

Psalm 90, Job 34-42 (#70) Revised 2023

Psalm 90 — Moses contrasts God eternal nature and man's mortality, asking God to relent and renew his favor toward Israel. *Look for "You", "We", and "Our" in this psalm. Do any of these words stand out to you? If so, why?*

Job 34 – Elihu repeats back Job's argument that he is innocent. He then speaks about how "innocent" he thinks Job really is. Elihu tells about all the bad things that he sees in Job's life. He then continues to defend God's honor by saying that God can do no wrong. He punishes only those who deserve it, and only until they repent at which point, He restores them. Elihu then says that no one has the right to judge God or call His justice into question. He then speaks about how God doles out justice. Elihu wants Job to repent because of his sin and rebelliousness. *Was Job rebelling against God as Elihu had accused him (v. 37)? Why or why not?*

Job 35 – Elihu continues to speak. He insists that when someone sins or when they are righteous, it has no effect on God. Sin does nothing to God, and righteousness does not give God anything. Sin and righteousness only affect people. According to Elihu, God ignores the cries of the oppressed because of their wickedness, and that Job's case is no different. He says that Job is full of hot air and empty words. *Do our sins and our righteousness affect God (vv. 6-7)? See Genesis 6:5-6.*

Job 36 – Elihu continues to speak on God's behalf and boasts of his own wisdom saying that his knowledge is divinely inspired. God is mighty but doesn't hate people. He is just. He prospers the righteous and punishes the wicked. If the wicked repent then they are restored, but if not, they will perish. God's punishment is His way of wooing us back to righteousness. According to Elihu, since Job had so many bad things happen to him, he was obviously being judged for his wickedness and needed to repent. He says that God is exalted and none can teach Him. We are to remember to extol His works and praise Him. The water cycle alone should give anyone enough evidence to show how unfathomable is God and His works. *What mistake is Elihu making in his argument that the other friends also made (vv. 8-12)? What was the one question about suffering that none of the four men addressed?*

Job 37 – Elihu continues to speak about God’s voice being like thunder, reaching the ends of the earth. God causes it to snow and rain so that everyone can see His works. God uses the weather to punish men or to show His love. Elihu asks Job if he knows how God does the things that He does. He asks if Job can actually join God in His work. He says that God is beyond our reach. *Is God beyond our reach? Cite some scripture for your answer.*

Job 38 – It is finally God’s turn to speak and all others will be silenced by His words. God unleashes a barrage of questions that might be summed up in one question to Job; “Can you explain my creation?” #8 p. 865 Did Job lay the foundations of the earth? Did he give the sea its borders? Does he know where light and darkness live? God continues throughout the chapter to ask Job to speak of anything majestic he has done. *Often we want to question God for the reason He does what he does. After reading this chapter, how do you feel you should approach God?*

Job 39 – God continues to ask Job questions, this time about wildlife. He speaks about mountain goats, does, wild donkeys, wild ox, ostriches, horses, and the hawk. This essence of this chapter can be summarized in this question to Job by God; “Can you oversee my creation?” #8 p. 865 *Have you ever thought about the diversity of animals on the planet, and why they were created? What does that say about God?*

Job 40 – God then asks Job to go ahead and make his accusations. Job states how unworthy he is and decides to be silent. God asks Job if he would discredit His justice. He then asks Job to take on the mantle of deity and do the things that he was accusing God of not doing. This chapter not only shows the power and strength of God, but it also shows His restraint and mercy in not instantly wiping out all evil doers. *Have you ever wished God would do things your way? What does this chapter tell you about how God operates?*

Job 41 – God speaks about the leviathan and how no one can tame it. If no one can tame the leviathan, then they certainly can't tame or stand up to God. No one can claim anything from God because God, as the Creator, owns everything. God continues to speak of the leviathan and how He can hold it at bay and tame it. *What was the leviathan, and what did it represent?*

Job 42 – Then Job replies to God that he spoke out of turn and without knowledge. He repented upon finally seeing God for who He really is. God then rebukes Job's friends and has each one of them to offer a burnt offering for themselves. God then says that Job will pray for them, and He will accept Job's prayer. After Job had prayed for his friends, he prospered and was restored double for what he had lost. He finally received true comfort and consolation. *Why did God tell Job to pray for his friends? Why was Job only blessed and restored after he prayed for his friends?*

