

PostExilicProphets 21-09-23b

We're ready now to resume our study in Zechariah and we're really gonna be picking them up and laying them down here, but it is a direct result of what our passage says. Turn with me to Psalm 72, Psalm 72. This is a Psalm of Solomon and it has to do with this coming king.

In fact, there is a real close correspondence between Zechariah's prophecy and this Psalm. Psalm 72, give the king your judgments, oh God, and your righteousness to the king's son. He will judge your people with righteousness and your poor with justice.

Sound familiar? The mountains will bring peace to the people and the little hills by righteousness. He will bring justice to the poor of the people. He will save the children of the needy and will break in pieces the oppressor.

Now, remember, we talked about the word for the third description of the coming king. He is just, he is delivered, and he is A-N-I-Y. He is Ani, Ani, Anau.

Well, you've got that same word in Psalm 72, verse four. He will bring justice to the poor, and this is the Ani-yim. He will bring justice to the afflicted of the people.

He will save Yeshua, Yeshav. He will save the sons of the needy. This is Evyon, E-V-Y-O-N.

Over and over again, when you see in the Old Testament scriptures, the poor and the needy, you will find these two descriptors together. This is worth the price of admission. It's worth everything you paid to be here tonight.

Notice, what is it he's going to bring to the afflicted? The first set there, that's translated the poor, but it means afflicted. What is he going to bring them? Justice. If you are being afflicted, that usually means there is an afflictor, right? There is affliction, and this is like undeserved suffering.

You are being oppressed, there is an oppressor. You are being hounded, there is a hound. You are being pushed, there's a pusher someplace, right? There is some agent that is the cause of your condition.

This is not something that's necessarily endemic to life or something that just happened by fate. Somebody is causing this affliction, and it says he, the king, will bring justice to the afflicted. Justice puts this right.

So this is an external agent of affliction. Makes sense? Now, he will save the sons of the needy and will break in pieces the oppressor. The word for needy here is evyon, E-V-Y-O-N.

This comes from a different verb, abah. We had anah, A-N-A-H, and you had A-B-A-H. But this one is, instead of starting with the evil ion, it starts with the aleph, the first letter of the alphabet.

And this means that you are in want. You lack something that you need. This doesn't necessarily imply an external agency or look for an oppressor or something that needs justice.

You're just in lack. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not lack. Those who lack are going to be provided for.

There will be provisions. So this is more of an intrinsic need and recognition of need. I am poor.

I lack what I need to subsist and so on. Like the widow who needed flour and oil, and so her cruise of oil never went dry and her barrel of flour didn't lack. So this is just want or need or poverty in the general sense.

It doesn't assign blame or fault or agency to anyone. Well, this combination, anah and abah, occurs over and over again in scripture. The coming king is going to address both of those.

He's going to break in pieces the agents of oppression, and he's going to do it with justice. How important is this? Let me ask you a question, kind of like a current events question. Are there people who think that there is oppression going on, that there are agencies of oppression of various kinds? Do some of us feel oppressed because somebody is trying to make us comport to their agenda? Are there people who are up in arms and doing all kinds of crazy things because they feel like that there is an oppressor? And where is the justice? Isn't that largely lacking in this? Swatting flies with a sledgehammer, you see a problem, and so your solution is worse than the problem itself.

You become a part of the problem. You begin to be the thing that you are allegedly trying to stamp out. You say, well, I've been oppressed.

My people have been oppressed. My kind have been oppressed. My category has been oppressed.

And so you end up being an oppressor of other people because you feel like they were oppressing you and you're going to oppress them right back, right? And there is a lack of justice. What do we have to look forward to? Can, are we going to get just breaking of the oppressor? Are we going to get just removal of affliction and poverty in this time and in this age by horses and chariots? Can horses and chariots bring about this kind of environment? They never will. They never can.

It's going to prevail in the millennial kingdom. What was the last phrase? What was my last prepositional phrase? In the millennial kingdom, inside the millennial kingdom. What will happen outside the millennial kingdom? They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, right? The daughter of Jerusalem and the daughter of Zion is going to enjoy peace, tranquility, justice, lack of oppression, lack of want.

The horse and the chariot are going to be removed from the inside of the borders of the millennial kingdom. What's going to happen if you are outside? Well, there is a reason why the

coming king has a rod of iron with which he breaks in pieces the potter's vessel. He doesn't come with a feather duster.

His scepter is not a wet piece of spaghetti. He's got a rod of iron, right? Why? Because outside the kingdom, the rest of the nations have to be subordinated. They have to be subdued.

They have to be kept in check by force. Who is allowed in the kingdom? People who don't need force because they have learned to be ruled by God himself. Now, this is particularly interesting when you come back and continue in Psalm 72.

