

KSW13 to Mar 30

March 24 Su Reading 83 — Isaiah 29:13-24 — From Empty Worship to Awe

- 13 *And the Lord said:
“Because this people draw near with their mouth
and honor me with their lips,
while their hearts are far from me,
and their fear of me is a commandment taught by men,
14 therefore, behold, I will again
do wonderful things with this people,
with wonder upon wonder;
and the wisdom of their wise men shall perish,
and the discernment of their discerning men shall be hidden.”*
- 15 *Ah, you who hide deep from the LORD your counsel,
whose deeds are in the dark,
and who say, “Who sees us? Who knows us?”*
- 16 *You turn things upside down!
Shall the potter be regarded as the clay,
that the thing made should say of its maker,
“He did not make me”;
or the thing formed say of him who formed it,
“He has no understanding”?*
- 17 *Is it not yet a very little while
until Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field,
and the fruitful field shall be regarded as a forest?*
- 18 *In that day the deaf shall hear
the words of a book,
and out of their gloom and darkness
the eyes of the blind shall see.*
- 19 *The meek shall obtain fresh joy in the LORD,
and the poor among mankind shall exult in the Holy One of Israel.*
- 20 *For the ruthless shall come to nothing
and the scoffer cease,
and all who watch to do evil shall be cut off,
21 who by a word make a man out to be an offender,
and lay a snare for him who reproves in the gate,
and with an empty plea turn aside him who is in the right.*
- 22 *Therefore thus says the LORD, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob:*
- “Jacob shall no more be ashamed,
no more shall his face grow pale.*
- 23 *For when he sees his children,
the work of my hands, in his midst,
they will sanctify my name;
they will sanctify the Holy One of Jacob
and will stand in awe of the God of Israel.*
- 24 *And those who go astray in spirit will come to understanding,
and those who murmur will accept instruction.”*

Standing in Awe — Yesterday’s reading about being only associated with holiness extends to today’s reading, describing those who “*honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me*” (v. 13). I am sometimes guilty of that when I sing familiar songs in a worship service and find my mind wandering. That is not intentional worship. Even worse are those who say, “*Who sees us? Who knows us?*” (v. 15). Their hearts are not only far from God, but they are dismissing Him, trying to stay undisturbed in their sinful ways. God’s plan for reversing this situation was to “*again do wonderful things with this people, with wonder upon wonder*” (v. 14). Those wonders came through Jesus when “*the deaf ... hear ... the blind ... see ... and the poor ... exult in the Holy One*” (vv. 18-19). When the Jews see that, “*they will sanctify my name; they will sanctify the Holy One ... and will stand in awe of the God of Israel*” (v. 23). Thousands of spiritually hungry Jews followed Jesus, and after His Ascension, many thousands of repentant Jews, and then Gentiles, discovered the miraculous indwelling and empowering of the Holy Spirit. The next time you worship at church, please be thinking about your need to “*stand in awe*” during worship.

[I Stand in Awe of You - YouTube](#)

Who can grasp Your infinite wisdom?
 Who can fathom the depth of Your love?
 You are beautiful beyond description,
 Majesty enthroned above.

And I stand, I stand in awe of You;
 I stand, I stand in awe of You.
 Holy God to whom all praise is due,
 I stand in awe of You.

— Mark Altrogge (1987)

March 25 M Reading 84 — Isaiah 61:1-4 — The Anointed Messiah

- 1 *The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
 because the LORD has anointed me
 to bring good news to the poor;^[fn]
 he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
 to proclaim liberty to the captives,
 and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;^[fn]*
- 2 *to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor,
 and the day of vengeance of our God;
 to comfort all who mourn;*
- 3 *to grant to those who mourn in Zion—
 to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes,
 the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
 the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit;
 that they may be called oaks of righteousness,
 the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.^[fn]*
- 4 *They shall build up the ancient ruins;
 they shall raise up the former devastations;
 they shall repair the ruined cities,
 the devastations of many generations.*

(61:1) Or *afflicted*

(61:1) Or *the opening* [of the eyes] *to those who are blind*; Septuagint *and recovery of sight to the blind*

