

"Zechariah's First Burden"

Part 12

Zechariah 9-11

Introduction: Last week in our study of Zechariah we started into chapter 11. It is in this chapter that Zechariah changes his delivery. Before this he was a man with Words of encouragement and now when we come to this chapter, he has Words of doom and destruction. In this chapter Zechariah looks beyond his day into the first century during the first advent of our Lord. Let us consider what we looked at last week.

I. The Coming Wrath

Notice Zechariah 11:1

There was a judgment coming that was unavoidable. They had resisted Jesus Christ but they would not be able to resist this judgment.

John 1:10-11

¹⁰ *He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.*

¹¹ *He came unto his own, and his own received him not.*

Notice Zechariah 11:1-2

The idea behind these verses is to show that the judgment will be so severe that even the strength of the land will be destroyed.

Notice now how severe the judgment will be.

Notice Zechariah 11:3

The devastation will be to the point that the shepherds will howl and the lions will roar. The shepherds will howl because their pastures will be gone and the lions will lose their cover along the Jordan.

Let us notice a parallel passage.

Jeremiah 25:34-38

³⁴ *Howl, ye shepherds, and cry; and wallow yourselves in the ashes, ye principal of the flock: for the days of your slaughter and of your dispersions are accomplished; and ye shall fall like a pleasant vessel.*

Zechariah Study #32 September 3, 2023

³⁵ And the shepherds shall have no way to flee, nor the principal of the flock to escape.

³⁶ A voice of the cry of the shepherds, and an howling of the principal of the flock, shall be heard: for the LORD hath spoiled their pasture.

³⁷ And the peaceable habitations are cut down because of the fierce anger of the LORD.

³⁸ He hath forsaken his covert, as the lion: for their land is desolate because of the fierceness of the oppressor, and because of his fierce anger.

II. The Cause

Notice Zechariah 11:4-5

Zechariah was called to portray the True Shepherd here. A little later he will be called to portray the false shepherd. The problem and the cause are in verse 5. It was the religious leaders of Jesus day. They had control over the people and as the leaders they rejected Jesus Christ when He came offering to them the Kingdom.

Last week we looked at how much they hated Jesus. They wanted to kill Him when He resurrected Lazarus and then they wanted to kill Lazarus.

Notice Zechariah 11:5 again.

These religious leaders lived like there would be no judgment day for them. They used the people to get rich.

Hebrews 9:27

²⁷ And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

III. Zechariah's Ministry

Notice Zechariah 11:6

God's message through Zechariah was that He would not protect the inhabitants of the land. He would step back and He would allow them to go into captivity. This is not the Babylonian captivity but it is pointing to the 1st century Jews who would be dispersed by the Romans in AD 70. These people had all the evidence before them. Jesus' Words, His miracles, the witness of the Father and the Words of the prophets. But they still rejected Him. A small remnant turned to Him but most of them walked away. One of the reasons was because Jesus came preaching repentance and they did not see themselves as sinners.

Application:

Zechariah Study #32 September 3, 2023

People who continuously hear the Gospel and suppress the Truth are walking on dangerous ground.

Romans 1:18-24

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

¹⁹ Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

²⁰ For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

²¹ Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

²² Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

²³ And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

²⁴ Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

This brings us to where we are today.

Notice Zechariah 11:7

Zechariah stands in the place of the Shepherd. He chooses 2 sticks. One is called Beauty and the other Bands. Beauty means FAVOR and Bands means UNION. Notice the words of Unger.

"The Eastern shepherd carried a rod or stout club hewed from a tree to beat away wild beasts attacking the sheep and a crooked staff for retrieving the sheep from difficult places."

These were the two sticks that Zechariah had. One for protection and one for rescue.

Application:

These are two sticks that every pastor should carry.

➤ **Crooked Staff**

Let me touch on the staff first. It speaks of rescue. A pastor is to be there to rescue believers who get caught in the briars and the weeds. He is not to kick them deeper into the briars but he is to be there to help pull them out.

