

"Zechariah's First Burden"

Part 1

Zechariah 9-11

Introduction: Today we are returning to our study of the book of Zechariah and as we do, we are coming to the last section of the book. The last section will deal with two burdens.

Notice Zechariah 9:1 - This is burden number one.

Notice Zechariah 12:1 - This is burden number two.

A burden is something which God places heavily upon a person's heart. Let me show you what a burden in a person's heart looks like.

Jeremiah 20:2, 7-9

² *Then Pashur smote Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks that were in the high gate of Benjamin, which was by the house of the LORD.*

⁷ *O LORD, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived; thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me.*

⁸ *For since I spake, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the LORD was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily.*

⁹ *Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.*

Jeremiah was suffering because of preaching the Word of God. So, he decides he will not proclaim the Truth, but he will just be silent. But the Word of God was like a fire in his bones. God had placed a burden upon Jeremiah to preach the Word of God and therefore he had to do it or he would be a man most miserable.

Zechariah was given two burdens from God and he had to speak of both to the Jews.

Burden #1 - Zechariah 9-11

This burden deals with the first coming of Jesus Christ.

Burden #2 - Zechariah 12-14

This burden will deal with the second coming of Jesus Christ.

As we approach Zechariah 9 there is one verse here that most people are familiar with and as for the rest of the chapter it is pretty much unknown, but I am hoping to change that in our study.

Notice Zechariah 9:9

This verse refers to Psalm Sunday when Jesus rode into Jerusalem. But what about the other verses? What are they referring to and how do they connect with Jesus arrival in Jerusalem?

I. The Conquests Zechariah 9:1-8

We are not going to go into great detail with verses 1-8 but I do want to give you the historical background so that we can understand the context. In verses 1-8 we are going to see the great conquests of Alexander the Great the Grecian leader. Alexander the Great was a military genius. He was undefeated in his battles and when he had finally conquered the world it is said that he sat down and wept because there were no more countries to conquer. He took over his father's throne at the age of 20 and by the time he was 30 he had created one of the largest empires in history. He died at the age of 32 from a fever that many believe were the results of a sexual disease. He could conquer the world, but he could not conquer his own desires.

Now what we need to understand as we approach these first 8 verses is that Alexander the Great is going to be an instrument in the hand of God to bring judgment upon the enemies of the Jews. When we get to this chapter we must keep in mind that the temple is almost complete and those who had opposed the building of the temple had sort of faded into the background but now the Jews are facing more powerful threats. It is the surrounding peoples who are sending threats to Jerusalem and God is fully aware. He therefore is going to use Alexander the Great to destroy the enemies of the Jews.

Genesis 12:1-3

Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

² *And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:*

³ *And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*

Notice Zechariah 9:1

Alexander the Great would start up north in the land of Syria. The judgment would fall upon Hadrach and would then spill over to Damascus. The statement at the end of this verse is very interesting.

"when the eyes of man, as of all the tribes of Israel, shall be toward the LORD."

Some see this as saying that God has His eyes on every man and every situation that comes upon His people. Others see it stating that the Jews would watch closely as the judgment of God would fall upon these nations.

Notice Zechariah 9:2-4

Now we see that the judgment will spill over to Tyre and Sidon. These were a people who saw themselves as very wise. But they were only wise in their own eyes. Tyre was a city that was considered to be unconquerable because of its location. The Assyrians put the city under siege for 5 years but could not conquer it. The Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar had it under siege for 13 years and could not finish the job. Alexander the Great conquered Tyre in just 7 months.

Notice Zechariah 9:3-4 again.

This was a very wealthy city. It was a very strong city. The people in the city were very proud because of the security they had built. But it was no match for God. Her wealth did her no good. God delivered this city over to Alexander the Great and in 7 months it had been destroyed.

Application:

Human wisdom, human strength and worldly wealth are of no good when facing the judgment of God.

