

Ezekiel 47 1-12

This is our penultimate study in the book of Ezekiel. In this passage we read of a river which gets wider and deeper as it flows away from the temple. It comes from the south side (the place of sacrifice) but flows eastwards. We read of the abundance of life on its banks and wherever it flows there is life (v9). It even purifies the saltiest of seas, the Dead Sea. (v8)

This river is mirrored in Revelation where John is given a vision of the New Jerusalem coming down from heaven. (Rev 22) On each of its banks stands the tree of life.

Psalms 1 and Jeremiah 17 vs 5-8 also describe trees bearing fruit planted by the sides of a stream.

Clearly there is a theme here! What is the significance of this life giving water?

Let the words of Jesus be our guide to the answer. He met a Samaritan woman (she was not allowed into the temple) and asked her for some water. In the conversation that followed he said, 'Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again but whoever drinks the water I give will never thirst. Indeed the water I give him will become in him a spring of living water welling up to eternal life.' (John 4 v 13-14) As a result of this 'life giving water' she received from Jesus, many Samaritans became Christians. (v42)

Later in John's gospel Jesus says these words, 'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.' (John 7 vs 37-38)

Jesus is the source of this life giving water. Those who drink of it experience life and life to the full. (John 10 v 10) To drink of Jesus means to allow him, through his word, his teaching and his Spirit, to refresh our bodies and our souls as much as water does when we drink it on a hot dry day. When we do this we become a source of that living water and as it gets passed on from person to person so the river becomes wider and deeper.

If our spiritual lives have become stagnant we should ask Jesus to flush us with his refreshing water. If we are thirsty because we have never tasted this life giving water, then we shouldn't waste anymore time trying to be sated by drinking from sources that give a quick fix and can never permanently satisfy or give life abundant.

Daily Devotions Tuesday 2nd June 2020

Ezekiel 48 1-35 (or just 29 & 35)

An inheritance (v29) is something that a person will come into possession of sometime in the future. For my boys it will be our house! (Lynda and I are doing our best to spend the rest!!) This chapter details the plots of land that are set aside for all the tribes of Israel. We are given the impression that God's people will be well looked after in this future city.

Likewise we read in John 14 vs 2-3 that Jesus is preparing a place for God's people of the New Covenant.

In his vision, Ezekiel is told of the 4 walls of the city each with 3 gates in them. They are named after the tribes of Israel. (v30, 31) In John's vision of the new city in Revelation 21 we read the same but in addition John tells us of the 12 foundations under the walls that are named after the apostles.

In Rev 21 v 9 an angel gives John an invitation. 'Come I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.' He then shows John the city, the New Jerusalem. How amazing that this city represents the whole church of Christ which has been built up on the sacrificial work of the 12 apostles!

There is a difference in John's vision. There is no temple (Rev 21v22). There is no need for an altar anymore as Jesus was the once and for all sacrifice. The verse tells us that the Lord God and Jesus are now the temple!

Ezekiel's final words are the new name for the city, 'The Lord is there'. The phrase, 'I will be their God and they will be my people' is an often repeated phrase throughout the Bible. We've read it in Ezekiel, it was in the memory verse from Leviticus on Sunday and it finds its fulfilment in these visions of heaven. Rejoice as you read of it in Rev 21 v 3-4!

When Jesus told his disciples he was going to prepare a place he also said this, 'I will come back and take you with me that you also may be where I am' (John 14v3)

.....where I am!

We may all have different ideas of what our own personal heaven will be like (mine has a beach made of 'Love Hearts') but the truth is that heaven will be heaven because God is there. This is our inheritance.