

even-numbered even-numbered verses and shall we stand as we read the even-numbered verses and shall even-numbered verses and shall we stand as we read the even-numbered verses and shall we stand as we read the even-numbered verses and shall we stand as we read the even-numbered verses and shall we stand as we read the even-numbered verses and shall we stand as as we Some time later, the day after God was made up between the earth and heaven, and he brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem. Now just how this transpired, we don't know for sure.

Was it an astral projection or was it just in vision only? We don't know. And it really doesn't matter as far as the story goes. Jerusalem was about to be destroyed, obliterated, severely wiped out.

A third of them will die in the siege as the result of the famine and the pestilence. Another third of them will die when the walls are breached and the Babylonian troops come into the city, and with a sword another third of them will perish. The other third that is still left will be taken as slaves throughout the known world of that day, and it will cease to exist as a functioning nation.

Jerusalem will be desolate. Because of the severity of the destruction of Jerusalem, God wanted Ezekiel to know the reasons why the city was so destroyed by God. And so he takes him to Jerusalem to let him see exactly what is going on.

Not on the surface, but underneath in the hearts and in the minds of the people. So as he gets to Jerusalem he sees this wall. The Lord instructs him to dig a hole in the wall and then to crawl through that hole.

It led him into a chamber. And in that chamber he saw the elders of Israel. Those men who were the leaders and the spiritual leaders of Jerusalem.

But on the walls in that chamber he saw all sorts of filthy pornography. Horrible scenes of just obscene things. And the Lord said to him, do you see what's on the walls? He said, I have let you enter into the minds.

You've gone into their brains. You see the imaginations and the things that are there in their thoughts. And this is the reason why there's going to be such severe judgment.

Because the imaginations and their thoughts are so evil, so filthy. Sometimes people get the false idea that God is not aware of what is going on in their lives. Some people live dual lives.

They are one thing while here in church, but something else completely during the week on the job or within their homes. And they think that God isn't aware of this duplicity. Because they are able to deceive men, they somehow think that God doesn't know what's going on in their lives.

And because God has not yet judged them, they are so foolish as to think that they're actually getting by with their duplicity. Somehow they feel even God doesn't know. But in Deuteronomy chapter thirty two, God said, vengeance belongs to me and I will pay.

For their foot will slide in due time. For the day of their calamity is at hand and the things that will come upon them will make haste. Again in Deuteronomy twenty nine nineteen, as the Lord has spoken of the curses that are going to come against those who have turned from his laws.

He said, it will come to pass when a man hears the words of the curses that are coming. And if in his heart he blesses himself and he says, it won't happen to me, I will have peace. Even though I walk in the imagination of my heart and in the drunkenness, the Lord will spare me and the anger of the Lord and his jealousy will smoke, he said, upon that man.

And all of the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven. As Jesus is addressing the seven churches in Asia in the book of Revelation chapters two and three, to each of these churches he begins his message by saying, I know your works. Some of them the works were commendable, but with others the works were evil.

But he knew what was going on. I know your works. You're only deceiving yourself if you think that God doesn't know what's going on in your life.

Or if you think that you're getting by with your sin. In Hebrews 4.13 it tells us, Neither is there any person that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. God sees.

God knows. Not just what you do, but he knows what you think and he knows the evil imaginations that might exist in your heart. We read in Genesis six, five, God saw the wickedness of man, that it was great in the earth and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

We live in a day and age of which Jesus prophesied the days before he would come. He said that evil days would wax worse and worse. He questioned when he returned if actually there would be any righteousness on the earth.

The availability and almost the inescapableness of sin. You can be watching a decent television program and then the ads come on. And the ads have such filthy suggestions.

They can play with the mind. They can introduce evil thoughts. It's almost impossible to escape it.

We are surrounded by it and it is so easily available. And so many people have been trapped as the result of the ease and the availability of evil today. Of pornography and all.

It is all around us. And we have a tendency to become brainwashed. Whereas things that once did shock us and we would have immediately have turned the TV off.

Now we watch through it. And we're sort of dulled and sort of insensitive to it because we've seen it so much. But in reality it's being planted.

