

Taking Your Life to the Next Level

Ezekiel 36:20-27

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²⁰ And wherever they went among the nations they profaned my holy name, for it was said of them, 'These are the LORD's people, and yet they had to leave his land.' ²¹ I had concern for my holy name, which the house of Israel profaned among the nations where they had gone.

²² "Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am going to do these things, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone. ²³ I will show the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, the name you have profaned among them. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Sovereign LORD, when I show myself holy through you before their eyes.

²⁴ "For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. ²⁵ I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. ²⁶ I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

Sermon Outline:

- I. Destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC
 - a. Theme of the prophets – God is doing something in the midst of the worst of circumstances.
 - b. God has been humiliated in this context because everyone else sees the tragic circumstances of Judah.
- II. For My Name's Sake
 - a. God is going to do his work of redemption for His name's sake – not yours. In other words, He cannot betray who He is as a resurrecting God.
 - b. Your name is wrapped up in my name.
- III. Death Always Precedes Resurrection
 - a. Notice the word, "Always".
 - b. Death means you can't see the future. It looks like a valley.
- IV. Resurrection Always Comes When We Receive It
 - a. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you...
 - b. I will remove from you your heart of stone...
 - c. I will give you a heart of flesh...
 - d. I will put my spirit in you...
- V. Process
 - a. Death/Ending
 - b. Waiting/Receiving His Love
 - c. Resurrection (the next level God has for you)

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Small Group Questions:

1. What thoughts, feelings, or questions do you have after reading the passage or listening to the sermon?
2. The phrase “Death ALWAYS Precedes Resurrection” – do you agree with this statement? Why or why not? Has this been true for you?
3. What themes of death do you notice throughout the Bible? What are some examples in which death lead to resurrection in these instances?
4. Are there some deaths that you have experienced in the past 6 months when you did not think you would survive? What did it feel like? What was the outcome?
5. How can knowing that resurrection will always come, give you the strength you need to go through death? What’s an area of your life that you need to remind yourself that resurrection always comes after death?
6. Read verses 24-27. Find all the “I will...” statements made from God in these verses. How can these statements encourage you today?
7. Where do you have a heart of stone in your life today? Where do you desperately need and want resurrection?
8. Please break up into groups of 2-3 and share about an area of your life that you want to receive resurrection. Pray for each other. Pray for the courage and patience to endure the death to get to resurrection.