



OHBC MEMORY VERSE WEEK #26

THIS WEEK'S VERSE: EZEKIEL 22:30

"And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none."

Why Ezekiel 22:30?

Certainly from a devotional standpoint, the verse applies to women but we live at a time when there is a definite shortage of men – REAL men, that is! Men who are men of integrity and character. Men who love the Lord more than they love themselves (II Tim.

3:2), more than they love pleasure (II Tim. 3:4), more than they love money (I Tim. 6:10), and more than they love this present evil world (II Tim. 4:10). Men who are men of the Word. Men who walk in the Spirit. Men who have renewed their mind through massive doses of the Word of God. Men who love their wives as Christ loved the church (Eph. 5:25). Men who are purposely seeking to bring their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4). Men like Job, whose spiritual walk is so significant even God is impressed (Job 1:8)! Men whose lives so mirror the life of Christ that God will use them to "stand in the gap" in these last days, and use them to stay His hand of judgment.

Sadly, after God had gone on a search for this kind of man in Ezekiel's day, He was forced to say, "But I found none." As God searches for this kind of man in our day, has he found you? What changes do you need to allow God to make in your life for you to be that kind of man?

NOTE: This week's verse marks the half-way point in our goal to memorize 52 verses in 2005. On the next sheet you will find all 26 verses printed out for easy review. I challenge you to get all 26 verses back into your present memory!

DAY 126

TODAY'S READING: PSALM 54-63

OVERVIEW:

A prayer of protection: a cry against deceitful friends; the psalmist's trust in God; David's prayer for deliverance from his enemies; David's confidence in God's promises.

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

In yesterday's comments in this section the goal was to acquaint you with how God uses His Word in the Psalms, more than highlighting the things He actually said. Because the psalms in today's reading are easily understood, we will again use this space to help you to "learn how to fish" in the psalms, rather than simply "handing you a fish," borrowing from the insight of Bruce Wilkinson: "Just as the nation of Israel was divided into many different tribes, so the Psalms can be divided into many different types. As you continue your journey through this book, you'll find it helpful to be able to classify each psalm you read. A majority of the psalms fall into one of three categories:

1. Lament Psalms are petitions addressed directly to God by the individual or community in the context of distress. They usually include a description of the problems, a confession of trust, and a vow of praise to God, uttered with the confidence that God can and will deliver His people (examples: Psalms 3-7, 22, 42).
2. Thank Psalms, offered publicly by one or more worshippers, acknowledge God's faithful actions on behalf of His people in the past, or express confidence in His promise to act in the future (examples: Psalms 18, 27, 62).
3. Praise Psalms are hymns based on the word praise or hallelujah. They are joyful expressions of adoration for God's greatness, acknowledging Him as Creator, Sustainer, and Lover of His people (examples: Psalms 113, 117, 146-150).

In addition, you will encounter:

4. Royal Psalms are hymns describing the King, both earthly and heavenly, reigning over His kingdom (examples: Psalms 2, 95-96).
5. Woe Psalms are poems expressing the psalmist's righteous indignation at God's enemies, and calling for God's swift retribution (examples: Psalms 49, 109, 137).

6. Acrostic Psalms are highly stylized poems in which each new section, verse, or line begins with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet (examples: Psalms 9-10, 25, 35, 119).
7. Pilgrim Psalms are songs sung by worshippers on the way up to Jerusalem for the yearly feast (examples: Psalms 120-134).
8. Messianic Psalms are prophetic songs describing the coming Messiah as King (Psalms 2, 24, 100), Servant (Psalms 22-23, 40, 60), and the Son of God (Psalm 118)."

In today's psalms, do note that a good portion of them record the expression of David's heart and his confidence in God during some of his most difficult days: While being pursued (Psalms 54, 57, 59); having been betrayed (Psalm 55); and while he was brokenhearted (Psalm 56). Psalms 54, 60, 61 and 63 are psalms of lament (watch for the use of the phrase, "O, God").

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

As the One Who was betrayed by his "friend" – Psalm 55:12 (Matt. 26:47-50).