Sources for summary and questions: 1. Serendipity Bible for Groups-, c. 1988 Littleton, CO. 2. MacArthur Study Bible ESV, c. 1997 Thomas Nelson, Inc. 3. Life Application Bible HCSB, c. 1988 Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. 4. The Complete Bible Companion, c. 2014 Barbour Publishing, Inc., Uhrichsville, OH. 5. ESV Study Bible, c. 2008 Crossway Bibles, Wheaton, IL. 6. The World Bible Handbook, Lawrence Richards, Word Inc., Waco, TX. 7. The Quest Study Bible NIV, c. 1994 Zondervan Publishing & Christianity Today, Grand Rapids, MI & Wheaton, IL. 8. The Transformation Study Bible, c. 2009 David C. Cook. 9. Halley's Bible Handbook, c. 2000 Zondervan Publishing, Grand Rapids, MI. 10. 500 & Answers from the Bible, c. 2006 Barbour Publishing, Uhrichsville, OH. 11. Understanding the Bible, c. 2000 Holman Publishers, Nashville, TN. 12. Homan Bible Handbook, c. 1992 Homan Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN. 13. Moody Bible Commentary, c. 2014 Moody Publishers, Chicago, IL.

Psalm 91, Ezekiel 1-12 (#71) Revised 2023

Psalm 91 — Commonly known as the “Soldier’s Psalm”, it recounts the blessing of God’s protection toward those who trust in Him. *Are the promises in this psalm conditional?*

Ezekiel — For the historical background of Ezekiel read 2 Kings 22-25 and Jeremiah 28-29. The book of Ezekiel contains a variety of prophetic visions and oracles which Ezekiel presented to the exiles in Babylon over a twenty-two-year period (593-571 B.C.). Except for the oracle and lament over Egypt (29:17-30:26), the oracles appear in chronological order. Chapters 1-24 contain oracles from the five-year period preceding the siege of Jerusalem (588 B.C.). These are primarily announcements of God’s certain judgment against the city of Jerusalem and its temple. Chapters 25 to 32 are a series of oracles against surrounding nations with Babylon being the notable exception. Chapters 33-48 cover a sixteen-year period after the fall of Jerusalem and focus on hope for the future. Pay attention to how the structure reveals Ezekiel’s theology of God’s holy wrath. God is sovereign over all the nations and is a God of great mercy. If you read Ezekiel carefully, you will be able to see its imagery echoed in the writings of Paul and in John’s Revelation. This book was written in approximately 571 BC in Babylon.

Ezekiel 1 — At the age of thirty, when he should have started serving in the temple (Numbers 4:3), Ezekiel was instead called to serve as God’s prophet in Babylon. He saw a vision of God and received the Word of God in order to give it to his people. He describes what he saw, four creatures with wings, four wheels within wheels, a throne, and the Almighty. He immediately falls facedown as the Lord was speaking to him.

Ezekiel 2 — After falling on his face in humble worship, he then is lifted to his feet, is filled with the Spirit, and listened to the Word of God. He was fed on the Word of God which gave him what he needed to speak God’s Word (See Jeremiah. 15:16, Revelation 10:9, and Matthew 4:4). *How did God describe the people of Israel to whom Ezekiel would preach? See 2:4. What was Ezekiel not to do? See 2:6.*

Ezekiel 3 — God sent Ezekiel to his own people to proclaim the Word of God. God warned Ezekiel that his own people would not listen to him but was to go anyway. After the vision, he went to Tel-abib and sat there for seven days overwhelmed. Then God gives Ezekiel a command that should give each of us pause. When God tells Ezekiel to speak and he doesn’t obey, then the blood of the wicked that perish will be on his hands. *God has called each of us to speak His Word to a rebellious world around us. What are the reasons we give to ourselves for holding back and not speaking?*

Ezekiel 4 — God gave Ezekiel “performance art” to display to Jerusalem what would happen to it and the people. First, he “played war” to demonstrate the siege of the city (vv.1-3). The iron plate represented the barrier between God and His people (Lamentations 3:43-44) showing that God would no longer tolerate their idolatry. By God’s decree, Babylon would capture the city and nothing could stop that from happening. Then, he lay bound for part of each day, 390 days on the left side and then 40 days on the right. During that time, Ezekiel had to ration his food and water as the people of Jerusalem would do. Compare verse 14 with Acts 10:14. *Why did Ezekiel complain about the way he was told to bake his bread? What alternative did God allow him to use?*

