

Family Worship Guide – Week 36

READ

- God's redemptive purpose involves having all nations come to honor Him as God through the holy witness of His people. However, in this morning's passage, His purpose is at risk of not being fulfilled due to Israel's exile.
- Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians in 586 BC as an expression of the Lord's wrath against His people's unfaithfulness. The people of Israel lost their land, their livelihood, and many had lost their hope of having God's covenant promises fulfilled. As a result, the surrounding nations are not honoring the Lord and are at risk of being excluded from God's redemptive purposes.
- The Babylonian exile called into question God's willingness to fulfill His purpose of blessing the nations through Israel. Yet, in this passage, the Lord reaffirms not simply His commitment to the promises He made to His people, but He also reveals the motive and the means for doing so.
- Read Ezekiel 36:22-32
In no uncertain terms, God reveals His motive for blessing the nations through His people. Everything He does in redeeming Israel and fulfilling His promises is done for His names' sake among the nations (v. 22). All of God's saving activity is done to preserve and to proclaim His glory among all peoples. He will vindicate the holiness of His great name among all peoples by how He acts to redeem His people and by how He acts to reform their spiritual capacity. Not only does the Lord reassert His motivation, He also provides the means by which His promises will be fulfilled. Whereas His glory is the motive, His grace is the means. God says "I will" eleven times in this passage in reference to His sovereign, gracious intervention to redeem and to reform His people (v. 24-30). He is the agent of change in the life of His people. He will supernaturally transform them into His holy witnesses to the nations by depositing His Spirit within them (v. 27). God provides His Spirit to His people so they might be His witnesses to the ends of the earth (See, Matthew 28:18-20).

Bottom Line: God redeems and reforms His people by His grace for His glory through His Spirit so they might be His holy witnesses among all nations.

Questions:

What is God's goal for the nations?

Why is God committed to His redemptive purpose?

How will God fulfill His redemptive purpose?

How does God's resolve to redeem and reform His people encourage you?

How might we become more consciously aware of our dependency upon the Holy Spirit for who we are to be and what we are to do in the world?

PRAY

- Read *Window on the World*, pg. 20-21 *Baloch* (Pakistan)
- Use Prayer Card

SING

- Use lyric sheet and mp3 download of "Revelation Song"
- Today's text underscores God's mercy and grace for His people. For that reason, we wanted a song that reflects the response evoked when one learns or is reminded of this unmerited favor and compassion God grants those who believe in Him. "Revelation Song", based on the fourth chapter of the book of Revelation, is a wonderful picture of the praise due the Lord. The author describes God in such a way that you cannot help but be "filled with awestruck wonder".

MEMORIZE

- Ezekiel 36:27 And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

SUGGESTIONS

These suggestions were created by the age-group ministry leaders as a way to help parents better communicate the biblical truths discussed in the Family Worship Guide. These activities and questions can replace or serve as a supplement to the questions under the “Read” section on Page 1. Remember that these suggestions are intended to help parents facilitate God-centered discussions with their children. Parents should prayerfully use these suggestions, and any other means necessary, to help their children discover the truths of God’s word and worship Him together.

Preschool (Birth-Kindergarten)

- Before you begin: Find a jar of peanut butter and screw the cap on very tightly.
- Ask your preschooler if they like peanut butter sandwiches. Tell them you will take off the lid and they’ll be able to see and smell the delicious peanut butter and maybe we can make a sandwich. Pretend to have difficulty removing the lid. Ask them to help you take the lid off. When you have removed it, explain that you needed some additional strength and help to be able to get the lid off and the jar open.
- Guess what, we need help everyday. We are just not strong enough to do everything alone, so God helps us. Nothing is too hard for God. He gave us His son, Jesus, so that we would never have to be alone. He loves us that much! We need to tell our friends about Jesus and that He can help them too. We should tell everyone, “God loves you!”
- Let’s pray and thank God that, through His love for us, He sent Jesus to help us in our greatest need. Let’s ask God to help us tell others about Him and what He has done for us.

Children (Grades 1-5)

- Sit down at the kitchen table and have two pieces of construction paper for each child. One piece should be green and the other piece should be gray (if you don’t have paper this color you can just use crayons or markers to color them first). Then tell each child to draw a large heart on each piece of paper and then have them cut the hearts out. The gray heart represents the heart of stone and the green heart represents the heart of flesh.
- Have the children read Ezekiel 36:22-32 on their own, and then have them go through the passage and write down all the things that characterize the heart of stone and then the heart of flesh. Have the children write these things down inside the appropriate color heart. Be sure to emphasize the primary difference in these two hearts is the presence of the Holy Spirit in the heart of flesh (be sure the child writes this in the green heart in bold letters “Holy Spirit”).
- Talk with them about how the Holy Spirit gives us the power to obey God, glorify God, and serve Him for His glory, here at home with mommy and daddy and among the nations. Be sure the children sees the importance of having and longing for the Holy Spirit to live within them. Take the gray heart over to the garbage and throw it away, while you make clear to them that we do not want hard and stony hearts like this, but hearts of flesh (hearts filled with the Holy Spirit). To close, pray for the children, showing them that this is the type of heart you want for yourself (in your life and in your parenting) and for them.

Students (Grades 6-12)

- According to the passage you read, how does God work to bring about the cleansing of His people?
- What is significant about the picture of removing the old heart and replacing it with a new one?
- When God places His Spirit in a person, what should the result of that be?
- Do you think walking in His statutes and obeying His rules are possible without His Spirit living in you? Why or why not?

Prayer

Praise

Praise is an act of worship through prayer in which we express our adoration of and love for God. It is rejoicing in who God is and the salvation He gives us through Christ. We recognize the many facets of His character and the work He has done in our lives. It is giving thanks for the blessings He has given us. When we praise God, we give glory, honor and thanks to Him.

Biblical Basis for Praise:

Deuteronomy 10:21; 1 Chronicles 16:8-13; Psalm 150; Romans 15:8-11; Hebrews 13:15; 1 Peter 2:9

Take some time for each of those gathered with you to lift up praises to the Lord.

Nations: Baloch (Pakistan)

- The Baloch are a people group of over 3 million with little Gospel presence. Pray the Lord will send out workers to spread the Gospel among this people.
- The Baloch people and Pakistan as a whole are hostile to the Gospel. Ask God to work in the hearts of those in the government and in tribal leadership.
- There are very few believers among the Baloch. Pray for God to strengthen these brothers and sisters to grow strong in the Scriptures and love for Christ.
- Pray for God to raise up a church among the Baloch for His name's sake.

Source: *Operation World* by Johnstone and Mandryk

Scripture Memory

Week 36

Ezekiel 36:27 And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

Revelation Song

By Jennie Lee Riddle

Worthy is the
Lamb who was slain
Holy holy is He
Sing a new song
To Him who sits on
Heaven's mercy seat

Holy holy holy
Is the Lord God Almighty
Who was and is and is to come
With all creation I sing
Praise to the King of Kings
You are my everything
And I will adore You

Clothed in rainbows
Of living color
Flashes of lightning
Rolls of thunder
Blessing and honor
Strength and glory
And power be
To You the only wise King

Filled with wonder
Awestruck wonder
At the mention of Your name
Jesus Your name is power
Breath and living water
Such a marvelous mystery

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