, there was no fault to be found in the official Tyrian attitude toward Jehovah’s people Israel. (1Ki 5:1-18; 9:10, 11, 14; 2Ch 2:3-16) Later kings, however, departed from this “faultless” course, and Tyre came in for condemnation by God’s prophets Joel and Amos, as well as Ezekiel. (Joe 3:4-8; Am 1:9, 10) Aside from the evident similarity of the course of “the king of Tyre” with that of God’s principal Adversary, the prophecy illustrates again how “perfection” and “faultlessness” can be used in limited senses.

(Ezekiel 30:13, 14) “This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says: ‘I will also destroy the disgusting idols and bring an end to the worthless gods of Noph. There will no longer be a prince from the land of Egypt, and I will put fear in the land of Egypt. ¹⁴ I will desolate Path’ros and set a fire in Zo’an and execute judgment on No.

w03 7/1 32 ¶1-3

What Happened to Them?

NOPH and No are Biblical names for Egypt’s once famous capitals of Memphis and Thebes. Noph (Memphis) was some 14 miles [23 km] south of Cairo, on the west side of the Nile River. In time, however, Memphis lost its status as Egypt’s capital. By the turn of the 15th century B.C.E., Egypt had a new capital, No (Thebes), located about 300 miles [500 km] south of Memphis. Among the many temple ruins of Thebes is that of Karnak, considered to be the largest structure ever built with columns. Thebes and its Karnak temple were dedicated to the worship of Amon, the chief god of the Egyptians.

What did Bible prophecy foretell regarding Memphis and Thebes? Judgment was pronounced against Egypt’s Pharaoh and its gods, especially the chief god, “Amon from No.” (Jeremiah 46:25, 26) The crowd of worshipers who flocked there would be “cut off.” (Ezekiel 30:14, 15) And so it turned out. All that is left of Amon’s worship are temple ruins. The modern town of Luxor is situated on part of the site of ancient Thebes, and other small villages exist among its ruins.

As for Memphis, little remains except for its cemeteries. Bible scholar Louis Golding says: “For century upon century the Arab conquerors of Egypt used the titanic ruins of Memphis as a quarry for the building of their capital [Cairo] on the opposite side of the river. So well have the Nile and the Arab builders between them done their work that for miles upon miles within the circuit of the ancient

city not a stone protrudes above the black soil.” Truly, as foretold in the Bible, Memphis became “a mere object of astonishment . . . without an inhabitant.” —Jeremiah 46:19.

Bible Reading

(Ezekiel 29:1-12) In the tenth year, in the tenth month, on the 12th day of the month, the word of Jehovah came to me, saying: ² “Son of man, turn your face toward Phar’aoth king of Egypt, and prophesy against him and against all Egypt. ³ Speak these words: ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says: “Here I am against you, Phar’aoth king of Egypt, The great sea monster lying among the streams of his Nile, Who has said, ‘My Nile River belongs to me. I made it for myself.’ ⁴ But I will put hooks in your jaws and cause the fish of your Nile to cling to your scales. I will bring you up out of your Nile along with all the fish of the Nile that cling to your scales. ⁵ I will abandon you in the desert, you and all the fish of your Nile. You will fall on the open field, and you will not be gathered up nor be collected together. I will give you as food to the wild beasts of the earth and the birds of the sky. ⁶ Then all the inhabitants of Egypt will have to know that I am Jehovah, For they were no more support to the house of Israel than a piece of straw. ⁷ When they grasped your hand, you were crushed, And you caused them to tear their shoulder. When they supported themselves on you, you were broken, And you caused their legs to wobble.” ⁸ “‘Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says: “Here I am bringing a sword upon you, and I will cut off from you both man and beast. ⁹ The land of Egypt will become a desolate and devastated place; and they will have to know that I am Jehovah, for you have said, ‘The Nile River belongs to me; I am the one who made it.’ ¹⁰ So I am against you and against your Nile, and I will make the land of Egypt devastated and dry, a desolate wasteland, from Mig’dol to Sy-e’ne to the boundary of E-thi-o’pi-a. ¹¹ Neither man nor livestock will pass through it on foot, and it will not be inhabited for 40 years. ¹² I will make the land of Egypt the most desolate of lands, and its cities will be the most desolate of cities for 40 years; and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them among the lands.”