Ezekiel 5 — God commanded that Ezekiel shave his head and beard, a very real sacrifice for a Jew. The hair was used to represent the people of Jerusalem who would be punished in three different ways, death by famine, death by the sword, and exile among the nations (Deuteronomy 28:47-57). Here you will see that God would spare a remnant yet again. *What caused the Lord to be so angry with His people (vv. 6-7 and 11)?*

Ezekiel 6— The time for signs and examples is over. Now Ezekiel delivers sermons. The first sermon is a judgment against idolatry. The mountains and valleys where idolatrous acts were performed would be destroyed along with the idolatrous people. God, however, would show grace and mercy and leave a remnant. The remnant would finally remember God and turn back to Him, but all the other people will die from pestilence, sword, and famine. Ezekiel uses rather harsh and graphic language to describe idolatry. *Why did God tell Ezekiel to prophesy against the mountains (v. 2)? See also Deuteronomy 12:2-3.*

Ezekiel 7 — The end has come. Four times God says “I will repay” (verses 3-4, 8-9; see also Gal 6:6-8). Everything that Judah had put their trust in (other than God) would not be able to help them, not money (v. 19), idols (vv. 20-22), or their leaders (vv. 23-27). It was indeed the end (vv. 2, 3, 6). *Re-read verses 10-11. What does God mean by the rod blossoming, pride budding, and violence growing up, and what does it say about God’s character?*

Ezekiel 8 — Ezekiel has another vision; this time dealing with the defilement of the temple. What Ezekiel was shown in his vision about the idolatry in the temple was indicative of what was happening within the nation. The nation was given over to idol worship in every area. In the temple, there was an image at the door as a person first came in. There were idolatrous images in the inner chamber. People worshipped idols openly in the very temple while others hid their idolatry “in the dark” (v. 12); but in the eyes of God, all were guilty. These sins caused God to remove His glory from the temple (v. 6) and brought violence to the land (v. 17). *Who was Tammuz (v. 14)?*

Ezekiel 9 — The glory of God had left the Holy of Holies and was departing from the temple because of the people’s great sins (1 Sam. 4:19-22; Jer. 7:1-15; Exod. 33:12-16). God’s judgment begins. He sent out a messenger to mark those who should be spared and sent out the executioners to slaughter everyone else inside the city without pity or mercy. Ezekiel cried out for God to show His people mercy, but the Lord’s wrath was upon those who have sinned. *What is the reason that some get the special mark on their foreheads and thus are not slaughtered? Where else in the Bible do we see something similar? See Revelation 7:3.*

Ezekiel 10 — After seeing all of the sins of Judah and Israel laid bare, Ezekiel looks up and receives a fresh vision of the throne of God (Jer. 17:12). God is preparing to leave His house behind to the idols since He is unable to be in the presence of such great sins. God is unwilling to share His glory with idols (Isa. 42:8). God directs the man in linen to bring coals from the fire of the altar so that He can bring judgment on Jerusalem (compare to Isa. 6:6-7). Ezekiel then describes the cherubim and the wheels of God that were still turning and working out His purposes in the world. *Why was it necessary that the glory of the Lord leave the temple (vv. 18-19)?*

Ezekiel 11 — Ezekiel prophecies against the leaders of the city. The leaders believed that they were the choice meat and would be spared the sword. God, however, was telling them that they were the scraps, and that He would kill them with the sword “at the border” (v. 9). As Ezekiel is prophesying one of the leaders dies. God then says that He will renew His people who have been scattered. He will replace their hearts of stone with new hearts of flesh. Then the glory of the Lord departed Jerusalem and went to a mountain to the east (see Matt. 23:38-24:3). *Will the glory of the Lord ever return to the temple? See Ezekiel 43:1-4, Zechariah 14:4-5. When will this happen?*