As the One Who saves those who will call upon Him – Psalm 55:16-17 (Rom. 10:13).

As the Rock – Psalm 61:2; 62:2, 6-7 (I Cor. 10:4).

DAY 127

TODAY'S READING: PSALM 64-70

OVERVIEW:

David's prayer of deliverance from his enemies; David's confidence in God's promises; David's exhortation to praise God for His goodness; the blessings of God upon His people; God's judgment upon His enemies; David's prayer in time of trouble.

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

Have you ever felt like the psalmist in Psalm 64? Like the whole world is against you? Even the "man after God's own heart" had many people who continually spoke evil concerning him. Jesus said, "Blessed are ye, when (notice, not "IF", but "WHEN"!) men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake" (Matt. 2:11). The closer you grow toward Christlikeness and the more you are used by Him to accomplish His work, the more you can expect it. It comes with the territory. Jesus went on to say, however, that rather than allowing it to consume us, and discourage us, "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Matt. 5:12). In other words, rejoice in the fact that you've ascended into the ranks of a whole bunch of godly people that God has been using all through the centuries to bring glory to Him, and they've all experienced the same exact treatment. We will not be the exception to the rule.

Obviously, even Jesus Himself wasn't! The good news is, the psalmist says, "What goes around, comes around." His actual wording was perhaps a little more articulate, "So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves" (Ps. 64:8). Paul's similar warning was, "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another" (Gal. 5:15). Have you found yourself in conversations with "friends", where you've been "biting and devouring" other believers? Be very careful, because it'll just be a matter of time before you're "biting and devouring one another"! When you use your tongue as a weapon, it'll come back to rip you to shreds!

You've gotta love how the psalmist addresses God in Psalm 65:2- "O thou that hearest prayer." If you're ever looking for reasons you should pray, how about this one: The God who created the entire universe and is holy beyond your wildest possible comprehension, said He'd listen! With a reason like that you don't need too many others! (You may even want to take a minute right now to tell God "Thanks for listening!") Notice that the psalmist is back on this same thought in Psalm 66, verses 18-20.

Note that the word "terrible" (Ps. 65:5; 66:3; 68:35) is the old English equivalent of the modern day usage of the word "awesome".

Note also the setting of the context by the word "Selah" in Psalm 66:4, for that time when "All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee; they shall sing to thy name." The "whole earth" hasn't worshipped or sung to the Lord since Adam sinned in the Garden, and won't until the Lord Jesus Christ has set in motion "the times of restitution of all things" (Acts 3:21) at the beginning of the Millennium.

Psalm 66, 67 and 68 provide great insight into just how glorious the Second Coming of Christ and His millennial reign on the earth will actually be. It gives a whole new meaning to "A New World Order"!

The name of God in Psalm 68:4, “JAH”, is short for Jehovah (Yahweh), the “self-existing One”, or the God who is “ever in the present.” Psalm 68:18 foretells of the resurrection of Christ. Paul explained the meaning of the psalm as a prophecy concerning Christ in Eph. 4:8. Christ conquered death and Satan, who until the resurrection held mankind in bondage (Heb. 2:15).

In Psalm 69, David voices what we all feel at certain times of our lives, as his song is being sung out of a sea of troubles. Psalm 69:9 was historically true of David, yet prophetically, was fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ in Luke 2:13-17. Is it likewise true of you? Are you so passionately in love with your Savior, and so completely zealous for Him to be glorified, that when His name is “reproached” (also translated “defied”; “blasphemed”), that the reproach of it falls upon you the same way that it falls upon God? In other words, when God’s name is blasphemed and defied, do you feel what God feels?

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

As the One who LED CAPTIVITY CAPTIVE – Ps. 68:18 (Eph. 4:8)

As the One who was BROKENHEARTED and FULL OF HEAVINESS – Ps. 69:20 (Matt. 26:37)

As the One given VINEGAR TO DRINK IN HIS THIRST – Ps. 69:21 (Matt. 27:34; John 19:28-30)

DAY 128

TODAY’S READING: PSALM 71-77

OVERVIEW:

David’s prayer of praise and thanksgiving; David’s prayer for Solomon (and the “Son of David”); the mystery of the prosperity of the wicked; the rebuke of the wicked and proud; praise for God’s majesty.