AUGUST 14-20

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD | EZEKIEL 32-34

“The Watchman’s Heavy Responsibility”

(Ezekiel 33:7) “As for you, son of man, I have appointed you as a watchman to the house of Israel; and when you hear a word from my mouth you must warn them from me.

it-2 1172 ¶12

Watchman

Figurative Use. Jehovah raised up prophets who served as figurative watchmen to the nation of Israel (Jer 6:17), and they, in turn, sometimes spoke of watchmen in a symbolic way. (Isa 21:6, 8; 52:8; 62:6; Ho 9:8) These prophet-watchmen had the responsibility to warn the wicked of impending destruction, and if they failed to do so, they were held accountable. Of course, if the people were unresponsive and failed to heed the warning, their blood was upon themselves. (Eze 3:17-21; 33:1-9) An unfaithful prophet was about as worthless as a blind watchman or a voiceless dog.—Isa 56:10.

(Ezekiel 33:8, 9) When I say to someone wicked, ‘Wicked one, you will surely die!’ but you do not speak out to warn the wicked one to change his course, he will die as a wicked man because of his own error, but I will ask his blood back from you. ⁹ But if you warn someone wicked to turn back from his way and he refuses to change his course, he will die for his error, but you will certainly save your own life.

w88 1/1 28 ¶13

Keep On Preaching the Kingdom

Avoiding Bloodguilt

¹³ The responsibility of Jehovah’s dedicated Witnesses to warn people of God’s coming judgment can be compared to that of Ezekiel in his time. He was designated a watchman to the house of Israel. His assignment was to warn the Israelites that execution was coming upon them if they did not turn away from their bad ways. If he as a watchman failed to sound the warning, execution would still come upon the wicked people, but their blood would be upon the head of the negligent watchman. In this Jehovah shows his attitude toward executing judgment: “I take delight, not in the death of the wicked one, but in that someone wicked turns back from his way and actually keeps living. Turn back, turn back from your bad ways, for why is it that you should die, O house of Israel?”—Ezekiel 33:1-11.

(Ezekiel 33:11) Tell them, “As surely as I am alive,” declares the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, “I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that someone wicked changes his way and keeps living. Turn back, turn back from your bad ways, for why should you die, O house of Israel?”’

(Ezekiel 33:14-16) “‘And when I say to the wicked one: “You will surely die,” and he turns away from his sin and does what is just and righteous,¹⁵ and the wicked one returns what was taken in pledge and pays back what was taken by robbery, and he walks in the statutes of life by not doing what is wrong, he will surely keep living. He will not die.¹⁶ None of the sins he committed will be held against him. For doing what is just and righteous, he will surely keep living.’

w12 3/15 15 ¶3

Maintain Your Sense of Urgency

WHY IS OUR PREACHING URGENT?

³ When you consider what stands to be gained or lost as a result of our preaching, you probably feel an urgent need to speak to others about the good news. (Rom. 10:13, 14) God’s Word says: “When I say to the wicked one: ‘You will positively die,’ and he actually turns back from his sin and carries on justice and righteousness, . . . he will positively keep living. He will not die. None of his sins with which he has sinned will be remembered against him.” (Ezek. 33:14-16) Indeed, the Bible tells those who teach the Kingdom message: “You will save both yourself and those who listen to you.”—1 Tim. 4:16; Ezek. 3:17-21.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

(Ezekiel 33:32, 33) Look! You are to them like a romantic love song, sung with a beautiful voice and skillfully played on a stringed instrument. They will hear your words, but no one will act on them.³³ And when it comes true—and it will come true—they will have to know that a prophet has been among them.”

