

## **Kings and Prophets 17-11-30**

This is Thursday, the 30th of November, 2017. We're continuing our study of kings and prophets. We're in the book of Zechariah.

We're approaching the finish line of our long study. It's been very fascinating to me to be able to put these prophets in their context. And we've got just Zechariah and Malachi to go.

And we find ourselves now in Zechariah chapter 12. We looked at the first oracle on the other side of the binder. You remember that there's sort of a symmetry to the book of Zechariah.

We had sort of the front cover, then we saw the binder in the middle. And then beginning in these more recent chapters, we're looking at the backside. And it begins with an oracle and the burden of the word of the Lord comes in chapter 9. And so we saw 9, 10, and 11 last time and concluded that.

And we're picking up tonight in chapter 12. And if you look there, you'll see the burden of the word of the Lord. So that's going to be our second oracle in this section.

Let's take a moment to focus our concentration, cultivate the ministry of the Holy Spirit, both in the delivery and in the receiving of these observations from God's word. And then we'll begin. Father, we're grateful for these times that we spend together nourishing our souls on the spiritual food, the manna from heaven that we find in your word.

We know that it has supernatural power in its content. It transforms us. It ennobles us.

It cleanses us and sanctifies us. It is the voice of your Holy Spirit to teach us and to guide us and to motivate us in the directions we could never find for ourselves in the energy of our own flesh. We thank you for this portion of your word, for what it has meant down through the ages to both those who lived in the Old Testament age and those of us who live in this wonderful age of grace.

We pray that as we look at it together tonight, that it will be meaningful and helpful to each one, that we will be drawn closer together and closer to the example of the Lord Jesus as we seek to serve and to learn and grow in the time that remains to us in this life. We pray it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Well, we see that we have a new oracle beginning here. Let's read it, at least the first portion of it, and see what it has to say. The burden of the word of the Lord against Israel.

This against is the Hebrew preposition *al*, A-L, which means against. It sometimes means upon. And it's interesting because as we go forward, ask yourself, is this for or against Israel? This is translated the oracle or the burden of the word of the Lord against Israel.

Thus says the Lord who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms

the spirit of man within him. We've seen sets of three things in the previous oracle. You remember we saw what appeared to represent prophet, priest, and king, the three areas that comprise leadership and three areas of failure, the false shepherds that God finds fault with, and the Lord Jesus ultimately will come and be the perfect leader in all three of those areas.

And here we have God qualified. You think of all of the ways that God could hand you his ID card. I've told you before how fascinated I was when I was riding in a car with the commandant of the Marine Corps and we had kind of a long drive to this one hospital where we were going to visit people that had been injured in the Murrah building blast in Oklahoma City.

And so to kill time, we were talking about one thing and another, and I don't remember how it came about. I am sure that if I had to do over again, I might not do it. But I basically asked the commandant if he would mind if I looked at his ID card.

I was just curious, does it look anything like mine? And he got it out and showed it to me. So I actually got to see the ID card for the commandant of the Marine Corps. And it looked exactly like mine, except face and rank were different.

But I thought it might have an embedded chip or some secret key to the missile silo or something in it, access to the inner sanctums of the Pentagon or something. But it's just your standard old ID card. That's before they started.

I think now there are some special features that enhance the digital access. But it identifies even as high as the commandant. He has to identify himself for his authority to be recognized at certain times in certain areas.

Well, the Lord God of heaven does the very same thing. He doesn't just say, I'm God, so shut up and listen. He says, I am the God who brought you out of the land of Egypt.

I am the God of your fathers. He identifies himself in a number of different ways. So there are many ways that he could identify himself.

And it's always interesting to see, what does he choose? You would expect that whatever it is, it will be pertinent to what he's about to say. And he doesn't say, I'm the God of your father, Abraham. He doesn't say, I'm the God that brought you out of the land of Israel.

What does he say? He says, I am the God who stretches out the heavens. And this is a cal. It's not, I stretched them out long time ago.

I'm resting on my laurels from centuries and millennia ago. He says, I am the God who stretches out the heavens. And you get the idea that this is an ongoing involvement.

The whole notion that God wound up the universe like a clock and then wandered off somewhere and fell asleep or got busy or is betrayed by passages such as this. He is still actively involved in the management of, the oversight of, and what science recently has

discovered to be the continuing expansion of the universe. Not only is expanding, but the expansion is accelerating.

They kept thinking, well, wouldn't it be convenient if we had a universe that cycled? It expands, but its gravity gradually slows that to a stop. And then it begins to converge and it comes back and condenses into a dot the size of a period on a page and then expands again. You know, this is what they say.

I'm sorry, but looking at the expanse of the universe, I don't care how much math they do. Nobody's going to tell me that everything, all the interstellar matter, the earth itself and all of this material will condense down to the size of a dot on a page. I just intuitively don't believe it.

I don't know. I think it came from nothing. I think God spoke it into existence or spoke and his minions did whatever was necessary to bring it into existence from other dimensions than these.