(61:3) Or *that he may display his beauty*

The Effects of the Spirit — We looked at this passage earlier when introducing one of the names of the Holy Spirit: “*The Spirit of the Lord GOD.*” At that time, however, we did not consider the effects that resulted when the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus during His ministry on earth. Jesus confirmed in Nazareth’s synagogue that He was the main subject of this passage by quoting verses 1-2 and then concluding, “*Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing*” (Luke 4:21). Why did the Holy Spirit come upon Jesus? The stated effects were “*to bring good news ... bind up the brokenhearted ... proclaim liberty ... opening [spiritual] prison[s] ... proclaim ... the LORD’s favor ... to comfort,*” and *to give wonderful gifts to redeemed mankind for reconstructing ruins of failed systems* (vv. 3-4). We are still in that long period of time as we watch the effects of the Holy Spirit working in individual lives and collectively in the Church. The good news is still being proclaimed to people who are trapped in sinful habits and situations. Needy people are being cared for and comforted by individual Christians and church organizations. The Holy Spirit is working through us to continue the work that Jesus started on earth, until the last one is saved and Jesus returns. After that, “*the day of vengeance of our God*” (v. 3) will be unleashed on all those who defiantly rebelled and resisted the wooing of the Spirit in their hearts and minds. While there is still time, we believers must continue to do the work Jesus has called us to do and the Holy Spirit empowers us to do.

[Work, for the Night Is Coming - YouTube](#)

Work, for the night is coming,
Under the sunset skies;
While their bright tints are glowing,
Work, for daylight flies.
Work till the last beam fadeth,
Fadeth to shine no more;
Work, while the night is darkening,
When man's work is o'er.
— Annie L. Coghill (b. 1836)

March 26 Tu Reading 85 — Isaiah 63:7-14 — The Spirit in Israel’s History

- ⁷ *I will recount the steadfast love of the LORD,
the praises of the LORD,
according to all that the LORD has granted us,
and the great goodness to the house of Israel
that he has granted them according to his compassion,
according to the abundance of his steadfast love.*
- ⁸ *For he said, “Surely they are my people,
children who will not deal falsely.”
And he became their Savior.*
- ⁹ *In all their affliction he was afflicted,^[fn]
and the angel of his presence saved them;
in his love and in his pity he redeemed them;
he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.*

- 10 *But they rebelled
and grieved his Holy Spirit;
therefore he turned to be their enemy,
and himself fought against them.*
- 11 *Then he remembered the days of old,
of Moses and his people.^[fn]
Where is he who brought them up out of the sea
with the shepherds of his flock?
Where is he who put in the midst of them
his Holy Spirit,*
- 12 *who caused his glorious arm
to go at the right hand of Moses,
who divided the waters before them
to make for himself an everlasting name,
who led them through the depths?*
- 13 *Like a horse in the desert,
they did not stumble.*
- 14 *Like livestock that go down into the valley,
the Spirit of the LORD gave them rest.
So you led your people,
to make for yourself a glorious name.*

ESV Footnotes

(63:9) Or *he did not afflict*

(63:11) Or *Then his people remembered the days of old, of Moses*

The Spirit of Rest — Three times the Holy Spirit is mentioned in this passage, all in a historical context. First, the Holy Spirit was given to the people of Israel when Moses said that God “*brought them up out of the sea*” (v. 11a), referring to the miracle at the Red Sea. Yahweh “*put in the midst of them his Holy Spirit*” (v. 11b). He was their Immanuel (“God with us”) and their Savior (v. 8), and the Spirit led them through the waters and the wilderness. Today, the Holy Spirit is not only in our midst by influencing and leading the Church of Christ, but He indwells each believer. Second, after 40 years of wandering in the wilderness because of their sin, “*the Spirit of the LORD gave them rest*” (v. 14), bringing them into the Promised Land. That is a picture of the spiritual rest the Holy Spirit gives to those today who are freed from the heartache of sin’s bondage and brought into the family of God. The Spirit is our rest. Third, Israel’s occupation of the Promised Land was filled with periodic times of rebellion against the God who saved them, “*But they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit*” (v. 10). This shows one personal characteristic of the Holy Spirit, i.e., He can be grieved. Later, we will see that Paul warned us about this in the form of a command: “*And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption*” (Eph. 4:30). The Spirit is not only with us, He dwells within us and gives us eternal, spiritual rest.

[Near to the Heart of God - YouTube](#)

There is a place of quiet rest,
Near to the heart of God,
A place where sin cannot molest,
Near to the heart of God.

O Jesus, blest Redeemer,
Sent from the heart of God,
Hold us, who wait before Thee,
Near to the heart of God.