w91 3/15 17 ¶16-17

Keep Pace With Jehovah’s Celestial Chariot

Not Deterred by Indifference

¹⁶ Ezekiel also set a fine example by being obedient and not allowing himself to be deterred by indifference or ridicule. Similarly, by keeping up with the development of the pure language, we are attuned to the direction taken by the royal Chariot Rider. Thus we are equipped to respond to his commands,

strengthened to be undeterred by the indifference or ridicule of those to whom we speak Jehovah’s judgment message. As with Ezekiel, God has forewarned us that some people would actively oppose, being hardheaded and hardhearted. Others would not hear because they do not want to listen to Jehovah. (Ezekiel 3:7-9) Still others would be hypocrites, as Ezekiel 33:31, 32 states: “They will come in to you, like the coming in of people, and sit before you as my people; and they will certainly hear your words but these they will not do, for with their mouth they are expressing lustful desires and after their unjust gain is where their heart is going. And, look! you are to them like a song of sensuous loves, like one with a pretty voice and playing a stringed instrument well. And they will certainly hear your words, but there are none doing them.”

¹⁷ What would be the outcome? Verse 33 adds: “And when it comes true—look! it must come true—they will also have to know that a prophet himself had proved to be in the midst of them.” Those words reveal that Ezekiel did not give up because of lack of response. The apathy of others did not make him apathetic. Whether people listened or not, he obeyed God and fulfilled his commission.

(Ezekiel 34:23) I will raise up one shepherd over them, my servant David, and he will feed them. He himself will feed them and become their shepherd.

w07 4/1 26 ¶3

Humbly Submitting to Loving Shepherds

³ The prophecy of Isaiah 40:10, 11 emphasizes the tenderness with which Jehovah shepherds his people. (Psalm 23:1-6) During his earthly ministry, Jesus too showed tender concern for his disciples and for people in general. (Matthew 11:28-30; Mark 6:34) Both Jehovah and Jesus deplored the ruthlessness of the shepherds, or leaders, of Israel, who shamelessly neglected and exploited their flocks. (Ezekiel 34:2-10; Matthew 23:3, 4, 15) Jehovah promised: “I will save my sheep, and they will no longer become something for plunder; and I will judge between a sheep and a sheep. And I will raise up over them one shepherd, and he must feed them, even my servant David. He himself will feed them, and he himself will become their shepherd.” (Ezekiel 34:22, 23) In this time of the end, Jesus Christ, the Greater David, is the “one shepherd” whom Jehovah has appointed over all His servants on earth, both the spirit-anointed Christians and the “other sheep.” —John 10:16.

Bible Reading

(Ezekiel 32:1-16) And in the 12th year, in the 12th month, on the first day of the month, the word of Jehovah again came to me, saying: ² “Son of man, sing a dirge concerning Pharaoh king of Egypt, and say to him, ‘You were like a strong young lion of the nations, But you have been silenced. You were like a sea monster, thrashing about in your rivers, Muddying the waters with your feet and fouling the rivers.’ ³ This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says: ‘By means of an assembly of many nations I will cast my net over you, And they will haul you up in my dragnet. ⁴ I will abandon you on the land; I will cast you onto the open field. I will cause all the birds of the sky to settle on you, And I will satisfy the wild beasts of the whole earth with you. ⁵ I will cast your flesh on the mountains And fill the valleys with your remains. ⁶ I will drench the land with your gushing blood up to the mountains, And it will fill the streams.’ ⁷ ‘And when you are extinguished I will cover the heavens and darken their stars. I will cover the sun with clouds, And the moon will not give its light. ⁸ I will darken all the shining luminaries in the heavens because of you, And I will cover your land with darkness,’ declares the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. ⁹ ‘I will distress the hearts of many peoples when I lead your captives to other nations, To lands that you have not known. ¹⁰ I will cause many peoples to be awestruck, And their kings will shudder in horror over you when I brandish my sword before them. They will tremble continually, each fearing for his life, On the day of your downfall.’ ¹¹ For this is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says: ‘The sword of the king of Babylon will come upon you. ¹² I will cause your hordes to fall by the swords of mighty warriors, The most ruthless of the nations, all of them. They will bring down the pride of Egypt, and all her hordes will be annihilated. ¹³ I will destroy all her livestock beside her abundant waters, And no foot of a human or hoof of the livestock will muddy them again.’ ¹⁴ ‘At that time I will clear up their waters, And I will make their rivers flow like oil,’ declares the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. ¹⁵ ‘When I make Egypt a desolate wasteland, a land stripped of all that filled it, When I strike down all the inhabitants in it, They will have to know that I am Jehovah. ¹⁶ This is a dirge, and people will certainly chant it; The daughters of the nations will chant it. They