Ezekiel 12 — God’s people had become spiritually blind and deaf. They refused to see the signs or hear God’s Word. Because of this, God had Ezekiel preach two more action illustration sermons to warn them about the impending judgment of God. In the morning, he packed for exile showing that the people would pack to go into captivity. In the evening, he dug through his wall, covered his face, and walked out to show what would happen to King Zedekiah when he tried to escape. The false prophets of the time were saying that Ezekiel’s and Jeremiah’s prophecies would not come true, but God said that they would come true and quickly. *Is your life a living illustration sermon that catches the attention of people who are blind and deaf to God’s truth? The answer is to be personal.*

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Psalm 92-93, Ezekiel 13-24 (#72) Revised 2023

Psalm 92 — God's love and faithfulness are celebrated with this song. *List the ways that God's love and faithfulness are manifested (hint: look for the use of God's proper name Yahweh, translated as LORD in most English Bibles).*

Psalm 93 — The psalmist teaches that God is in control, mightier than nature, and trustworthy forever. *List the attributes of God described in this psalm.*

Ezekiel 13 — Ezekiel is now called to prophesy against the false prophets. They whitewashed the people's sins, but God wanted to wash them white (Isa. 1:18). Ezekiel then prophesied against the women who were leading the people astray with divination, false prophecy, and magic charms. *Why were the false prophets so dangerous? How do we know if a prophet is a true or false prophet? See Deuteronomy 18:21-22. What percentage of the time must a prophet be right in his prophecies to be a true prophet of God?*

Ezekiel 14 — In chapter 8, God showed Ezekiel the idols in the temple. Now God is showing Ezekiel the idols in the very hearts of the leaders of Jerusalem. He calls the people to repent and turn from their idolatrous ways. God uses Noah (Heb. 11:7), Daniel (Dan. 2), and Job (Job 42:7-10) as examples of men who saved others from destruction because of their personal righteousness. But God now says that even these men and their righteousness would not be able to save anyone in Israel; they would only be able to save themselves.

Ezekiel 15 — God talks about how wood from a good vine is only useful for two things: bearing fruit or burning. If a vine isn't bearing fruit, its only use is for the fire. Israel was not bearing fruit. She was only good for one thing. Because of this, God would set His face against her and she would be consumed by the fire. Entertaining sin in the heart will lead to practicing sin in your life. *"Idols in their hearts are the commitments and affections that people allow to stand between them and God (14:3)." #7 p. 1202. What idols of the heart do Christians have? What is an idol that you have struggled with?*

Ezekiel 16 — God uses very rough language to describe Israel. Yahweh chose her as a baby and raised her to be His bride. She deserted Him and went off with anyone and everyone. She broke her marriage covenant and was both an adulterous wife and a harlot who paid others to sin with her. God judged Sodom and Israel (Samaria, the northern kingdom), but that did not cause Judah to repent. She offered herself to false gods and allied herself with other nations. As such, she would be stoned and cut apart with the sword. We probably find this language offensive – but it is nowhere near as offensive as the behavior of the people of Jerusalem in betraying the Lord their God. *Genesis 19 describes the gross sexual immorality and perversion of Sodom. What other sins of Sodom does Ezekiel 16 describe? See verses 48-50.*

Ezekiel 17 — God has Ezekiel use an allegory to describe Israel and her situation. The first great eagle is Nebuchadnezzar. He came to Jerusalem (called Lebanon in the story) and took King Jehoiachin (the top branch of the cedar) to Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar left King Zedekiah (some seed) which grew into a low vine. Zedekiah made a covenant with Nebuchadnezzar to be loyal to Babylon, but he broke that covenant thinking that Egypt (the second great eagle) would protect him. God declared that this would not work and that Zedekiah would die in Babylon. *Compare this chapter with Isaiah 11:1-9. What did the cedar represent, and what does the twig (shoot/sprig) that grows represent?*

Ezekiel 18 — The Jews were quoting a proverb (Jer. 31:29-30) which accuses God of being unjust in punishing the children for their parent's sin. God explains that a person's sin or righteousness are credited to that person only. God is a just God. He does not punish a child for their parent's sin. He also does not spare a child because of the parent's righteousness. Each person is judged on their own merit. God does not want anyone to perish because of sin. He wants all to repent and turn from their sin. If they repent, they will not be punished. *Verse 31 calls for us to receive a new heart and a new spirit. What is the only way that this can happen?*