And it comes up in imaginations. And such was the case at the time when God destroyed the world in the days of Noah. Because the imaginations of their heart was only evil continually.

David as he was dying called his son Solomon to his bedside. And he said, Solomon my son know the God of your father and serve Him with your whole heart and with a willing mind. For the Lord searches all hearts.

He understands all your imaginations and your thoughts. And if you seek Him you will find Him. But if you forsake Him He will cast you off forever.

As Solomon had built the temple and was dedicating it. And as he was more or less pondering some of the problems that could come to the people if they turned from God. But his prayer was, Lord if they turn back to You and if they call upon You then hear from heaven.

Answer their prayers. And he could even foresee the possibility of their turning from God and being taken captive by their enemies and dwelling in strange lands. And he said, but if they turn toward this place and they in their distress they cry out unto You then forgive and do to every man according to his ways whose heart, he said, You know.

Because You know the hearts of all of the children of men. This saying that God knows your heart, your thoughts, your fantasies and nothing is hid from Him. Jeremiah the prophet said that the heart is deceitful above all things, desperately wicked.

Who can know it? But God responds that I search the hearts. I try the reins and I give to every man according to his ways and according to the fruit of his doing. In Luke 16, 15, Jesus said to the Pharisees, You do justify yourselves before men but God knows your hearts.

For that which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God. As the people would look at the Pharisees they would think, oh they're so holy. They're so righteous.

Look at that. Aren't they righteous men? But God is looking on their hearts. And Jesus' opinion of them was much different from the people's opinion.

Jesus said, Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup, but within you're full of extortion and excess. You blind Pharisee! First cleanse that which is in the cup, and then the outside may also be clean. Woe unto you, you Pharisees, you hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed sepulchers, which appear beautiful on the outside, but inside you're full of dead men's bones and all kinds of uncleanness.

So you outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within you're full of hypocrisy and iniquity, you serpents and generation of vipers. How can you escape the damnation of hell? Men looking at them thinking, righteous. Jesus looking at them and thinking, you are so evil, so wicked.

How do you ever hope to escape the damnation of hell? Now there were two common misconceptions that were held by these religious leaders, these elders in Jerusalem, in whose minds Ezekiel was allowed to enter. They are found there in verse 12, the Lord doesn't see us, and the Lord has forsaken the earth. Surely David knew much better than this, as we read in Psalm 139 this morning, David said, where can I flee from thy presence? If I ascend into heaven, you are there.

If I descend into hell, oh, you are there. If I take the wings of the morning and I flee to the uttermost parts of the sea, even there you surround me. If I say, surely the night will hide me.

He said, the darkness and the light are alike unto thee. David realized that there was no hiding from God. That God knew him completely.

That God knew his thoughts even before he thought them himself. Paul, when he was writing to the Romans, said that they had become vain in their imaginations. Their foolish hearts were darkened and professing themselves to be wise, they actually became fools as they changed the glory of an incorruptible God into an image that was made like into corruptible man or onto birds and four-footed beasts and

creeping things.

In other words, they started worshiping man, the human body. They started worshiping nature, the trees, and the flowers, and the birds, and the animals, and so forth. It sounds like he's talking about the wacko environmentalists who place a greater value on trees and upon animals than they do on humankind.

You know that you can be fined and imprisoned if you destroy an eagle's egg, and yet the government will help pay for an abortion if you want to get rid of your unwanted child. You can be arrested and fined if you deliberately starve a dog to death, and yet the courts ordered that Terry be starved to death. You know that you can be arrested and fined if you pick up a bird feather in the forest.

There was a naturalist that was taking our children on a nature's hike up to the youth camp, and there was a beautiful feather there on the ground, and this one little child picked it up, and this naturalist came to him and said, drop that. You can be arrested for possessing the feather of an endangered bird. But the kid said, I just picked it up.

Doesn't matter. You're in possession if you're holding it. What's wrong when we put more value on a feather of a bird than we do upon human life, upon a child, and say, well, you can be arrested for holding that.

Paul went on to write concerning this goofy age, wherefore God gave them up to filthy practices as they followed after the lust of their own hearts to dishonor their own bodies between themselves, who changed the truth of God into a lie, and they worshiped and served the creature more than the creator who is blessed forever. And for this cause God gave them up to vile affections, for even the women did change the natural use into that which is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lusts towards one another, men with men doing things that are unthinkable and receiving in themselves the consequences of their sin which was fitting.

