
AVOID A FEROCIOUS FELICITATION; INSTEAD, DESIRE A NEW HEART

Ezekiel 36:26-27

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Teaches that true obedience to God is not self-achieved but comes from a transformation of the heart that God alone can perform. Lessons include God replacing a "heart of stone" (stubbornness, resistance) with a "heart of flesh" (soft, receptive, and obedient), and the promise of His Spirit dwelling within people to enable them to follow His commands from an inner desire rather than external pressure. This is a work of divine grace and the promise of a new spiritual life, or regeneration.

In the last days, when God brings His chosen people back to the Promised Land (v. 24), He will change them spiritually: For, after all, only a transformed people can enjoy a transformed land. The spiritual experience described in this section illustrates what happens to every sinner who trusts Jesus Christ.

THE LORD WILL GIVE THEM A NEW HEART (Ezek 36:26). Ezekiel Had Already Spoken About This Inward Change (11:18-20; 18:31), The Kind Of Change That The Lord Yearned For Israel To Experience Before They Entered The Promised Land. "Oh, That They Had Such A Heart In Them That They Would Fear Me And Always Keep All My Commandments" (**Deut 5:29**. NKJV).

The Prophet Jeremiah shared the same promise that Ezekiel gave: "Then I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God" (**Jer 24:7**, NKJV). Jeremiah spoke about the New Covenant God would make with the Jews, a covenant not written on stones but on their hearts and in their minds (**31:31-33; 32:29; Heb 8:8-13**). A "stony heart" is a hard heart, one that doesn't receive God's Word and nurture spiritual growth (**Ezek 2:4; 3:7**).

THE LORD will give them the Holy Spirit within (Ezek 36:27). IT IS THE SPIRIT WHO ACCOMPLISHES THESE DIVINE MIRACLES IN THE HEARTS OF THOSE WHO TRUST THE LORD FOR SALVATION. He gives us a new heart and a new spirit and also a new desire to love the Lord and obey Him. The Holy Spirit is given like refreshing water upon parched ground, and this produces the "fruit of the Spirit" in our lives (Isa 44:3; Gal 5:22-23).

The witness of the Spirit in the heart is proof that the person has been born of God (**Rom 8:9,14-17; Eph 1:13-14**). Because you have God's Spirit within, you share in the divine nature (**2 Peter 1:1-4**) and therefore want to obey the divine will. It is nature that determines conduct. Dogs act like dogs because they have a dog's nature, and God's people act like they belong to God because they have God's nature within (**1 John 3:9**). Ezekiel will deal again with this gift of the Spirit in.

THE LORD will claim them again as His people (Ezek 36:28). It will be like a renewal of the covenant, for they will live in the land, He will be their God and they will be His people. This will be a permanent arrangement, for they will no longer rebel against the Lord and disobey His will.

LESSONS TO TAKE HOME

1. GOD GIVES A NEW HEART AND SPIRIT

The core promise is that God will replace a hardened, rebellious "*heart of stone*" with a new heart that is soft and responsive, or a "*heart of flesh*". This is a fundamental, internal change in one's nature.

2. GOD'S SPIRIT IS THE SOURCE OF TRANSFORMATION:

The promise includes putting God's Spirit within people. This indwelling Spirit is the power that enables obedience, a gift of grace rather than a result of human effort.

3. OBEDIENCE BECOMES A DESIRE, NOT A BURDEN:

With a new heart and spirit, people will be able to follow God's statutes and ordinances because they will be written on their hearts. This is not a forced compliance but a change of will where they desire to do God's will.

4. A NEW HEART MAKES ONE SENSITIVE TO GOD:

A "*heart of flesh*" is a heart that is sensitive to God's will and is able to understand and respond to spiritual things, in contrast to a spiritual

"heart of stone" that is dead and unresponsive.

5. GOD'S PROMISES ARE TRANSFORMATIVE:

This passage is part of a larger prophecy showing that God's plan is

not just about external circumstances but also about an internal, spiritual renewal that is necessary to fulfill His promises and have a true relationship with Him.

CONCLUSION

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