That was verse four. They shall fear you as long as the sun and moon endure throughout all generations. He shall come down like rain upon the grass before mowing, like showers that water the earth.

In his days, the righteous shall flourish and abundance of peace until the moon is no more. Interesting turn of phrase. Is there coming a time when the moon shall be no more? If somebody is going to be tormented day and night, is there coming a day when there will be no night? The sky is going to catch fire.

The elements are going to melt with a fervent heat. And this solar system and this universe will be no more. Look at verse eight.

He shall have dominion also from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth. Does that sound familiar? In Zechariah nine, does it not say exactly the same thing? In our next few verses in chapter nine, verse 10, he shall speak peace to the nations. His dominion shall be from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth.

It seems like a direct quote, doesn't it? Zechariah nine, 10 and Psalm 72, verse eight. Those who dwell in the wilderness will bow before him and his enemies will lick the dust. This doesn't sound like the peaceable kingdom with the wolf and the bear and the lion and the lamb and the peaceable snakes inside their dens, does it? His enemies are going to be licking the dust.

They're not doing that because they are humble and oriented toward justice and they don't want to be afflicting anymore. These are the broken oppressors. These are the unjust.

These are those who, even if they are God's people, did not get with God's program in life and they will be outside the kingdom. When they come to pass under the rod, the rod's going to come down and knock them in the head and send them to the uttermost parts of the earth, right? The kings of Tarshish and of the Isles will bring presents. The kings of Sheba and Seba will offer gifts.

All kings shall fall down before him. All nations shall serve him. Why? Look at verse 12.

He will deliver the needy when he cries, the poor also, and him who has no helper. He will spare the poor and needy and will save the souls of the needy. Once again, you've got those same

two words.

Those who are oppressed from the outside, afflicted, and those who are generically lacking. He will redeem their life from oppression and violence and precious shall be their blood in his sight. Well, he is going to rule with justice.

He's going to rule in righteousness. The means by which he does this is because of God's righteousness, because of God's power, because of God's plan and purpose, right? Now, where does he get this justice and righteousness? Can we get some of it today? Can we inject some of it into our governmental leaders and our social movement minions and our bloggers and commentators and talking heads and influencers? That's a new thing in my late lifetime. There are influencers.

Their job description is, well, they're an influencer. They're on the internet and people listen to what they say. What was the conclusion in our first session tonight? We saw the description of the king and we saw that those who reap the benefits and enjoy the blessings and inheritance in that millennial kingdom are those who are cut from that same cloth, who have humility, who have dependence upon God and who understand what is actually righteous and just, right? Those are the ones that are going to support the king, be like the king.

So Old Testament Israel reflects New Testament believers. So you and I want to be cut from this cloth. We want to have righteousness and justice as our standards, not be subjective, but be objective.

We want to be genuinely dependent on God, genuinely humble and not have our thinking, our choices, our decisions based on the flotsam and jetsam of this world, right? Well, in keeping with that idea, let me share some information with you. As I told you, I've been reading a book called Predictably Irrational, which describes how when we think we are making an objective choice, we are not. For example, I'm going to go through these rather quickly.

If I give you two choices, we're on break and there's either brownies or there's Jell-O. It's easy to make a choice. You say, well, it's either a brownie or it's Jell-O.

But if there is a third choice that is similar to but different, let's say there's two different flavors of Jell-O. You've got brownies and then you've got cherry Jell-O and some other Jell-O. Similar but different.

Maybe it's Jell-O with and without bananas in it, okay? Simply adding a third option, which is plain Jell-O instead of Jell-O with bananas. We started out with brownies and Jell-O with bananas, but then you put another dish that just has plain Jell-O in it. An enormously significant number of people will ignore the plain Jell-O and ignore the brownie and choose the Jell-O with bananas because there is a lesser choice like that choice.

You'd never suspect yourself of this, but it has been proven scientifically over and over again. This is relativity. Our decisions are affected by the number of choices that we have and the

similarity of some of those options.

So something wildly different, and then two that are similar, one that's better than the other one, Jell-O with bananas, Jell-O without. An overwhelming number of people, even if they like brownies, they will choose the Jell-O with bananas because it looks better than the Jell-O without. Or maybe it's got cherries or strawberries or something, but it's the enhanced version.

You say, oh, well, instead of the plain, I want the enhanced, and you kind of forget about the brownie. We are not objective like we think. They've done this test over and over and over again.

Normally half the people would choose one, half would choose the other, but when you put the third lesser option out there, an overwhelming number choose the enhanced option. Marketers use this all the time. There was a company called Williams-Sonoma, and they introduced the bread.

Remember bread machines? Everybody and his uncle had to have a bread machine, or their aunt maybe. But when they first came out with them, nobody was buying the bread machines, and they couldn't figure it out. So what they did is they came out with an enhanced bread machine that had a couple of extra cycles and a bigger cookbook with it and all that, and they priced it half again as much as the bread machine they started with.