You know, we can create little momentary nuclear explosions and so on that partake of particles and things other than the norm. But whatever it was, God stretches out the heavens. He stretches them out.

He continues to stretch them out. He's actively involved in it. He lays the foundation of the earth.

He didn't just lay it in the past. Genesis 1-1, he lays the foundation of the earth and it speaks both of God's continuing involvement and his timelessness because you put all three of these things together. And notice there are three.

Genesis 1-1 has two. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. He stretched out the heavens and he laid the foundation of the earth, you could say.

You've got to wait till the latter part of chapter two and into chapter three before you get this third one. He forms the spirit of man within him. God formed man out of the dust of the ground, which presupposes that he had to have already stretched out the heavens.

He had already found the foundations of the earth or there wouldn't have been any place for the man to live. There had to be space and there had to be matter. There had to be heavens that would sustain the earth and provide it energy, give it direction and symmetry and have signs and lights in the sky and so on.

The star dust of which the earth is made had to start in the heavens, the heavens, the earth. But you get the idea that the reason God stretches out the heavens and the reason God lays the earth was with a view toward man with a spirit. These build the heavens were an arena for the earth.

The earth is the environment for the man. So even though scale wise they get smaller,

importance wise, as is so typical with God, the last shall be first and the first shall be last. Man with his spirit within him is the whole reason for the universe and the planet.

And you have that all summarized so beautifully and poetically in this introduction, which is God speaking in first person. Thus says the Lord who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth and forms the spirit of man within him, doesn't say he formed him out of the dust of the ground because it's not talking about his temporary habitation. It's talking about his permanent spiritual self, spirit of man within him.

Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. How does this sequence from the introduction, the heavens, the earth, man with his spirit, now he's talking about the situation of the people of God in Jerusalem and Judah vis-a-vis the nations. The surrounding peoples will lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem.

Let me remind you that historically speaking, we've not had any such thing take place since the days of Haggai and Zechariah. The surrounding peoples have not laid siege. Now, did Jerusalem get attacked from time to time? Has it been attacked down through history? Yes.

It has not been surrounded by the nations. So we know that this is prophetic. It's future.

Now, the people in Zechariah's day wouldn't have known that. But what sort of reception do you think this news would get? God doesn't say, behold, the peoples are going to surround and besiege your city as they're still trying to finalize the temple and just get that they've just come back. They've already been sacked, besieged, hauled off captive.

They've come back and they're trying to rebuild. So this isn't exactly the kind of news we had in Haggai, for example. The Lord is with you.

Build, be strong. There's a great future ahead. Jerusalem and God's people will once again be the focus and the center and the top of the mountain and Zion and victory and prosperity and peace, a chicken in every pot and so on.

This seems to argue the other way. It reminds you of Daniel who is praying for the restoration and the peace of Jerusalem and Judah, and he gets the vision that makes him physically ill and unable to stand. And he's got to be helped to his feet and restored and strengthened.

It's so debilitating because all of his hopes are dashed as the long view unfolds. I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples. Now, here's the thing.

Well, let's keep reading. It shall happen in that day. I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples.

So first of all, Jerusalem is going to be a cup that's going to get drunk. Secondly, it's going to be a heavy stone and it's going to be attempted to be hauled away. There's those who are going to

try to heave the stone.

They're going to try to pick it up and remove it, get it out of the way. This stone is an impediment. Let's get rid of it.

Those who try will be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it. So you've got a little bit of a chiasmic structure here. They're going to, all the peoples, all the nations are going to besiege it.

It's going to be a cup of drunkenness and a heavy stone that's going to cut them when they do that. In that day, says the Lord, I will strike every horse with confusion and its rider with madness. I will open my eyes on the house of Judah and will strike every horse of the peoples with blindness.

And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, the inhabitants of Jerusalem are my strength in the Lord of hosts, their God. It's a weird thing to say. The governors, while all this is going on.

So Jerusalem's a cup and people are going to try to drink it, but it's going to make them drunk and stupid and blind and silly and confused. It's going to be an impediment stone. And when they try to pick it up and move it, it's going to cut them up.

And the governors of Judah and are going to say, notice it doesn't say the governor of Jerusalem is going to say the governors plural of Judah are going to say, remember, Judah is an area. Judah is a country, right? The Southern kingdom. They're going to say the, the multiple people in charge in some way are going to say, the inhabitants of Jerusalem are my strength in the Lord of hosts, their God, not my God, their God.

There's something about the inhabitants of Jerusalem. It's going to appeal to these regional potentates. We've got to figure that out.

Then in verse six, it says in that day, I will make the governors of Judah like a, the same guys, like a fire pan in the wood pile and like a fiery torch in the sheaves. Well, you know what happens to that? You throw it in there and it's going to create a conflagration. But what else? If you use a little butane match and you light your grill or you light a brush pile, you light a bonfire, you still got the match, right? If you take a lamp, an oil lamp, and you use the flame and you light something, you can kindle a blaze, but you still have that thing.