will chant it over Egypt and over all its hordes,’ declares the Sovereign Lord Jehovah.”

AUGUST 21-27

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD | EZEKIEL 35-38

“Gog of Magog Will Soon Be Destroyed”

(Ezekiel 38:2) “Son of man, set your face against Gog of the land of Ma’gog, the head chieftain of Me’shech and Tu’bal, and prophesy against him.

w15 5/15 29-30

Questions From Readers

Who, then, is Gog of Magog? To answer that question, we need to search the Scriptures to find out who attacks God’s people. The Bible speaks not only of the attack by ‘Gog of Magog’ but also of the attack by “the king of the north” and of the attack by “the kings of the earth.” (Ezek. 38:2, 10-13; Dan. 11: 40, 44, 45; Rev. 17:14; 19:19) Do these represent separate attacks? Not likely. The Bible is no doubt referring to the same attack under different names. Why can we draw that conclusion? Because the Scriptures tell us that all the nations of the earth will be involved in this final attack that prompts the war of Armageddon.—Rev. 16:14, 16.

When we compare all these Scriptural references about the final attack on God’s people, it becomes evident that the name Gog of Magog refers, not to Satan, but to a coalition of nations. Will this coalition be led by the figurative “king of the north”? We cannot say with any certainty. But this thought does seem to be in harmony with what Jehovah says about Gog: “You will come from your place, from the remotest parts of the *north*, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great assembly, a vast army.”—Ezek. 38:6, 15.

(Ezekiel 38:14-16) “So prophesy, son of man, and say to Gog, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says: “On that day when my people Israel are dwelling in security, will you not know it? ¹⁵ You will come from your place, from the remotest parts of the north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great assembly, a vast army. ¹⁶ Like clouds covering the land, you will come against my people Israel. In the final part of the days I will bring you against my land so that the nations may know me when I sanctify myself through you before their eyes, O Gog.”’

w12 9/15 5-6 ¶8-9

How This World Will Come to an End

⁸ After false religion has been destroyed, God's servants will still be found "dwelling in security" and "without wall." (Ezek. 38:11, 14) What will happen to this seemingly defenseless group of people who continue to worship Jehovah? It appears that they will become the object of an all-out assault by "many peoples." God's Word describes that development as the attack by "Gog of the land of Magog." (**Read Ezekiel 38:2, 15, 16.**) How should we view that attack?

⁹ Knowing in advance about this attack on God's people does not make us overly anxious. Rather, our main concern is, not our own salvation, but the sanctification of Jehovah's name and the vindication of his sovereignty. In fact, Jehovah declared more than 60 times: "You will have to know that I am Jehovah." (Ezek. 6:7; see footnote.) Hence, we look forward with intense interest to the fulfillment of that outstanding aspect of Ezekiel's prophecy, trusting that "Jehovah knows how to deliver people of godly devotion out of trial." (2 Pet. 2:9) Meanwhile, we want to use every opportunity to strengthen our faith so that we will be able to keep our integrity to Jehovah no matter what tests we may face. What should we do? We should pray, study God's Word and meditate on it, and share the Kingdom message with others. By doing so, we keep our hope of everlasting life firm, like "an anchor."—Heb. 6:19; Ps. 25:21.