— Cleland B. McAfee (1903)

March 27 W Reading 86 — Ezekiel 1:1-21 — Spirit in the Wheels

¹ *In the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I was among the exiles by the Chebar canal, the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God.^[fn] ² On the fifth day of the month (it was the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin), ³ the word of the LORD came to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the Chebar canal, and the hand of the LORD was upon him there.*

⁴ *As I looked, behold, a stormy wind came out of the north, and a great cloud, with brightness around it, and fire flashing forth continually, and in the midst of the fire, as it were gleaming metal.^[fn] ⁵ And from the midst of it came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had a human likeness, ⁶ but each had four faces, and each of them had four wings. ⁷ Their legs were straight, and the soles of their feet were like the sole of a calf's foot. And they sparkled like burnished bronze. ⁸ Under their wings on their four sides they had human hands. And the four had their faces and their wings thus: ⁹ their wings touched one another. Each one of them went straight forward, without turning as they went. ¹⁰ As for the likeness of their faces, each had a human face. The four had the face of a lion on the right side, the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and the four had the face of an eagle. ¹¹ Such were their faces. And their wings were spread out above. Each creature had two wings, each of which touched the wing of another, while two covered their bodies. ¹² And each went straight forward. Wherever the spirit^[fn] would go, they went, without turning as they went. ¹³ As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches moving to and fro among the living creatures. And the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning. ¹⁴ And the living creatures darted to and fro, like the appearance of a flash of lightning.*

¹⁵ *Now as I looked at the living creatures, I saw a wheel on the earth beside the living creatures, one for each of the four of them.^[fn] ¹⁶ As for the appearance of the wheels and their construction: their appearance was like the gleaming of beryl. And the four had the same likeness, their appearance and construction being as it were a wheel within a wheel. ¹⁷ When they went, they went in any of their four directions^[fn] without turning as they went. ¹⁸ And their rims were tall and awesome, and the rims of all four were full of eyes all around. ¹⁹ And when the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and when the living creatures rose from the earth, the wheels rose. ²⁰ Wherever the spirit wanted to go, they went, and the wheels rose along with them, for the spirit of the living creatures^[fn] was in the wheels. ²¹ When those went, these went; and when those stood, these stood; and when those rose from the earth, the wheels rose along with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.*

ESV Footnotes

(1:1) Or *from God*

(1:4) Or *amber*; also verse 27

(1:12) Or *Spirit*; also twice in verse 20 and once in verse 21

(1:15) Hebrew *of their faces*

(1:17) Hebrew *on their four sides*

(1:20) Or *the spirit of life*; also verse 21

Following Obediently — We move on in today's reading to the prophet and priest, Ezekiel, who shared in the Jewish exile in Babylon. The visions given to him were fantastic, and he seemed to be constantly struggling to find words to describe what he saw. The vision in the first chapter introduced the arrival of the throne of God (cf. v. 26). The four living creatures he saw and described are later

identified as cherubim (10:20). Like the cherubim over the ark of the covenant, these had wings that touched each other. Like the four living creatures in John's later vision (Rev. 4:7), they had the same four faces of a human, lion, ox, and an eagle. The main reason for our reading about Ezekiel's vision today, however, involves the gyroscopic wheels that contained "*the spirit*" (vv. 20-21). What was this spirit? The Christian Standard Bible capitalizes "*Spirit*," and other translations indicate that form in a footnote, including the ESV. It does seem to be divine, and if so, it is the Holy Spirit. Notice that this Spirit was in control over the four living creatures. Twice it is said, "*Wherever the spirit would go [wanted to go], they went*" (vv. 12, 20). That is a picture of the guidance of the Holy Spirit in our lives today. He wants to lead us where He wants us to go. His desire is for us to follow His directions willingly and obediently, and the most rewarding life we could have comes from going where He wants us to go.

[I'll Go Where You Want Me to Go - YouTube](#)

I'll go where You want me to go, dear Lord,
O'er mountain, or plain, or sea;
I'll say what You want me to say, dear Lord,
I'll be what You want me to be.

— Mary Brown (b. 1856)

March 28 Th Reading 87 — Ezekiel 2:1-7 — A Rebellious House

¹ *And he said to me, "Son of man,^[fn] stand on your feet, and I will speak with you."* ² *And as he spoke to me, the Spirit entered into me and set me on my feet, and I heard him speaking to me.* ³ *And he said to me, "Son of man, I send you to the people of Israel, to nations of rebels, who have rebelled against me. They and their fathers have transgressed against me to this very day.* ⁴ *The descendants also are impudent and stubborn: I send you to them, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD.'* ⁵ *And whether they hear or refuse to hear (for they are a rebellious house) they will know that a prophet has been among them.* ⁶ *And you, son of man, be not afraid of them, nor be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns are with you and you sit on scorpions.^[fn] Be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house.* ⁷ *And you shall speak my words to them, whether they hear or refuse to hear, for they are a rebellious house.*