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

In Psalm 71, note the eight names the psalmist uses to refer to God that he has made quite “personal” (each one is prefaced by the personal pronoun “my”) –

1. My Strong Habitation (71:2)
2. My Rock (71:3)
3. My Fortress (71:3)
4. My God (71:4)
5. My Hope (71:5)
6. My Trust (71:5)
7. My Strong Refuge (71:7)
8. My Helper (71:12)

There’s plenty enough in just those eight names to have your own “personal” worship service! What a God we serve!

As you continue your journey through life, keep in mind that the enemy is constantly seeking to shut you down and shut you up! That is, he wants to take your passion for God out of your soul, and he wants to take your praise for God out of your mouth. Understanding this desire of the enemy prompted the psalmist to say, “But I will hope continually, and yet praise thee more and more” (71:14). Let’s all make that our resolve today!

Psalm 72 is in my estimation a “psalm of psalms.” What an absolutely incredible Old Testament declaration of praise for the Lord Jesus Christ at His Second Coming! This psalm lets you know that Solomon was just a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Millennium in I Kings 10 as the Queen of Sheba presents herself before Israel’s king, the “Son of David,” as he sits enthroned in all of his wisdom, splendor, majesty, and glory over the entire world (72:10). This psalm lets you know that the Lord Jesus Christ will unleash His power in judgment upon the earth (72:1-6), and will establish His rule over the entire earth (72:7-9). Read and enjoy! May it cause all of us to “LOVE His appearing” with Paul (II Tim. 4:8), LONG for His appearing with John, and PRAY for His appearing per our Lord’s instruction (Matt. 6:10).

In Psalm 73, Asaph voices what all of us have felt at one time or another: Why does it seem that the wicked prosper, and the righteous are stepped on (73:11-14)? As Asaph said, sometimes it can just about get the best of you (73:2), and make you want to throw in the towel (73:16)! Why does it seem that that’s the way it shakes down in life? For the most part, because that’s the way it is! In THIS life!

What we sometimes forget is that THIS life is not all there is! Asaph said that he was reminded of that when he went “into the sanctuary of God, and understood their end” (73:17).

Psalms 74 is Asaph’s attempt at “praying for the Kingdom to come,” and quite a good one at that!

Psalms 75 deals with Israel and the Second Coming of Christ. Notice in verses 2-6, that the Lord Jesus Christ Himself is speaking in the first person. How awesome is that? Notice in verse 6 where “promotion cometh.” Here’s the clue: It’s not “from the east, nor the west, nor from the south.” Got any guesses where it comes from? That’s right! The north! Why north? Check out Psalm 48:2; Hebrews 12:22; Isaiah 14:13; Ezekiel 1:4.

Psalms 76 is another great description of our Lord’s awesomeness as he “arises in judgment” (76:9) and descends upon this earth at His Second Coming to establish His rule and reign. Can you answer the question of 76:7 – “Who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?” Why don’t we allow the words of the old hymn to answer it for us? “No, not one! No, not one!”

Psalms 77 is, likewise, a description of the Second Coming and Millennium. Just when the nation of Israel is “in the day of [her] trouble,” when at Armageddon, all of the nations of the earth have converged upon her and she is crying out, “Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail or evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?” (77:7-9), then notice the very next word: “Selah”! It is just then that the Lord Jesus Christ will step out of heaven riding on a white horse, with the armies of heaven behind Him (Rev. 16:15-21; 19:11-19) and go absolutely ballistic upon all His enemies to establish “peace on earth and good will toward men.” Verses 16-19 of Psalm 77 are a description of the Second Coming, as our Lord steps out of the third heaven, descends through “the deep” that is above our heads, and comes thundering into the earth’s atmosphere. What a day that will be. Let’s pray it’ll be seven years from today.