Ezekiel 19 — Ezekiel is speaking about the rulers of Israel. The lioness is Israel, and the first, strong lion refers to Jehoahaz (vv. 2-4; Jeremiah 22:11-12) who died in Egypt. The second lion probably refers to the current King Zedekiah (vv. 5-9), who was taken to Babylon (Jeremiah 39), and blinded. After this, there were no kings left who could save the land because they refused to listen to the Word of God. Next, he refers to Israel as a vine. He is speaking to Zedekiah and telling him about how this beautiful vine was going to be plucked up in wrath and withered by the east wind (v. 12; 17:10). It would be planted in Babylon (the desert) and the line of David would end at this time. The vine of Judah would have no branches worthy of a scepter (Genesis 49:8-10) until the birth of Christ (Matthew 1:1; Luke 1:30-33). *What is the significance of calling Judah a lioness and its rulers a lion?*

Ezekiel 20 — God has Ezekiel recount Israel's history of rebellion and God's history of His faithfulness. He speaks of their time in Egypt, the Exodus, the wilderness, and their conquering of Canaan land. The nation rebelled against God numerous times, and yet He continued to chasten and correct in order to draw them back to Himself. God then highlights how faithful and powerful He is with a series of "I will" statements. *What reason did God give for His continued faithfulness, and how does this give you hope?*

Ezekiel 21 — God has pulled His sword (Jeremiah 51:20-23) from its scabbard (vv. 1-7), prepared it for battle (vv.8-17), used it to slaughter and destroy Jerusalem (vv. 18-27), and finally utilized it to consume the Ammonites (vv. 28-32). In verses 18-23, God shows His power over pagans as He overrules their methods of making decisions. God then tells Ezekiel to demonstrate his reaction to these judgments by sighing (vv. 6-7) and wailing (v. 12) before the people. *Read 2 Peter 3:10-18. What is your response to the coming judgment of God, and how do you express that to others?*

Ezekiel 22 — Ezekiel is told to judge Judah. He lists out the charges against her followed by God's judgment. He then illustrates the smelting furnace and compares Judah to dross. God would gather them up in Jerusalem and melt them. He next speaks of the land or jungle and how the leaders are like lions and wolves seeking to devour the people, and how the priests do not distinguish clean from unclean (Matt. 7:6). The prophets were liars who whitewashed the sins of the people (Ezekiel 13). Lastly, God was looking for someone to build up the wall and stand before Him in the gap (breach) so that He would not have to destroy Judah. *Did God find anyone to stand in the gap so that judgment does not have to fall in Ezekiel's day? What do we need to do to be "gap men"?*

Ezekiel 23 — God takes idolatry very seriously. He compares it to prostitution and adultery. Israel had been giving themselves to idols and foreign gods since the time of Egypt. God judged the northern kingdom (Samaria) in 722 B.C. when the Assyrians took them captive. The southern kingdom of Judah did not heed this warning but instead increased their sins against God. Their sins were all the more grievous to God because He dwelt among them in the temple in Jerusalem (1 Corinthians. 6:19-20). God had delayed His punishment so the people of Judah thought that it meant they would not be punished (Ecclesiastes 8:11). *Are you giving God your undivided devotion (2 Cor. 11:1-4; James 4:1-10)? Is there any area that is competing with God? Be thoroughly honest.*

Ezekiel 24 — God revealed to Ezekiel, who was in Babylon, what He was doing in Jerusalem (Amos 3:7; John 15:15). The date mentioned here is January 15, 588 B.C.; the day that Nebuchadnezzar began the siege of Jerusalem. God would burn Jerusalem with the fire of His fury and only after His fury was spent would Jerusalem be clean again. God had Ezekiel demonstrate how the Israelites in captivity should respond to the burning of Jerusalem. In obedience to God, that morning he told the people that his wife would die, who was the delight of his eyes. That night she died, and he did not mourn for her the way that they traditionally mourned. He only groaned silently according to God's command. He was illustrating that they should not mourn for the loss of the city, but rather they should have been mourning over their sins that grieved God. Now it was too late (Isa. 55:6). *How did Ezekiel show his complete obedience to the Lord even though God's commands seemed unbearable to him? How does this relate to us? See Luke 14:26-27, 33.*

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