ESV Footnotes

(2:1) Or *Son of Adam*; so throughout Ezekiel

(2:6) Or *on scorpion plants*

Strengthened to Go — There are several unusual things revealed in this passage. The first is Ezekiel's title. God calls him, "*son of man*," 93 times in this book, the same title Jesus used of Himself 82 times in the New Testament. Only one other person was addressed that way in the Bible, Daniel, and it was only one time (Daniel 8:17). This unusual title shows that the prophet Ezekiel was very special to God. The second unusual feature is that God summarized Israel's spiritual condition by repeating this statement three times: "*for they are a rebellious house*" (vv. 5-7). He was working with an unruly crowd. Third, it is said that the Holy Spirit "*entered into*" Ezekiel (v. 2), rather than the more frequent visit of the Spirit "*upon*" someone in the OT. The purpose of this encounter with the Spirit was apparently to give strength to Ezekiel. In the last verse of the previous chapter, when Ezekiel said that he saw "*the likeness of the glory of the LORD, ... I fell on my face*" (1:28). The next verse says that the divine voice from the throne said, "Son of man, stand on your feet..." (2:1), but Ezekiel was apparently not able to obey that command until the Holy Spirit "*entered ... and set me on my feet.*" It was then that the prophet received God's commission for service: "*Son of man, I send you to the people of Israel...*" (v. 3). He was made to stand so that he could go to work! The Holy

Spirit also works in our lives today to give us strength to tackle whatever tasks the Father gives to us. That is what happened at the commissioning of the missionaries sent from Antioch to the Gentiles: "...the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them'" (Acts 13:2).

I couldn't find a video for this hymn, "Spirit of Power, and Truth, and Love."

Spirit of power, and truth, and love,
Who sitt'st enthroned in light above,
Descend, and bear us on Thy wings
Far from these low and fleeting things.

Compassed by foes on every side,
By sin and sore temptation tried,
Where can we look or whither flee
If not, great Strengtheners, to Thee?

— William Alexander (b. 1808)

ACCOUNTABILITY TIME!

March 29 F Reading 88 — Ezekiel 3:12-27 — The Watchman's Warning

12 Then the Spirit^[fn] lifted me up, and I heard behind me the voice^[fn] of a great earthquake: "Blessed be the glory of the LORD from its place!" 13 It was the sound of the wings of the living creatures as they touched one another, and the sound of the wheels beside them, and the sound of a great earthquake. 14 The Spirit lifted me up and took me away, and I went in bitterness in the heat of my spirit, the hand of the LORD being strong upon me. 15 And I came to the exiles at Tel-abib, who were dwelling by the Chebar canal, and I sat where they were dwelling.^[fn] And I sat there overwhelmed among them seven days.

16 And at the end of seven days, the word of the LORD came to me: 17 "Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. 18 If I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, in order to save his life, that wicked person shall die for^[fn] his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. 19 But if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, or from his wicked way, he shall die for his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul. 20 Again, if a righteous person turns from his righteousness and commits injustice, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die. Because you have not warned him, he shall die for his sin, and his righteous deeds that he has done shall not be remembered, but his blood I will require at your hand. 21 But if you warn the righteous person not to sin, and he does not sin, he shall surely live, because he took warning, and you will have delivered your soul."

22 And the hand of the LORD was upon me there. And he said to me, "Arise, go out into the valley,^[fn] and there I will speak with you." 23 So I arose and went out into the valley, and behold, the glory of the LORD stood there, like the glory that I had seen by the Chebar canal, and I fell on my face. 24 But the Spirit entered into me and set me on my feet, and he spoke with me and said to me, "Go, shut yourself within your house. 25 And you, O son of man, behold, cords will be placed upon you, and you shall be bound with them, so that you cannot go out among the people. 26 And I will make your tongue cling to the roof of your mouth, so that you shall be mute and unable to reprove them, for they are a rebellious house. 27 But when I speak with you, I will open your mouth, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD.' He who will hear, let him hear; and he who will refuse to hear, let him refuse, for they are a rebellious house."

