

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Spring Term of 2020**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE NEW COVENANT**

Message Three

God's New Covenant Seen with Ezekiel

Scripture Reading: Ezek. 34:11-31; 36:26-27; Matt. 5:3, 8; Eph. 3:16-17, 20-21; 2 Cor. 4:16

I. In Ezekiel 34 the Lord Himself comes as the Shepherd to search for His sheep and seek them out in carrying out His new covenant—vv. 11-31; Luke 15:3-7; Matt. 9:36; John 10:11; 21:15-17; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 5:3-4:

- A. God raised up from the dead “our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of an eternal covenant”—Heb. 13:20:
 - 1. The eternal covenant is to consummate the New Jerusalem by shepherding.
 - 2. The eternal covenant is the covenant of the new testament to gain a flock, which is the church issuing in the Body of Christ and consummating in the New Jerusalem.
- B. As the great Shepherd, the Lord is making real to us the contents of the new covenant—8:8-13.
- C. The Lord brings us out from among the unbelievers to Himself—Ezek. 34:12-13a; cf. Eph. 2:12-13.
- D. He brings us to our own land, signifying Christ as the good land of Canaan—Ezek. 34:13b; cf. Col. 1:12.
- E. He brings us back to the high mountains, signifying the resurrected and ascended Christ—Ezek. 34:13-14.
- F. He brings us back to the streams, signifying the living water of the life-giving Spirit—v. 13; Rev. 22:1; 1 Cor. 12:13; Psa. 36:8.
- G. He feeds His flock by the streams, signifying His feeding us with His riches—Ezek. 34:13; Rev. 22:1-2a.
- H. He brings us back to the good and rich pasture, signifying Christ as our life supply—Ezek. 34:14; Psa. 23:2; John 10:9; cf. 1 Tim. 1:4.
- I. He causes us to lie down, giving us inward rest—Ezek. 34:15; S. S. 1:7; Matt. 11:28-30.
- J. He binds up the broken one and strengthens the sick one, signifying His binding up and healing the brokenhearted and sick ones—Ezek. 34:16a; Isa. 61:1-2; Luke 4:18-19; Matt. 9:9-13.
- K. The Lord exercises righteous judgments among us, clearing away all the unjust things—Ezek. 34:17-22; Col. 3:15.
- L. Christ is the real David, the real Shepherd, set up as the one Shepherd to feed us and cause us to be filled and satisfied—Ezek. 34:23:
 - 1. He takes care of us, including all our problems and responsibilities and every aspect of our living—Psa. 23.
 - 2. 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—Rev. 7:17.
 - 3. As we experience the Lord's shepherding and remain under His kingship, we enjoy His covenant of peace and are no longer subject to spiritual troubles and disturbances—Ezek. 34:25a.

4. Under His shepherding, all the evil beasts, evil persons, are kept away from the Lord's recovered people—v. 25b; cf. Acts 20:28-29; Phil. 3:2-3.
 5. He breaks the bars of all our yokes, including the yokes of sin and the world, and delivers us from all kinds of slavery—Ezek. 34:27b.
 6. He promises that we will not be prey to the enemy and that we will dwell in peace and safety—vv. 28a, 25b.
- M. He causes us to become a source of blessing to others so that they may be supplied with Him as the showers of blessing and as the planting place of renown—vv. 26-27a, 29; Zech. 10:1; Ezek. 36:35.
 - N. Through experiencing His shepherding, we have God's presence; we are His and He is ours in our fellowship with Him in oneness for the mingling of God and man—34:30-31.
 - O. If all the churches receive the burden to participate in Christ's wonderful shepherding in His heavenly ministry, there will be a genuine revival in the Lord's recovery—cf. John 21:15-17; 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:1-4; Acts 20:28; Heb. 13:20-21; Rev. 1:12-13.