(Ezekiel 38:21-23) "'I will call for a sword against him on all my mountains,' declares the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. 'Every man's sword will be against his own brother. ²² I will bring my judgment against him with pestilence and bloodshed; and I will rain down a torrential downpour and hailstones and fire and sulfur on him and on his troops and on the many peoples with him. ²³ And I will certainly magnify myself and sanctify myself and make myself known before the eyes of many nations; and they will have to know that I am Jehovah.'

w14 11/15 27 ¶16

"Now You Are God's People"

¹⁶ After the destruction of Babylon the Great, there will be an all-out assault on Jehovah's people, and at that time we will need to be under the protection that Jehovah will provide for his servants. Since this attack will trigger the final part of the "great tribulation," it is Jehovah himself who will set the stage

and choose the moment for this showdown. (Matt. 24:21; Ezek. 38:2-4) At that time, Gog will attack "a people regathered from the nations," Jehovah's people. (Ezek. 38:10-12) That attack will be the signal for the execution of Jehovah's judgments against Gog and his hordes. Jehovah will magnify his sovereignty and sanctify his name, for he says: "I will certainly . . . make myself known before the eyes of many nations; and they will have to know that I am Jehovah."—Ezek. 38:18-23.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

(Ezekiel 36:20, 21) But when they came to those nations, people profaned my holy name by saying about them, 'These are the people of Jehovah, but they had to leave his land.' ²¹ So I will show concern for my holy name, which the house of Israel profaned among the nations where they have gone."

w02 6/15 20 ¶12

Learn and Teach Christian Morality

¹² The apostle highlighted a prime reason for learning and then applying the morality that you find in the Bible. The Jews' misconduct reflected on Jehovah: "You, who take pride in law, do you by your transgressing of the Law dishonor God? For 'the name of God is being blasphemed on account of you people among the nations.'" (Romans 2:23, 24) It is equally true now that if we ignore Christian morality, we dishonor its Source. Conversely, if we hold firmly to God's standards, it reflects well on him, honoring him. (Isaiah 52:5; Ezekiel 36:20) Your being aware of this can strengthen your resolve if you face temptations or situations where ignoring Christian morality might seem the easiest or most convenient way to act. Moreover, Paul's words teach us something else. Beyond being personally aware that your conduct reflects on God, as you teach others, help them to see that how they apply the moral standards that they are learning will reflect on Jehovah. It is not simply that Christian morality promotes contentment and protects one's health. It also reflects on the One who provided and encourages that morality.—Psalm 74:10; James 3:17.

(Ezekiel 36:33-36) "This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says: 'In the day that I cleanse you from all your guilt, I will cause the cities to be inhabited and the ruins to be rebuilt. ³⁴ The desolate land that was lying desolate for everyone passing by to see will be cultivated. ³⁵ And people will say: "The desolate land has become like the garden of E'den, and the cities that were in

ruins and desolate and torn down are now fortified and inhabited.” ³⁶ And the nations that are left remaining around you will have to know that I myself, Jehovah, have built what was torn down, and I have planted what was desolate. I myself, Jehovah, have spoken, and I have done it.’

w88 9/15 24 ¶11

“They Will Have to Know That I Am Jehovah”

¹¹ After a remnant returned to Judah, that desolated land was transformed into a fruitful “garden of Eden.” (Read *Ezekiel 36:33-36*.) Similarly, since 1919 Jehovah has transformed the once desolate estate of the anointed remnant into a fruitful spiritual paradise, now shared with the “great crowd.” Since this spiritual paradise has been populated with holy people, let each dedicated Christian work to keep it clean.—*Ezekiel 36:37, 38*.