ESV Footnotes

(3:12) Or *the wind*; also verse 14

(3:12) Or *sound*

(3:15) Or *Chebar, and to where they dwelt*

(3:18) Or *in*; also verses 19, 20

(3:22) Or *plain*; also verse 23

The Moving Spirit — We have the identical statement here about the Holy Spirit's strengthening action that we saw in yesterday's reading: "... *the Spirit entered into me and set me on my feet*" (3:24; cf. 2:2). The strength Ezekiel needed this time was for a period of being bound by cords and temporarily unable to speak (3:25). The Spirit was eventually going to bring him out of that difficulty, but His purpose here was to sustain him through the trial. The Holy Spirit has a way of strengthening us for whatever difficult situation we must face. The other action of the Spirit in today's passage involves some kind of transportation: "*Then the Spirit lifted me up ... The Spirit lifted me up and took me away...*" (vv. 12, 14). This may have been a virtual transportation as part of his vision so that, while "*the glory of the LORD*" was leaving, Ezekiel was also being taken away in the vision. On the other hand, Ezekiel could have been describing a literal transportation from one location to another. We will see later that this is what happened to Philip after his encounter with the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:39). Even today, the Holy Spirit has a way of putting us in the right place at the right time, perhaps to experience something significant, to learn an important lesson, or to bring warning or encouragement to someone in need. We should be learning how to be more sensitive to the Spirit's working in our lives and circumstances. The question that will challenge us is this: Was that my own imaginative idea or was it the Spirit speaking to me? Experience will help to teach us when it is the Holy Spirit's voice.

[I'm Gonna Sing When the Spirit Says Sing - YouTube](#)

I'm gonna sing when the Spirit says sing,
I'm gonna sing when the Spirit says sing,
I'm gonna sing when the Spirit says sing,
and obey the Spirit of the Lord.

— Anonymous Spiritual

ACCOUNTABILITY TIME! If you are up to date in your reading as of today, please [click here](#) to leave your email address or let me know at accbiblead@gmail.com.

ACCOUNTABILITY REMINDER

March 30 Sa Reading 89 — Ps. 78:51-55; Zech. 2:6-13 — The Holy Land

Psalm 78

- ⁵¹ *He struck down every firstborn in Egypt,
the firstfruits of their strength in the tents of Ham.*
- ⁵² *Then he led out his people like sheep
and guided them in the wilderness like a flock.*
- ⁵³ *He led them in safety, so that they were not afraid,
but the sea overwhelmed their enemies.*
- ⁵⁴ *And he brought them to his holy land,
to the mountain which his right hand had won.*
- ⁵⁵ *He drove out nations before them;
he apportioned them for a possession*

and settled the tribes of Israel in their tents.

Zechariah 2

⁶ Up! Up! Flee from the land of the north, declares the LORD. For I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heavens, declares the LORD. ⁷ Up! Escape to Zion, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon. ⁸ For thus said the LORD of hosts, after his glory sent me^[fn] to the nations who plundered you, for he who touches you touches the apple of his eye: ⁹ “Behold, I will shake my hand over them, and they shall become plunder for those who served them. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me. ¹⁰ Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for behold, I come and I will dwell in your midst, declares the LORD. ¹¹ And many nations shall join themselves to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people. And I will dwell in your midst, and you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. ¹² And the LORD will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem.”

¹³ Be silent, all flesh, before the LORD, for he has roused himself from his holy dwelling.

ESV Footnote

(2:8) Or he sent me after glory

Family of Freedom — What response would you receive if you asked 10 people on the street today, “What is the Holy Land?” Almost all of them would say, “Israel.” Just about everyone knows the location of the Holy Land because it has been much in the news for years. Strangely, however, the two passages we read today are the only two places where the term “*holy land*” appears in the Old Testament. It is interesting that both passages are set in times of Israel’s release from bondage. In the historical Psalm 78, the context of our reading was their deliverance after being slaves for 400 years in Egypt. In Zechariah, the context was at the end of Israel’s 70-year exile in Babylon. The call was to go home to the land God called “*holy*.” It was holy because God had chosen it to be the home for His people, and it was holy because God’s presence would be there in a special way. A significant extension is seen in Zechariah 2:11, in that “*many nations shall join themselves to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people.*” That looked ahead to what Jesus would begin, the forming of the Church. Essentially all of us Gentiles are benefiting from that extension, being included in the family of God, the family of freed people. God said this should be our response: “*Sing and rejoice ... for behold, I come and I will dwell in your midst, declares the LORD*” (v. 10).

[He Set Me Free - YouTube](#)

Once like a bird in prison I dwelt,
No freedom from my sorrow I felt;
Then Jesus came and listened to me,
And glory to God, He set me free!

He set me free, yes He set me free,
He broke the bonds of prison for me;
I'm glory bound, my Jesus to see,
For glory to God, He set me free!

— Albert E. Brumley (1939)

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