And because they did not like to retain God in their minds, God gave them over to depraved minds to do things that are unimaginable. People could not possibly do the things that they are doing today unless they felt that God doesn't see them, that God doesn't know, that God has forsaken the earth. As the psalmist said in Psalm 73, they actually speak contemptuously against God.

They say, how does God know? Is there knowledge in the Most High? In verse 18 of chapter 8, God tells them the judgment that is going to come upon Jerusalem. Ezekiel has seen the reason for the judgment, because the minds of the people have become so perverted. And now God tells of the judgment in verse 18, Therefore will I also deal in fury, my eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity, and though they cry in my ear with a loud voice, still I will not hear them.

They've gone too far, they've crossed over the line, and judgment now awaits. As I look at the downward moral spiral that our nation is in, I wonder how much further must we go before God says, all right, that's it. I've had it.

If they cry, I will not answer. I'm going to bring my fury and judgment upon them. The men of Judah there in Jerusalem had gone that step too far.

Paul wrote in Romans chapter 2 verse 5, But after your hard and impenitent heart, you have only stored up unto yourself wrath for that day of wrath and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God. In other words, God's wrath and judgment like a river behind a dam is filling up, but then there comes that pressure

too great, the dam burst, and the judgment of God flows forth unchecked. In the book of Revelation, we read of the angel that will proclaim with a loud voice, If any man worships the beast, the Antichrist, or his image, or receives his mark in his forehead or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation.

He will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, in the presence of the Lamb, and there is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast in his image or whoever receives the mark of his name. You say, well, I don't believe those things in the Bible. It's a book of myths.

God doesn't really know or care. Well, whether you believe it or not, it doesn't change fact. It doesn't change the truth.

You might say, oh, I don't believe that one plus one equals two. Well, if you don't believe it, it doesn't change it. You don't prove that it doesn't equal two.

All you prove is that you're some kind of an idiot. And so if a person says, well, I don't believe the Bible. I don't believe what, you know, the Bible says.

It doesn't change the fact that God has spoken these things. That the Bible is the true word of God. It only means that you have never really studied the Bible.

For if you had studied it, you would know that it is the word of God. There are so many reasons to believe the Bible to be the word of God. And whether you believe it or not, still it is.

And God does see you, and God does know you. He knows all about you. And what God has said will indeed come to pass with the same exactness as the prophecies have already been fulfilled.

So many of them, as we will get moving on in the book of Ezekiel, we're going to be getting some amazing prophecies that were literally fulfilled shortly after the time that Ezekiel gave them. And those prophecies that were already fulfilled shall be fulfilled. The ones that are not yet fulfilled, you can be sure they will.

It does mean that if you remain an unbeliever, in that day when God shall judge, you will be with the unbelieving crowd that will be cast from the presence of God forever, in what is known in the Bible as the second death. Here's the amazing thing. God sees in your heart.

God knows what's going on in your mind. And still God loves you. And God desires to wash you.

To cleanse your mind. To cleanse your heart. God wants you to know His love and to live in fellowship with Him.

And He's made the provisions whereby your mind and heart can be cleansed. And Jesus came. He died upon the cross that through the shed blood of Jesus Christ you might be cleansed.

As the Bible said, the blood of Jesus Christ, God's son, cleanses a man from all sin. I might point out that in the Greek it is, is cleansing a man from all sin. It's a continuing process of the washing and the cleansing that God wants to do of your life.

To free you from the powers of sin that are destroying you. And if you will but accept and receive Jesus Christ, you will be cleansed fully. As the Lord said, come now, let's reason together, saith the Lord.

Though your sins be as scarlet, you can be as white as snow. Though they be red as crimson, yet you can be white as wool. God's offering to you a full pardon, a complete cleansing.

Father, we thank you for that offering that you have made to us. That if we would just but come, you would wash and cleanse us. And we could drink of the fountain of life freely.

Lord, work in our hearts, work in our lives, in Jesus name we pray. Amen.

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