Bible Reading

(Ezekiel 35:1-15) The word of Jehovah again came to me, saying: ² “Son of man, turn your face toward the mountainous region of Se’ir, and prophesy against it. ³ Say to it, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says: “Here I am against you, O mountainous region of Se’ir, and I will stretch out my hand against you and make you a desolate wasteland. ⁴ I will turn your cities into ruins, and you will become a desolate wasteland; and you will have to know that I am Jehovah. ⁵ For you showed unrelenting hostility, and you gave the Israelites over to the sword at the time of their disaster, at the time of their final punishment.”’ ⁶ “‘Therefore as surely as I am alive,’ declares the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, ‘I will prepare you for bloodshed, and bloodshed will pursue you. Since it was blood that you hated, bloodshed will pursue you. ⁷ I will make the mountainous region of Se’ir a desolate wasteland, and I will cut off from it anyone passing through and anyone returning. ⁸ I will fill its mountains with the slain; and those slain by the sword will fall on your hills, in your valleys, and in all your streams. ⁹ I will make you a perpetual desolation, and your cities will not be inhabited; and you will have to know that I am Jehovah.’ ¹⁰ “Because you said, ‘These two nations and these two lands will become mine, and we will take possession of both,’ even though Jehovah himself was there, ¹¹ ‘therefore as surely as I am alive,’ declares the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, ‘I will deal with you according to the same anger and

jealousy that you displayed in your hatred toward them; and I will make myself known among them when I judge you. ¹² You will then have to know that I myself, Jehovah, have heard all the insolent things you spoke against the mountains of Israel when you said, “They have been laid desolate and have been given to us to devour.” ¹³ And you spoke arrogantly against me, and you multiplied your words against me. I heard it all.’ ¹⁴ “This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says: ‘The whole earth will rejoice when I will make you a desolate wasteland. ¹⁵ Just as you rejoiced when the inheritance of the house of Israel was laid desolate, that is how I will deal with you. You will become a desolate ruin, O mountainous region of Se’ir, yes, all of E’dom; and they will have to know that I am Jehovah.’”

AUGUST 28–SEPTEMBER 3

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD | EZEKIEL 39-41

“Ezekiel’s Temple Vision and You”

(Ezekiel 40:2) By means of visions from God, he brought me to the land of Israel and set me down on a very high mountain, on which there was a structure like a city to the south.

w99 3/1 11 ¶16

“Set Your Heart Upon” God’s Temple!

¹⁶ For an answer, let us go back to the vision itself. Ezekiel wrote: “In the visions of God he brought me to the land of Israel and gradually set me down upon a very high mountain, on which there was something like the structure of a city to the south.” (Ezekiel 40:2) The setting for this vision, the “very high mountain,” reminds us of Micah 4:1: “It must occur in the final part of the days that the mountain of the house of Jehovah will become firmly established above the top of the mountains, and it will certainly be lifted up above the hills; and to it peoples must stream.” When does this prophecy come into fulfillment? Micah 4:5 shows that this commences while the nations still worship false gods. In fact, it has been in our own time, “the final part of the days,” that pure worship has been lifted up, restored to its proper place in the lives of God’s servants.

(Ezekiel 40:3) When he brought me there, I saw a man whose appearance was like that of copper. He had a flax cord and a measuring reed in his hand, and he was standing in the gateway.

(Ezekiel 40:5) I saw a wall surrounding the outside of the temple. In the man's hand was a measuring reed six cubits long (to each cubit, a handbreadth was added). He began to measure the wall, and its thickness was one reed and its height was one reed.

w07 8/1 10 ¶2

Highlights From the Book of Ezekiel—II

40:3–43:17—What is significant about the measuring of the temple? The measuring of the temple is a sign that Jehovah's purpose concerning pure worship is sure to be fulfilled.

(Ezekiel 40:10) There were three guard chambers on each side of the east gate. The three were the same size, and the side pillars on either side were the same size.

(Ezekiel 40:14) Then he measured the side pillars, which were 60 cubits tall, as well as the side pillars in the gates all around the courtyard.