But if you are a fire pan in the wood pile or a fiery torch in the sheaves, what happens to the fire pan and the torch? It's in the midst of the blaze. It is likely to be as consumed as everything else, right? But Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, Jerusalem. So this fire is going to devour the surrounding peoples on the right hand or on the left, but Jerusalem is somehow going to survive.

Not the governors of Judah who are the fire pan and the torch. Jerusalem is going to survive. It

just gets more and more confusing the further you read it.

The Lord will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall not become greater than that of Judah. So the tents of Judah are going to be saved first, and they are going to be the means of deliverance in some sense, so that glory doesn't descend on Jerusalem itself. More about that later.

In that day, the Lord will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The one who is feeble among them in that day shall be like David. And the house of David shall be like God, like the angel of the Lord before them.

It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. Well, that's enough for us to bite off here and see if we can figure out real quick. The burden of the word of the Lord against Israel, against Israel or upon Israel, but all the rest of this is Judah and Jerusalem.

So I haven't seen Israel yet. I'm seeing Judah and Jerusalem, right? So what we'll probably have to do is look at the second half. Let's just read these next five verses real quickly.

And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Notice it didn't say anything about Judah. Again, we're in our observation phase here.

We're just making a few notes of what we do and don't see, right? Verse 10, I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplication. Then they will look on me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for him as one mourns for his only son and grieve for him as one grieves for a firstborn.

They will look on me whom they pierced. They will grieve for him. In that day, there should be a great morning in Jerusalem, like the morning at Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.

And the land shall mourn every family by itself, the family of the house of David by itself, their wives by themselves, the family of the house of Nathan by itself and their wives by themselves. By the way, as we're in this section, just look at how much space it takes up. You think, wow, look on him whom they pierced.

We know this prophecy is carried forward and quoted in the New Testament, but it gets a line. Now this mourning and who's doing it and where they are is getting a lot of copy. It's getting a lot of text space here.

Verse 13, the family of the house of Levi by itself and their wives by themselves, the family of Shimei by itself and their wives by themselves. All the families that remain every family by itself and their wives by themselves. So back to my verse one now, the burden of the word of the Lord against Israel.

Where does Israel show up? Verse 12, the families of the land. Okay. So again, they're

mentioned at the beginning and then inside that we're going to see Jerusalem and Judah, as you see it in verse two, that's going to be the content of everything two through 11, two through 11 is all Judah and Jerusalem, right? Which is a part of Israel as a people, as a nation at large.

But then Israel as in the large view, as the people group, as the original inheritors of God's covenant show up more in verse 12 through 14. And you still have the house of David, but you've got some universality there. You've got four houses mentioned and then all the rest of the houses.

And four is always the number of let's cover everything. It's the four winds, the four corners. It's so funny.

I have to laugh every time I see a skeptic website saying, oh, you know, look, the poor flat earth people that wrote the Bible think the earth has corners. Four is the number of universality. So that is why you have the number four.

And you've got these four houses mentioned here. It's universal there. So the passage proceeds, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness.

It's going to be this rock that people pick up and it's going to cut. It's going to cause people to be drunk. It's going to do these damages to those who surround.

But you get the idea that the power here is recognized in Judah. That the the people, the inhabitants of Jerusalem are my strength in the Lord of hosts, their God. So you have this weird symbiosis between Judah as a region and the governors of Judah who recognize that there's the people, something about the people, and it is actually their faith in God.

These inhabitants of Jerusalem, the people in Judah realize this is a key to victory in this in this siege. Obviously, and to just kind of cut to the chase here and tell you what I think all this means, we've moved forward into the time of the tribulation and we're getting very close to the Battle of Armageddon. It's after the first three and a half years, the false peace of the Antichrist, he breaks the covenant in the middle of the week.

Then everything starts going into the handbasket and the kings, the seven heads and the ten horns and the woman riding the beast and all the rest of it. This coalition revived Roman Empire, whatever you want to call it, is going to assemble Revelation 17 or 16, 17, whatever it is, in the veil of Megiddo in preparation for the Battle of Armageddon. They are going to surround Jerusalem.

Well, the key to victory here is already in Scripture. And as those armies begin to assemble and begin to focus their attention on taking Jerusalem, there is an unseen element, whether it is a guerrilla force, whether it is a resistance resistance that's in Judah. But it is as though these assembled armies are focusing on the stronghold of Jerusalem and they're not paying attention to these in Judah.

Well, these in Judah and where it says governors, verse six, in that day will make the governors of Judah. This is a really interesting word. It comes from Aleph.

Aleph leads us to Aleph, which is thousands. And this is the word Aleph, but the consonants are the same. It's the letter Aleph and then a Lamed and then an F sound, a PH sound, the Peh in Hebrew.

Aleph, Aleph, Aleph in this case. And it really means chief or head or leader of a group. Of an of an undisclosed number.

And this is one of the reasons we believe that Aleph doesn't necessarily mean a literal one thousand. Aleph is a group that is led by an Aleph. It's a group with a chief.