Revelation 20:11-12

¹¹ *And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.*

¹² *And I saw the dead, small and **great**, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.*

The great here at the Great White Throne will include the elites and the billionaires of the world. Money will be of no comfort and it will not be used to by a pass to get out of the Like of Fire.

James 5:1-3

Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.

² *Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten.*

³ *Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.*

In Revelation we see the destruction of Commercial Babylon and what happens to all her wealth.

Revelation 18:7-10

⁷ *How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.*

⁸ *Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.*

⁹ *And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning,*

¹⁰ *Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.*

Notice Zechariah 9:5-7

Now the judgment spills over to Philistia. He mentions several of the people groups within Philistia. Ashkelon, Gaza and Ekron are all groups of people within Philistia. Notice that he says Ashkelon will fear. Ashkelon was the one causing fear in the Jews. They would actually be terrified by what news of Alexander the Great approaching. God would destroy these groups because of what they were doing to the Jews.

Notice Zechariah 9:6-7 again.

The word "bastard" refers to a mongrel race. The Lord would destroy the king and the citizens and replace them with a mongrel race of people who would dwell in their land. In

verse 7 there is a reference to the cannibalism which they practiced in the worship of their false gods. There would be however a remnant that would actually worship God. So you need to get the picture. Alexander the Great would start in the north and he would sweep over these nations rapidly destroying the people as God used him as a means of judgment on these nations that were the enemies of the Jews.

Notice Zechariah 9:8

Here is a word of comfort for the Jews. Alexander the Great would not touch Jerusalem. He would pass by two times going to Egypt and then returning but God's protection would be around the city and God's people would be protected.

Now let me give you more information on Zechariah's prophecy here. This was all prophesied 200 years before Alexander the Great ever came on the scene. There are many Bible scholars who doubt that Zechariah wrote this because it is so accurate and it was foretold 200 years before it happened. But we see it as prophecy and as the Word of God so therefore we know that God knows what the future holds.

II. Lessons from the Conquests.

1. God can use whomever He desires to conduct His will.

Alexander the Great was an evil cruel man but God used him to judge the enemies of the Jews. God can use unsaved people in our lives to bring about His will.

Daniel 2:20-22

²⁰ *Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his:*

²¹ *And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:*

²² *He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.*

Even the most sinful people in our nation can be used by God to carry out His will. I can assure you that the people in leadership today are not there by chance. They are placed there by God and they are being used by Him even when they do not realize.

Acts 2:22-23

²² *Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:*

²³ *Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:*

2. The accuracy of the Bible.

Zechariah foretold this 200 years before it happened and history tells us it unfolded just as God said it would. We do not need this to know how accurate God's Words is, but it certainly does make it clear. That means that everything that is foretold will come to pass just as it is written.

Matthew 5:18

¹⁸ *For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.*

3. The protection of God.

Alexander the Great would conquer all the nations around the Jews but he would not touch them. He would pass Jerusalem 2 times and not harm one of the people.

God is and will judge this nation and in the midst of the millions who are living here He knows who belongs to Him.

2 Timothy 2:19

¹⁹ *Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.*

As judgment falls He can protect us from harm if He chooses to and if not when we die we shall be in His presence immediately.

2 Corinthians 5:6-8

⁶ *Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:*

⁷ *(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)*

⁸ *We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.*

4. The blindness of the heart.

Notice Zechariah 9:9

Isarel had all this information and they missed Him when He came the first time. They could have had the Kingdom if they would have enthroned Jesus. But they wanted a political deliverance not a spiritual deliverance.

Conclusion:

We wonder how they could miss Him with all this information. But it is no different today when people read and hear of Jesus works and resurrection and all the proof is in this book and yet they refuse to accept Him because they are looking for something else. Let me leave you with a warning.

Matthew 12:41-45

⁴¹ *The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.*

⁴² *The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.*

⁴³ *When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.*

⁴⁴ *Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished.*

⁴⁵ *Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.*