II. In Ezekiel 36 God's promise is that He will give His chosen ones a new heart and a new spirit and that He will put His Spirit within them—vv. 26-27:

- A. In the new covenant, God gives His chosen people one heart—to love God, to seek God, to live God, and to be constituted with God that we may be His expression—and one way—the Triune God Himself as the inner law of life with its divine capacity—Jer. 32:39; 31:33-34; John 14:6a.
- B. The one heart and one way are the one accord; divisions result from having a heart for something other than Christ and taking a way other than Christ—Acts 1:14; Rom. 15:6.
- C. We all need a new start to maintain the newness of our heart and our spirit—2 Cor. 4:16; Rom. 7:6; cf. Prov. 4:23; 1 Pet. 3:4.
- D. Our heart is our loving organ, and our spirit is our receiving organ; while we are in a fallen or backslidden state, our heart toward the Lord is stony and hard, and our spirit is deadened—Eph. 2:1; 4:18.
- E. When the Lord saves us or revives us, He renews our heart, making our stony heart a heart of flesh, a heart that is soft and loving toward Him; furthermore, He enlivens and renews our spirit with His divine life—cf. 2 Cor. 3:3; Col. 2:13.
- F. As a result, we love the Lord and desire Him with our renewed heart, and we can contact Him, receive Him, and contain Him by exercising our renewed spirit.
- G. We need a loving heart and a powerful spirit—Mark 12:30; 2 Tim. 1:7.
- H. We must be spiritual men with an exercised spirit; we must be dominated, governed, directed, led, and controlled by our spirit; we also must keep our heart turned to the Lord and seek the Lord as our purity—1 Tim. 4:7; 1 Cor. 2:15; 14:32; John 4:24; 2 Cor. 2:13; Rom. 1:9; 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17; Matt. 5:8.

III. We should aspire to have an enlarged heart; to have an enlarged heart requires growth and maturity in life—Psa. 119:32; 1 Cor. 3:1, 6; 14:20; Heb. 5:12—6:1:

- A. We must be genuine ministers of the new covenant, having an enlarged heart with the intimate concern of the ministering life, which is a fruitful life—2 Cor. 3:5-6; 6:11-13; 7:2-3:
 1. With an enlarged heart the apostles could embrace all believers regardless of their condition, and with an opened mouth they could speak to all believers frankly concerning the real situation into which they had been misled—6:11.
 2. This kind of openness and enlargement is needed to reconcile, to bring back, the misled or distracted believers to God—5:17-20.
- B. Solomon was competent to oversee God's people because he had wisdom and a large heart, which are two aspects of one thing:

1. Although he only asked for the wisdom and knowledge to go out and come in among God's people (1 Kings 3:5-9; 2 Chron. 1:10), God gave him "largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the seashore" (1 Kings 4:29).
 2. The seashore encloses the sea, God having "set the sand as a boundary for the sea" (Jer. 5:22); this shows that Solomon's heart was larger than the sea.
- C. In order to enlarge their heart, the saints in different localities should go to visit other places; if circumstances allow, it would be even better to travel overseas; the more we participate in the Lord's move, the more we see—Ezek. 1:15-21.
- D. The ability to forgive others when they have offended us is a matter of largeness of heart; if we have an argument with a brother, it is mostly because of the narrowness of our heart—Matt. 6:14-15.

IV. We need to be pure in heart (5:8) and poor in spirit (v. 3):

- A. We need a pure heart in order to see God, and we need a spirit that is emptied in order to receive the kingdom of the heavens.
- B. To be pure in heart is to be single in our goal and aim; our goal should be God alone; even in our service and function in the church life, we should not have an intention to gain anything but God Himself.
- C. If we come to a meeting with a sense that we are inwardly rich and have no need, this will close the door to God (Rev. 3:16-17, 20); we need to pray, "O Lord, thank You for always being with me, yet I am still short of You; I want to be emptied in my spirit so that You can have more room in me; O Lord, I open to You and ask You to gain more ground within my heart."

V. We need to be strengthened into our regenerated spirit so that Christ may make His home in our hearts—Eph. 3:16-17:

- A. When a saved one is strengthened into his spirit and possessed by Christ in his heart, deep within he has a longing for the church life and an inner consciousness concerning what the proper church life is.
- B. To know the church is not outward but absolutely inward; that the highways to Zion are in our heart means that we need to take the way of the church internally, not merely externally—Psa. 84:5.
- C. When we are strengthened through the Spirit into our spirit and when Christ makes His home in our heart, God is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think concerning the church life; if all the saints pray daily for this, the glorious church life will spread and be prevailing throughout the United States and the whole world—Eph. 3:20-21.