It's a unit capable of independent function. And it may be larger, it may be small, but they didn't concern themselves so much with numbers in large battles in the ancient world. They said, how many units have I got? And that's an Aleph and the leader.

So these are the chiefs. That chief is the best way to describe it. You could call it captain of a thousand if you understand that a thousand is not literal.

But governor really kind of misses it because these guys aren't administrators. They are. They are guys interested in breaking this siege and defeating the besieging armies.

And they realize they've got a connection. There's a link to the faithful in Jerusalem. And they say these inhabitants of Jerusalem are my strength.

And that strength is in the Lord of hosts, their God. And have they is it something about the temple that is rebuilt and their sacrifice and offering that there this is cryptic for us. Suffice it to say that because there is belief in God on the part of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, something they are, something they have, something they do is known to the chiefs of Judah.

And they realize this is how we're going to win. It's not necessarily waiting for the horsemen and chariots of the Lord to descend. The Lord himself coming in Revelation 19, coming with clouds and slaying them all with the breath of his mouth.

Remember that the breath of his mouth are the words of his mouth. And the word of God are the words of his mouth. And this can just as well be that the people of God have already secured victory because of what God tells them here and other passages like this.

That those who know the word of God are going to prevail and be victorious. And this is just like I believe the Lord Jesus knew what he was supposed to do in his humanity. Man shall live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

And he knew his Old Testament backwards and forwards. He was able to confound the doctors of the law at the age of 12. And he only got better in the next 18 years.

And there's nothing the Lord Jesus didn't know in his humanity. I believe that the Holy Spirit didn't reveal to him in his grasp of Scripture. And there are those who are going to know God in the tribulation.

And they're going to realize that here's the stuff that's in both the Old Testament and the New. And God has already told us what we need to do. And it's going to be a great key.

And this is one of them. And it's exciting to see it. I don't understand quite what it is, but I don't have to.

These chiefs of Judah are the guys that need to figure it out. And they, coupled with the inhabitants of Jerusalem, are going to defeat these seemingly undefeatable, overwhelmingly numerically superior armies. How do I know that? Verse 7, the Lord will save the tents of Judah first.

Notice there's a stronghold and a fortress and a lot of protection in Jerusalem. But it's the tents, the little flimsy things out in Judah. God's going to save them.

Nobody's attacking the tents. The assembled armies didn't say, let's go burn the tents of Judah. They want to attack the fortified stronghold of Zion.

The Romans knew it was a defensible position. That's why they built their big fort there. But God's going to save the tents.

And it's like a Gideon thing all over again, with the lamps and the pitchers. And remember, when Gideon and his 300 slammed those things down, there was fire and there was confusion. And the guys ended up defeating themselves and massacring each other.

You remember that? There was so much confusion. Well, what does the passage say here? I will strike every, verse 4, I will strike every horse with confusion and his rider with madness. I will open my eyes on the house of Judah and will strike every horse.

The horses, this is the cavalry. This is the strength. This was the strongest stuff in the ancient world.

But if it's all confused and it's throwing the riders and they're running in every direction, this is, God is giving those future people how to win. What are they going to do? Maybe they're going to EMP their communications. Maybe somebody on the inside is going to have access to something that is going to blind, deafen and dumb all of these armies.

They're going to do something, but God says, I will blind them. And maybe it's something that comes out of the temple. I don't know what it is, but this is how they're going to win.

Look at verse 6. I'll make the chiefs of Judah like a fire pan in the wood pile and like a fiery torch in the sheaves. All of these surrounding armies are going to sort of catch fire. And in the confusion, they're probably going to attack, harm and neutralize each other.

And when that happens, it's going to be like Joshua. Its far superior numbers are going to be defeated by the weight of their own mass and confusion. In that day, verse 8, the Lord will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

The one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David. One of you will put to flight a thousand. How is that possible? Verse 5, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, I will almost translate this.

The inhabitants of Jerusalem are my strength because of their faith in the Lord of hosts, their God. They're going to be clear headed. They're going to be clear minded.

They're going to be wise. They are going to be able to put to flight a thousand, every one of them. The weakest one of them is going to be like David and the house of David.

And you get the idea that there are going to be identifiable descendants of David at that time. If they rehabilitate temple worship by the time of the Antichrist, so that there is sacrifice going on and the Antichrist is able to cut it off, that means they've identified the Levites and they figured out who are legitimate Levites. Do you not think they're going to figure out who are legitimate descendants of David, you know, genetically or however they're going to do it? Somebody's going to know the house of David.

These people are going to be known. And the house of David is going to do like the house of David used to do back at the beginning. It's like a great chiasm.

David and Solomon were the two greatest, both general and administrator that Israel ever had. Well, at the end, it's going to be like the beginning and they're going to have a combination of Solomon and David in the house of David. So that the house of David is going to be like the presence of God himself, like the angel of the Lord before them.

Who can stand in battle against the angel of the Lord? Remember when the angel of the Lord appeared to Joshua, be strong and have a good courage. Be not afraid, the Lord your God is with you. It shall be in that day I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

And I'm guessing if God seeks a thing, he's going to find it. If he's seeking to destroy them, he probably is going to destroy them. And that's when the blood runs as high as the horse's bridles.