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

As the ROCK – Ps. 71:3 (I Cor. 10:4)

As the RIGHTEOUS JUDGE – Ps. 72:2, 4 (II Thess. 1:5-9)

As the SPEAKER in Psalm 75:2-6

DAY 129

TODAY’S READING: PSALM 78-82

OVERVIEW:

The judgment of the Lord against disobedience; Asaph’s prayer against enemies; Asaph’s prayer for mercy and restoration.

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

Psalm 78 is an incredible Psalm. What it provides is an abbreviated overview of Israel’s history from Exodus 7 to II Samuel 10.

We have talked previously about God’s principles concerning the iniquities of the fathers being passed all the way down to the third and fourth generation (Num. 14:18). The effects of sin are incredibly far reaching. Psalm 78 lets us know that the flip side is also true. The righteousness of the fathers likewise has the ability to be passed down to the third and fourth generation! Notice the four generations in 78:5-6

Generation # 1 – “OUR FATHERS...”

Generation # 2 – “that they should make them known to THEIR CHILDREN,”

Generation # 3 – “that the GENERATION TO COME might know them”

Generation # 4 – “who should arise and declare them to THEIR CHILDREN.”

Notice that there are also four reasons for passing down truth and righteousness through these four generations (78:7-8).

Two are positive and two are negative:

1. Positive – “That they might set their hope in God...”
2. Negative – “And not forget the works of God...”
3. Positive – “But keep his commandments...”
4. Negative – “And might not be as their fathers...”

Notice in verse 29 of Psalm 78, one of the most horrific things that God could ever do to a person— Give them what they want! (i.e. “their own desire.”) It is a collision course for disaster without exception, because what man “desires” naturally is always completely contrary to what God desires for him. Paul writes to his young son in the faith, Timothy, warning him about four things we desire (“love”) naturally:

1. “Self” – II Tim. 3:2
2. “Pleasure” – II Tim. 3:4
3. “Money” – I Tim. 6:10
4. “This present world” – II Tim. 4:10

Psalm 78:29 should cause all of us to pray, “O God, please don’t give me what I want.” The old guy said, “I want everything that’s coming to me, and my mother-in-law says she hopes I get it!”

Notice five things Israel did against God after their deliverance out of Egypt in verses 40 and 41, and the New Testament counterpart of how we are sometimes guilty of the same things after our deliverance out of Egypt:

1. They “provoked” God – Ps. 78:40a (I Thess. 5:19)
2. They “grieved” God – Ps. 78:40b (Eph. 4:30)
3. They “turned back” from God – Ps. 78:41a (II Tim. 4:10)
4. They “tempted” God – Ps. 78:41b (I Cor. 10:9)
5. They “limited” God – Ps. 78:41c (Heb. 4:2)

Notice also that these five things were the result of the two root sins listed in verse 42 – “They remembered not his hand, nor the day when he delivered them from the enemy.” Practically speaking, we get ourselves into a whole bunch of sin problems when we forget the awesome thing God did on our behalf the day He saved us “(delivered us from the enemy)”, and all of the things God did by His hand to bring us to that point (John 6:44), and all of the things He has done since (Rev. 2:4-5; Rom.1:21).

Psalm 79 and 80 are simple to understand for anyone who understands that there are three layers of application of Scripture. They both are pointing doctrinally (prophetically) to Israel during the latter part of the Great Tribulation just prior to the Second Coming of Christ. Notice that the “wild beast” in Palm 80:13 is defined in Hosea 13:8 and is none other than the “Beast” of Rev. 13. He is like a “leopard” (Hosea 13:7), a “bear” and a “lion” (Hosea 13:8), just as in Rev. 13:2 and Daniel 7:3-6. It’s amazing what God will reveal (I Cor. 2:10) when we approach God’s book the way He told us to approach it (I Cor. 2:13 – “comparing spiritual things with spiritual” – i.e. comparing Scripture with Scripture)!