➤ **The Club**

This is not to be used on the sheep. It is to be used to protect the sheep. A pastor uses this club by teaching the Bible and naming false teachers so that the sheep do not get caught up in the wrong teaching.

Too often a past will favor one of these over the other. He may be hard on false teaching but he shows little grace to rescue fallen believers. He may be excellent at rescue but he is weak at warning the sheep. Many times, a pastor is weak at protection because the church ties his hands. They do not want false teachers named because it may offend someone.

Notice Zechariah 11:8

Let me read for you what Unger says concerning this verse.

"The only construction which is at all to any notice, is that which regards the language as descriptive of the three rulers in the Jewish state - the priests, the teachers of the law, and the civil magistrates. These were the people of influential prestige by whom the nation's affairs were managed and to whose wickedness, which reached its acme when they crucified the Messiah, the destruction of the state is to be ascribed. The one month can best be understood as referring to the period of culminating unbelief just before the national leaders crucified our Lord and thus sealed the fate of the Jewish state. During this period the nation rejected our Lord, and the Lord rejected the nation by disavowing its leaders."

Notice Zechariah 11:8-10

When we slow down and we look closely at these verses they paint a very dark picture. The spiritual leaders had succeeded in leading the people down a path of destruction. Let me show you what they did.

Matthew 7:13-15, 21-23

¹³ Enter ye in at the strait gate: *for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:*

Zechariah Study #32 September 3, 2023

¹⁴ *Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*

¹⁵ *Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*

them.

²¹ *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*

²² *Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and -in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?*

²³ *And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

The spiritual leaders had led the Jews down the path of the Broad Way.

Notice Zechariah 11:9-10 again.

These people had gone so far that God would break His covenant with them. This is NOT the Abrahamic Covenant because it is impossible for God to break that Covenant. What is this covenant?

Listen to the words of Leupold:

"The term 'covenant' is here used in a looser sense, not as descriptive of a formal agreement entered into by contracting parties, but to indicate that, when the peoples round about Israel did her no harm, this was due to the fact that God had put them under as strong a restraint as might be exerted upon a nation by a covenant solemnly sworn to."

This was basically a covenant of protection. So what Zechariah is saying is that God is removing His protection. That is exactly what God did in AD 70.

Notice Zechariah 11:9 again.

It would be so bad in Jerusalem that the Jews would turn to cannibalism in order to survive. This actually happened and was recorded by Josephus.

Notice Zechariah 11:11

Zechariah Study #32 September 3, 2023

The people would come to understand that what was being prophesied was the Word of God. How would they know?

Deuteronomy 28:62-67

⁶² And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude; because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the LORD thy God.

⁶³ And it shall come to pass, that as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it.

⁶⁴ And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone.

⁶⁵ And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind:

⁶⁶ And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life:

⁶⁷ In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.

They knew what was about to happen was from the Word of God but it too late to reverse it.

IV. The Value

Notice Zechariah 11:12-13

This is all Messianic, meaning that it all points to Jesus. Zechariah was announcing he was finished trying to shepherd the people so he demanded his pay. They paid him 30 pieces of silver. Now let me show you what this was.

Exodus 21:32

³² If the ox shall push a manservant or a maidservant; he shall give unto their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.

Zechariah Study #32 September 3, 2023

Thirty pieces of silver was the price for a dead slave. This is all the value that the Jews placed upon Zechariah. In this we can see the problem. The Jews placed little value on the Truth of God's Word. They had a man who gave them the Truth but they saw him as no more valuable than a dead slave. Let us notice what this was pointing to.

Matthew 27:3-8

³ Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,

⁴ Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that.

⁵ And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.

⁶ And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood.

⁷ And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in.

⁸ Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day.

Conclusion/Application:

How much value do you place on Jesus Christ? How important is He to you? Know this, if you continue to reject Him like the 1st century Jews there may come a day when it is too late to reverse the consequences.