Now, he says, the second part of this, verse 10, I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Notice, not the tents of Judah, not the chiefs of Judah. The chiefs of Judah are going to recognize this, but the faith and the divine anointing is on the house of David in Jerusalem, just like at the beginning.

There was a great victory in the day that David slew Goliath. But who had the anointing of God? Who implemented the power of God? It was David. And that is the key to everybody else

achieving victory.

I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Verse five is the key here. My strength is in the Lord of hosts.

This is like their motto. Not by might, nor by power. Our strength comes from God, God's spirit.

God says, I'll pour that spirit out, the spirit of grace and supplication. Then they will look on me whom they pierced. Notice, the pouring out of the spirit comes.

Then they will look on me whom they pierced. Think about the order here. How did the first generation of the church, who were all Jews in Acts chapter two, how did they come to really recognize that Jesus was the Messiah? That the preaching of Peter on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descends, and those guys are able to communicate and hundreds believe on that day.

The spirit comes down. Now they see it. There seems to have been a lack of the spirit as a part of the problem when Jesus himself was walking in their midst, right? So I pour out my spirit on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

That makes it possible to recognize who it is that's coming out of the sky. Look on him whom they pierced and they're going to know who he is. The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

The Holy Spirit, by the way, you remember the spirit, we're back in the last seven years of the age of Israel. The Holy Spirit is not ubiquitous. He's not ever-present.

He's not doing what he does for us and in our age. And he'll be largely gone. That which restrains is taken out of the way, right? That's how you have Antichrist.

That's how you have the mark of the beast and all these horrible things. And the two witnesses who try to testify are going to be slain and they're going to lay in the square for three days until they are raised and taken up. When is it that that witness is going to be received and understood? When God pours the spirit of grace and supplication back out.

He's been gone for 6.99 years, right? When that spirit comes back, they're ready now. And they will look on me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only son.

No one has seen God at any time, but the Son of Man reveals Him. When you see me, Jesus said, you've seen the Father. And so this exchange of pronouns, they will look on me whom they pierced.

God says, when you pierced my son, you pierced me. I'm going to send him back and you will look on me. They will look on me whom they pierced.

And they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only son and grieve for him as one grieves

for a firstborn. Well, he is God's only son. He is the firstborn and he's also the firstborn out from the dead, right? So all of this language is very Christological, very messianic for these people.

In that day, there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem. Notice, not in Judah, in Jerusalem. Who are the people who are going to receive this spirit? Those who are already looking.

Who recognized Jesus and were the first to talk with Him and be taught by Him and follow Him? Those that were already down there at the Jordan listening to John the Baptist, right? Peter, Andrew, James, John. Those guys were already there. Simeon and Anna were anxiously waiting in Jerusalem and then they got to see the infant Jesus.

We're about to enter the Christmas season again and we'll be reminded of those things. These people in Jerusalem and in the house of David who have already got this figured out, they are the ones who are going to receive the spirit. Not just people who are acknowledgers, but these who are seekers, who recognize what's going on.

At a certain point, the spirit is going to come. There will be great mourning in Jerusalem like the mourning at Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. Now, we actually visited this first, I don't know if you remember or not, back when we were going through Kings and Chronicles and looking at the career of Josiah.

Remember when Pharaoh Necho was going up to join his ally and fight at Carchemish and all of that? And Josiah decided this was an opportunity. He was going to interdict Pharaoh Necho. And Necho came to him and said, your God has told me that I'm on a mission and you need to step aside.

Josiah wouldn't do it. He got an arrow, shades of Ahab in his chariot. And depending on if you read Kings or Chronicles, the parallel accounts, one says, I think the shorter one in Kings says, Necho slew him and they brought him back dead in his chariot and buried him in Jerusalem.

The longer account of Chronicles says he got an arrow and he said, take me back to Jerusalem. And they took him back in his chariot and he died in Jerusalem. It's an interesting difference of opinion about where he died.

The summary account says he was slain and carried back dead in his chariot. And you realize that in the Semitic mind, as good as in the day thou eatest thereof, you're dead. And yet they weren't, but they were.

Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. And that's what have eternal life. We have it, but we don't, but we do.

It's a fait accompli. It is a certitude. So you can say that it's happened, even though technically it hasn't.

Josiah was as good as dead on the battlefield. And when they carried him back dead, they

carried him back as good as dead. They carried him back fatally injured.

They don't have a lot of words for fatally injured. And he was about to die and that in Hebrew. They just say the guy was, you know, death on a stick.

They carried death in a chariot. You know, he's, does it matter? He died there. He died here.

The man's dead. He's not going to be king any more days. So, but here's the interesting thing.

Uh, like the morning at Haydad Rimmon. There's been debate, speculation, agony, a lot of work done trying to figure out what is Haydad Rimmon. Was there a pagan ritual that went on in the Valley of Megiddo that, that, because Haydad, like Ben Haydad, he was one of the, uh, gods of the, of the Canaanites.