(Ezekiel 40:16) There were windows with narrowing frames for the guard chambers and for their side pillars inside the gate on each side. The interior of the porches also had windows on each side, and there were palm-tree figures on the side pillars.

w07 8/1 11 ¶4

Highlights From the Book of Ezekiel—II

40:14, 16, 22, 26. The wall carvings of palm trees in the entryways of the temple show that only those who are morally upright are allowed to enter. (Psalm 92:12) This teaches us that our worship is acceptable to Jehovah only if we are upright.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

(Ezekiel 39:7) I will make my holy name known among my people Israel, and I will not allow my holy name to be profaned any longer; and the nations will have to know that I am Jehovah, the Holy One in Israel.'

w12 9/1 21 ¶2

"The Nations Will Have to Know That I Am Jehovah"

"I shall no more let my holy name be profaned," Jehovah says. When humans blame him for injustice, they are profaning his name. How so? In the Bible, "name" often denotes reputation. One reference work says that God's name refers to "what is known of him—his revelation of himself; it also represents his fame, and then his honour." Jehovah's name em-

braces his reputation. What is known of Jehovah when it comes to injustice? He hates it! He also has compassion for its victims. (Exodus 22:22-24) When humans claim that God is responsible for the very things he abhors, they are sully his reputation. They are thus "treating [his] name with disrespect." —Psalm 74:10.

(Ezekiel 39:9) The inhabitants of the cities of Israel will go out and make fires with the weapons—the bucklers and shields, the bows and arrows, the war clubs and lances. And they will use them to light fires for seven years.

w89 8/15 14 ¶20

Opening Up the Way Back to Paradise

²⁰ But what of all the war equipment that the nations will leave behind? In view of the symbolic indication of the length of time it will take to dispose of the combustible parts of them, the quantity will be enormous. (Ezekiel 39:8-10) Armageddon survivors may be able to adapt the materials of any remaining war relics of the nations to useful purposes. —Isaiah 2:2-4.

Bible Reading

(Ezekiel 40:32-47) When he brought me into the inner courtyard from the east, he measured the gate, and it was the same size as the others. ³³ Its guard chambers, its side pillars, and its porch were the same size as the others, and there were windows on each side of it and its porch. It was 50 cubits long and 25 cubits wide. ³⁴ Its porch faced the outer courtyard, and there were palm-tree figures on both of its side pillars, and eight steps led up to it. ³⁵ He then brought me into the north gate and measured it; it was the same size as the others. ³⁶ Its guard chambers, its side pillars, and its porch were the same as the others. It had windows on each side. It was 50 cubits long and 25 cubits wide. ³⁷ Its side pillars faced the outer courtyard, and there were palm-tree figures on both of its side pillars, and eight steps led up to it. ³⁸ A dining room with its entrance was near the side pillars of the gates, where the whole burnt offerings were washed. ³⁹ There were two tables on each side of the porch of the gate on which to slaughter the whole burnt offerings, the sin offerings, and the guilt offerings. ⁴⁰ On the way up to the north gate, there were two tables outside the entrance. There were also two tables on the other side of the porch of the gate. ⁴¹ There were four tables

on each side of the gate—eight tables in all—on which the sacrifices were slaughtered. ⁴² The four tables for the whole burnt offering were of hewn stone. They were one and a half cubits long, one and a half cubits wide, and one cubit high. On them were kept the implements used to slaughter the burnt offerings and the sacrifices. ⁴³ Shelves, one handbreadth wide, were attached all around the interior walls; and the flesh of the gift offerings would be placed on the tables. ⁴⁴ Outside the inner gate were the dining rooms for the singers; they were in the inner courtyard near the north gate, facing south. Another dining room was near the east gate, facing north. ⁴⁵ He said to me: “This dining room that faces south is for the priests who are responsible for the services in the temple. ⁴⁶ The dining room that faces north is for the priests who are responsible for the service of the altar. They are the sons of Za’dok, those from the Levites who are assigned to approach Jehovah to minister to him.” ⁴⁷ Then he measured the inner courtyard. It was 100 cubits long and 100 cubits wide, foursquare. The altar was in front of the temple.