In Psalm 81, the “solemn feast day” in verse 3 points to the Second Coming of Christ which will line up, as did First Coming of Christ, with the Feast of Tabernacles. It’s way too detailed to get into here, but for a little “recreation,” checkout II Chron. 7:9; Neh. 8:18; Hosea 9:5; 12:9; Lev. 23:34; Deut. 16:13; 31:10; II Chron. 8:13; Ezra 3:4.

Be sure to note the context in Psalm 82, as once again, God sets it for us by the insertion of the word “Selah” (82:2), and nails it for us in the last verse, “Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations.” I don’t care where you’re from, “that there’s good”!

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

As the SHEPHERD – Ps. 80:1 (John 10:11)

As the One Will Arise to Deliver Israel Out of Her Trouble – Ps. 80:7, 14, 19; 82:8 (Rev. 16:15-21; 19:19).

DAY 130

TODAY’S READING: PSALM 83-89

OVERVIEW:

The psalmist’s cry for deliverance for Israel; the blessedness of living in the midst of God’s presence; David’s desire to walk in truth; cry for deliverance from death; praise for God’s covenant and promises.

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

As we get back into the Psalms, Psalm 83 once again points prophetically to the time of the Second Coming of Christ when all of the nations (83:6-8) have converged “with one consent” (83:5), “confederate against” (83:5) the nation of Israel to “cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance” (83:4). As we have seen repeatedly, just when Israel’s back is against the wall,

and from a human standpoint is utterly helpless and hopeless, God answers their prayers (83:1)! It is a great reminder for those times when our back is against the wall, and from a human standpoint, we are helpless and hopeless, that God answers prayer, and can and will step in to do what could never be done in our own strength or power. He has already proven that He would, because that is exactly how Ephesians 2:11-17 describes our situation in our lost condition when we cried out to the Lord for our salvation! Note that the basis for the psalmist's requests in the last verse of this Psalm, should be the desire, passion and prayer of our hearts, "That men may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH (the "self-existing One"), art the most high over all the earth" (83:18).

The context of the expression of the psalmist's heart and praise for the Lord in Psalm 84 is set in verses 4 and 8. It is the Day of the Lord, Christ's millennial reign when He will once again "tabernacle" among us (84:1; John 1:14 – "dwell" = "tabernacle".) Do the words expressing the passion of the psalmist's heart for God and His glory in verse 2 express what is in your heart today? "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God" (84:2).

The last part of verse 11 is a great promise and reminder – "the Lord will give grace and glory: NO GOOD THING WILL HE WITHHOLD FROM THEM THAT WALK UPRIGHTLY." God most certainly "withholds" certain things, but contrary to Satan's lies (see Genesis 3:5), it is never because He is "withholding" some GOOD thing from us. His restrictions are always to keep us from something He knows will be BAD for us, and ultimately destroy us. It is sometimes difficult to get our flesh to really believe that, and the "father of lies" is at every turn more than willing to convince us otherwise. In light of that, the concluding verse (84:12) is very fitting, "O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee."

The millennial context continues in Psalm 85. The description of that time is laid out beautifully in verse 10, "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." It is also a beautiful thing when the word pictures in this verse are found in the life of a New Testament believer. Mercy with no regard for truth makes us wishy-washy, spineless, and way too accommodating of unholy doctrine and unholy living in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. On the other hand, truth with no regard for mercy makes us harsh, judgmental, and unloving. God wants a perfect balance of both in the life of His people. (See Ephesians 4:25, then Ephesians 4:15.)

Psalm 86:5 and 15 are a personal favorite – "For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee... Thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth." How many times do we need those reminders, especially those of us who are bent toward doing "penance" before we can let go of failures. I love the fact that before we even come to Him, He is already "READY TO FORGIVE." He made that more than clear by the willful offering of His only and beloved Son!

For those who find themselves in the depths of despair today, find comfort and solace by using the words of the psalmist in Psalm 88 as he lifts his complaint up to the Lord, and then allow the Lord to bring you up and out in Psalm 89, as the psalmist expresses his confidence and praise to the Lord.

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

By the SEED OF DAVID – Psalm 89:3-4 (Christ was made of the seed of David according to the flesh – Matt. 1:1; Luke 3:31-32).