And maybe this is some long lost ritual. And well, if you've ever seen the Canaanites in their annual morning, well, we don't know anything about that. It doesn't make any sense.

And, and we don't know where Rimmon is. It doesn't appear to be any, anything associated with Rimmon. It's an unknown quantity.

This idea is not original myself, but I've only seen it in one place and I think it's right. It appeals to me on multiple levels. Um, and let me just do a little skywriting real quickly, um, in the Proto Hebrew alphabet, not the square script of the Aramaic, the old alphabet.

Um, there are some letters that look a lot alike. We were talking about Aleph earlier in the old alphabet. It doesn't look like the Aleph you're used to seeing, you know, the little, uh, slanty thing with two little ears, one on each side.

It looked like what it was, uh, a, an ox head, a, a head, a, a chief thing. You know, it's even that Aleph by the way is translated oxen in some passages. Uh, context tells you what it means, but if I can do this for you, if you can imagine a, a less than sign and I'm drawing so that it makes sense to you, this is a less than sign, right? It's like a sideways V do that and then put a vertical line right through it.

Okay. That's the ox head with horns and ears. Okay.

You got horns, the extension of the V and you get ears, which are the extension of the little top of the headline, right? That's an Aleph in the old Hebrew alphabet. You can look it up sometime, look up a Proto Hebrew Aleph bait and Google will show it to you. That's, that's Aleph.

The letter R Raish in the old alphabet. If you took that exact same sign, but trim off the top ear, the top horn and the bottom horn and just leave the bottom ear so that it looks kind of like a pennant, right? Exact same shape, just the little stick out ears. The first three of them, as you go around this way are trimmed off and it looks just like a little pointy flag that's Raish.

So how easy would it be in a, in a manuscript that written in that alphabet to mistake or confuse

an Aleph and a Raish? It's extremely easy. And, and there's other instances where I can show you that it has happened in Kings and Chronicles parallel passages. So in a nutshell, here's what I would suggest.

I think this is in fact, harking back to Josiah and how we know that is, and I won't go into how Hadad became what it is, but suffice it to say, this should be the son of Ammon, A M O N, not R M O N. The son of Ammon was Josiah's father, Ammon, king of Judah, right? So it will be like the morning. And what happened when Josiah was slain? That was the last of the glory days of Judah. What happened after that? They, they put Josiah's son on the throne, but Necho came on his return trip and killed him and took them and put another son on the throne to, well, it didn't get, took him captive, took him down to Egypt.

He was the first king of Judah to die in captivity. And the, the hegemony, the, the, the independence of Judah really ends at that point. Necho is the end of any sovereignty in Judah.

After that, it's all downhill and pretty soon they're gone, right? So, uh, the death of Josiah and, and being under the thumb of Egypt is what they mourned about. The, the Josiah had done so much. He was such a great king.

And then he was slain, but he sort of lives on in his son kind of, but not his son is held captive, seems to, to die in Egypt, but he's got another son on the throne. And all of this is, I would say, loosely an allusion to the Lord Jesus who seems to be taken prisoner by death, seems to be defeated, seems to have gone to Egypt. And yet he comes back.

And so this, they, they will see him whom they pierced and they're going to think back how this, you remember how we mourned for Josiah? That's how we should have mourned for our Messiah when he was claimed captive and overcome and taken to the bosom of the earth and seemed to be dead. So it's a real interesting little notation, but I would wager I wouldn't necessarily bet per se, but my, my, I'm fairly confident that this is the son of Ammon and not Hadad Rimmon. And it goes back to Josiah and the, the, the loss that they felt, the sense of loss.

These people, when the spirit comes on them, they are going to mourn. They're going to recognize exactly what went wrong. Israel as a people, the Jews as a culture have never recognized Jesus.

The Jews for Jesus do, and they already mourn in this way, but these in the age of Israel are going to finally recognize. And when they see him coming, ah, oy vey, if you will, and it's going to make sense to And they're going to have a combination of celebration at the destruction of these besieging nations and mourning and regret. This all could have happened the first time.

Look at what we've had to go through. The Holocaust being just one symbolic example, because we didn't get this right the first time and what a powerful, eternal reminder and lesson. But let me leave you with a point of application because all of this, we say, wow, that's really interesting.

It's going to be great for the tribulational chiefs in Judah to figure this out and, and have the key to victory. And here comes the Lord Jesus and they're, they're going to get it all figured out. That's great for them.

What about me? Let me ask you this. When trials dark on every hand beset us, that's the line from a gospel song, trials dark in every hand and we cannot understand, you know, why doesn't the Lord just lead us into the blessed promise land? Why, why are we in the, you know, the dark trials? What is that all about? Notice here, when all of these nations begin assembling around the people of God, the house of David in Jerusalem and these amenable people in Judah that are going to be blessed along with them and are going to be the means of deliverance. God did not stop the nations.

God lets the siege happen. A siege is ugly. There's starvation, there's limitation, there's, it's dark times and this fire is a destructive thing and they are in the midst of the fire.