VI. In order to maintain the newness of our heart and our spirit, we need to be renewed day by day with the fresh supply of the resurrection life to become as new as the New Jerusalem—2 Cor. 4:16-18:

- A. Newness is God; therefore, to become new is to become God in life and nature but not in the Godhead—Rom. 6:4; 7:6:
1. God is forever new, and He infuses His ever-new essence into our being to renew our entire being—12:2; Col. 3:10.
 2. The Spirit of God renews us by infusing our inward parts with God's attributes, which are forever new, can never become old, and are everlasting and unchanging—Rev. 21:5a.
- B. The believers should be renewed to be as new as the New Jerusalem since they all are becoming the New Jerusalem by walking in newness of life (Rom. 6:4) and building the New Jerusalem by serving in newness of spirit (7:6).

- C. We can maintain the newness of our spirit by serving in our spirit (1:9; 7:6) and by exercising our spirit of faith (2 Cor. 4:13); faith is in our spirit, which is mingled with the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17), not in our mind; doubts are in our mind.
- D. While we are in the midst of suffering, we need to receive the renewing; otherwise, the suffering that we pass through means nothing to us; within us there is a refuge—our spirit—Psa. 91:1.
- E. God arranges our environment so that little by little and day by day our outer man will be consumed and our inner man will be renewed—2 Cor. 4:16-18.
- F. In order to be renewed day by day, we need to be revived every morning—Matt. 13:43; Luke 1:78-79; Prov. 4:18; Judg. 5:31; 2 Cor. 4:16.
- G. We need to come to the Lord's table in newness (Matt. 26:29); the Lord never takes an old table; we need to be renewed by learning to say, "I'm sorry; forgive me."
- H. We are renewed day by day through four items: the cross (2 Cor. 4:10-12, 16-18); the Holy Spirit, by which we are reconditioned, remade, and remodeled with the divine life (Titus 3:5); our mingled spirit (Eph. 4:23); and the holy word of God (5:26).

VII. Our mingled spirit needs to spread into our mind in order to subdue, take over, and occupy our mind, thus becoming the spirit of our mind; the more the mingled spirit penetrates, saturates, and possesses our mind, the more we let Christ's mind become our mind—Phil. 2:5; Eph. 4:23; 1 Cor. 2:16; Rom. 12:2:

- A. The renewing in the spirit of our mind revolutionizes our logic, philosophy, thought, concept, and psychology.
- B. Renewing is to have our mind changed in our religion, logic, and philosophy concerning the universe, mankind, God, etc., by the Spirit of truth with the revelations in the Scriptures, even to have Christ's mind replacing our mind through the consuming work of the cross—Titus 3:5; Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:23; Rom. 8:6; Phil. 2:5; 2 Cor. 4:16.
- C. We should not live according to the vanity of the mind but according to the spirit of the mind; this is the key to the daily living of the corporate one new man, the secret to having a church life filled with the character of God, the aroma of Christ, and the oneness of the Spirit—Eph. 4:3-4, 17-18, 23-24.
- D. By our loving the Lord and by the exercise of our spirit in prayer and in reading the Word day by day, our mind is filled with the mingled spirit; this changes and renews our mind; for us to be renewed in our mind is to get rid of all the old concepts concerning the things of the human life and be made new again by the teaching of the Holy Scriptures and the enlightening of the Holy Spirit—Psa. 119:105, 130; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Deut. 17:18-20.

VIII. The Lord's recovery depends upon our renewed, purified heart and our renewed, strengthened spirit; when our heart is fully possessed by Christ and our spirit is habitually exercised to touch the Lord, God will have a way, and the recovery will be prevailing:

- A. This consummates God's intention in making the believers the new man as the new creation to consummate in the New Jerusalem; as a result of our being renewed, we are made a new creation, which is the new man in Christ—Col. 3:10-11; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15-17; Eph. 2:10, 15.
- B. God's goal is to have the one new man that ultimately will consummate in the New Jerusalem, which will be the final consummation of the one new man.