They're like a fire pan and like a torch in the straw. They're going to feel the heat. The cup that is going to make the nations drunk, the cup gets drunk.

There's not fire that leaps out of the cup and destroys the nations. There is pain and suffering involved in this situation that they're going to be like a stone and they're going to, they're going to be tried to pick up and they're going to cut those who try to pick them up. But they're, they're a stone.

They're a stone with sharp edges. Who wants to be a cup that gets drunk and a stone that gets bled upon? Who wants to be a torch that gets burned up in the fire that it starts? There's, there's consumption and a lot of refining that seems to go on here. And it isn't until the spirit of grace and supplication gets poured out that they really figure out that this victory is bigger than just destroying the besieging nations.

Notice the change in perspective. We're concerned about finding the key to victory around these besieging nations. But in the midst of that victory, we look up and there's mourning.

There is, it's, you're reminded of the guy that, you know, the one Pharisee is saying, Lord, I thank you that I'm not like other men. I sure am glad I got to. And the other guy is beating his chest saying, Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.

But that is the key because those who are least, those who humble themselves, those are the ones God can have grace on. God resists the proud. He gives grace to the humble.

And breaking that pride is the key. And God has to let these dire straits occur as a means of refining his people and getting the scales to fall from their eyes. How much pride do you think Saul of Tarsus had on his religious mission for God? He was a Pharisee of the Pharisees and he had all of their blind pride.

He had to be slammed down and blinded on the road, right? He had to be led by the hand and

he had to have one of those, their Christians that he was trying to lock up, come to him and give him a message from God. Do you think that Saul did not mourn often when he thought back on what he had done to the people of God, those who were the first to believe in Christ? He says, I am the chief. He doesn't say I'm a chief of Judah.

He says, I'm a chief of sinners. I'm an aloof. I'm an ox.

I was a dumb ox. I thought I was a leader, but the very same word means I'm a dumb ox. I persecuted the people of God, yet this grace was given to me.

You have that nascent, you have it incipient right here. So by way of observation, interpretation and application, why would God have us look at this passage? Our difficulties, our challenges, when we seem to be beset, when we seem to be about to be defeated by superior numbers and it looks like there is no deliverance anywhere on the horizon, the one place when we are looking horizontally, the one place we never seem to remember to look is up. How are these people going to see the one whom they pierced? They're going to look up.

That's where he is. And they're going to realize the inhabitants of Jerusalem, my strength is in the Lord of hosts, God. And those who believe that are going to be like God on earth.

They're going to be like the angel of the Lord on earth. That heavenly power comes down to earth when that connection is made between heaven and earth, and then it will be physically fulfilled when the Lord Jesus himself comes. Just to close here so that we finish the chapter very quickly, the land shall mourn every family by itself.

Then we've got these four houses mentioned. So let's look at this. The house of David, I get that.

Remember back when we were looking at the threes, the three kinds of shepherd? I'll wipe out three shepherds in one day. I'll fire them. I'll destroy them.

And we said, what were those? Do you remember? I helped you out. I gave you a hint at the beginning because I knew I was going to ask this question. What were the three areas that the shepherds represented? There's the civil leadership, the king, the governors, the rulers, right? There's the prophets, and there's the priests.

Jesus wears those three crowns, prophet, priest, and king. And the false shepherds were the chief priests of the people who were imbroglioed with the Sanhedrin and so on. You have the Pharisees and the Sadducees and those who were fulfilling the prophetic function presuming, alleging that they were teaching the people, but instead they were making them twofold the child of hell that they were.

And you had the civil leadership, right? And God condemned all of that. So who now is going to mourn? Well, look at these houses. The family of the house of David by itself.

Who do they represent? Prophet, priest, or king? King, right? Their wives by them. I'll get to the wives in a minute. The family of the house of Nathan by itself.

We've got two choices here because one of David's sons is named Nathan. And you could say, well, as you go on down, the family of the house of Levi and the family of Shimei, and you would say, well, David is the general house and then specifically the house of Nathan. And you remember that Jesus is descended from David through Nathan on one side, and that's how it gets around the Jeconiah curse, because Mary is descended from David through Nathan.

And you think, well, is it that Nathan? Who's the more famous, biblically speaking, who's the more famous Nathan? Nathan the prophet. And the house of Nathan then would represent the prophetic leadership. Then you have the family of Levi.

What would that represent? The priests. So conveniently, we have king, prophet, priest. But then what do we do with Shimei? Well, there's also two Shimeis you can think of.

One is the grandson of Levi. And he was part of the priestly function. You also, there are several Shimeis, but the two most famous ones are the grandson of Levi or grandson of Aaron, I think, that was part of the priestly houses.

You know, you have different sons of Aaron, the household of Merari and the different ones. And Shimei is one of those. But who's the most famous Shimei you can think of? If you're thinking about David and you're thinking about Nathan, who do you think of? That Shimei was of the tribe of Benjamin, the household of Saul.

And remember when Absalom kicks David out of Jerusalem. What are we talking about? Jerusalem and defeat and restoration. Who was involved in David's export and import from Jerusalem? David himself, Shimei.

What did he do? You remember he's up there kicking up clouds and raining curses down. And, you know, the companions of David are saying, let me kill him. And David says, no, maybe his curses will somehow turn into a blessing.

And then when he comes back, Shimei comes and he's all repentant. And David says, look, build yourself a house in Jerusalem and you can build yourself a house in Jerusalem and you can stay so long as you remain within the city. But if you ever leave, your life is forfeit.

Then in a later account, he has some slaves that get loose and he leaves the city to go get the slaves. And so David on his deathbed tells Solomon, you got to execute Shimei because he broke the command. He left the city, bring his whorey head down to the grave.

And so he gets executed. So in this context, how interesting that you have those who are responsible for leadership and they mourn and it is an education for them on how to be sure that they are faithful in the house of David. Those in the house of Nathan need to be faithful in the realm of prophetic function of teaching and spiritual leadership and guidance.

Those in the house of Levi, there's going to be a priesthood. There's going to be the Ezekiel temple. And these guys are reminded they need to be faithful because their forebears missed it, missed it big time.

Who would Shimei represent? These who thought they had a case, but they were loyal to the wrong king and reigned curses and then were educated, take heed. If the branches are grafted back in, take heed lest you fall by the same example of unbelief, Paul says over in Romans. And in a nutshell, Shimei represents these who didn't get it, then they got it, then they didn't get it.

And then it goes to verse 14, all the families that remain, every family is mourning and the wives separately. Why the wives separately? They're mentioned in every case, the clans are going to mourn, but the wives, the women are going to have a separate. This is like the old churches where they had all the men on one side, all the women on the other, or you have the men's Sunday school class, you have the women's Sunday school class.

They're going to do this separately. Why? There is a different kind of mourning on the part of those who were in a position of authority. Israel has always been a patriarchal society.

These are the guys who made the decision. Who were those who recognized Christ much more fully than the leadership? It was the women. There were women who financed his ministry.

There were women at the tomb. There were women who saw him resurrected before any of the disciples did, right? The women have a different kind of mourning because they were sort of duty bound to support their husbands in a wrong decision or in a decision that was questionable. And they might have had an insight, but they did what they were supposed to do.

But their mourning is of a different kind. And they think, would I, could I, should I have said something? Should I have done like Pilate's wife and spoken up and said, don't do this thing? You're making a big mistake. And so that question, and it's not detailed here, but you got to understand the dynamic of wives when men are making the decisions is fundamentally different.

And their mourning over mistakes that were made and they're looking to the future. What can I learn from this is also going to be different. Can we draw closer in partnership so that we're more of like mind? If I see this, is there a way I can convey that without breaching the model here? And so it's a challenge to us as we think in terms of application that when mistakes are made, even on a spiritual level, there's a fine line that the wives have to walk.

Lest they have their own brand of mourning. But you notice they're not sitting there wagging their fingers saying, I told you so. They had a part in this in some way, but their mourning is of a different kind.

And that's why they mourn by themselves. There's really no other way to see this. Why are the wives specifically mentioned five times? You've got the four households and then all the rest of the families, all of the wives, their mourning is of a different quality and a different kind.

And it tells us that even in close, God-fearing marriages, there's a fundamental difference that wives have as they come before the Lord and recognize their function in loving their husbands and supporting their husbands and leading and guiding their children. It's different. It's of a different sort.

And regrets can be of a different kind. Mourning will be of a different kind. Lessons learned can be of a different kind.

So it's a wonderful, fruitful passage for meditation, I think. Well, we have completed another chapter in Zechariah. And if you look ahead, you notice there are only two chapters remaining in the back cover of the book, if you will.

And we'll be continuing here to look at chapter 13 and chapter 14, which both address the false worship of idolatry and in Zechariah 14, the day of the Lord. All of these things were written for our instruction, if you go to Corinthians, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. These things served as examples for us.

The old King James says, in samples. And nowhere is it more pertinent and helpful to us than here. Given to a generation of people in Judah in the past, targeting a generation of people in Judah in the future, and yet here we are in the middle, able to look at it and benefit from it and have God the Holy Spirit minister it to us.

It's a wonderful privilege in many ways to be positioned where we are, looking back and looking forward and getting sort of a double benefit from these wonderful prophetic scriptures. Let's close here in a word of prayer, and then we will enjoy our special music. Father, thank you for this passage and the truth that it contains.

We thank you for the ministry of your spirit that we enjoy even now. We do not have to wait for the pouring out of the spirit of grace and of supplication. And as we recognize your grace and your faithfulness to us, it does engender in us a desire to make supplication and pray on our own behalf and on behalf of each other that we can understand more fully and serve more faithfully in the light of these things that have been revealed to us from this wonderful portion of your word.

We pray that we will be strengthened and motivated, encouraged and chastened by them, and that we will be better stewards of all of these wonderful resources and opportunities that you have granted to us in the days that remain in our lives. We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.