Suddenly the lesser bread machine started flying off the shelves, and they sold like hotcakes, but they didn't sell worth beans until they made an enhanced version, and people said, oh, look, this other one is a bargain. And by comparison, relativity caused people to buy bread machines that they did not start out buying. But because the company offered another option, they offered people a, do you want a trip to Paris with breakfast, or do you want a trip to Rome with breakfast? Split about 50-50.

Half people wanted to go to Paris, half wanted to go to Rome. But then they said, you've got three options. You can go to Paris with breakfast, or you can go to Rome with breakfast, or you can go to Paris but no breakfast.

80-something percent of people now chose Paris with breakfast because there was the lesser option, just like the Jell-O. We're not as objective as we think. That's relativity.

There is a thing called anchoring. I'm gonna give you, listen, there are 49 hidden influences that can change and in some cases wreck your decisions. And I'm gonna give them to you in rapid order.

And you just think about these. There is authority bias. This is number one.

We are more prone to accept a view if it's presented by somebody that's got some kind of credentials. If I tell you that *heos teis geis* in Acts 1.8 means till the end of the age instead of unto the uttermost parts of the earth, Patty could tell you that, or I could tell you that. You

would be more likely to believe it if I tell you because you know I've been to seminary, right? So from two different sources, you tend to go with a source that you say, well, they must know they've had X years of Hebrew and Greek.

So what they say must be right. Authority bias, not necessarily a bad thing. These are shortcuts that are built into our brain that get us through life.

Our prejudices, our suspicions, our instincts give us quick shortcuts. When you're driving, you don't have time to process a whole bunch of objective facts and arrive at a rational decision. If you see a shadow, you tend to swerve.

It might be a squirrel and your rational brain would say, we're not running out of squirrels and it's dangerous to swerve. But your instinct says obstacle, swerve. And before you can stop yourself, you swerve, right? These shortcuts do us a lot of good.

Our vision, when things are fuzzy, we tend to think they're more distant. And things that are clear, we tend to think are up close. So if something at a distance is exceptionally clear, go to Yosemite and stand there and look at Half Dome.

The air is so clear and that thing is so crisp, you don't realize that if you start trying to hike to Half Dome, you've got the better part of the day's hike ahead of you. It looks like, oh, it's just past that little ring of trees because it's so clear. These are shortcuts that our mind uses, but they can trip us up.

And I do have a point in talking about this. I'm not just talking about our brain. I'm talking about how easily it is influenced by things that we are not aware of.

If something looks like it might be scarce, like toilet paper or ammunition, people will have a tendency, you might look in the cupboard and say, I've got like 12 rolls of toilet paper. But if you hear that the shelves are nearly empty of toilet paper, people will run down and buy more because we have an increased desire for that which we might run out of or might lose, might lose access to. Have I got more bullets than I could ever shoot? Probably, but when I hear that, oh man, you better get nine millimeter now because it's not gonna be available for months, run down and buy another box.

It's the just-in-case syndrome. It's a scarcity bias. Things that are scarce, we are prone to hoard.

We're prone to stock up. Confirmation bias. This is really interesting.

You know confirmation bias. You tend to believe things that support what you already think. They got two scientific studies talking about whether capital punishment reduces crime, tends to be a deterrent to crime.

Is the possibility, the threat, or the existence of capital punishment, does it actually deter crime? One study amassed all of their evidence and said, yes, capital punishment is a deterrent to

crime. An equally convincing study amassed evidence and put it out and said, it really doesn't deter crime. They then got 100 people, 50 of whom believe in capital punishment and 50 of whom do not.

They gave them these studies to read. And at the end of it, the 50 people who believed in capital punishment found the non-capital punishment study utterly unconvincing and said, look, this study is right. The people who don't believe in capital punishment had the exact same reaction to the other study.

None of them crossed the line because of the other equally convincing scientific study. They asserted what they already believed and they found the one study convincing that went with what they already believed. Confirmation bias.

We tend to hear only information that confirms our preconceptions and we dismiss or we find fault or we don't really listen too closely to things that we don't think is right. We have what's called, this is called hyperbolic discounting, which is a preference for something that pays off in the near term. If I say you can have a chocolate bar now to a child, or I say, if you wait an hour, I'll give you two chocolate bars, the overwhelming number of children will choose a chocolate bar now.

Pying the sky by and by doesn't convince. I'd rather get an immediate payoff now. We have the tendency to believe that we can control or influence things that are really beyond our control.

Power of positive thinking. I can beat cancer because I'm a fighter. You wanna talk about, there was a book that Patty and I listened to, an audio book, something about sunshine, documenting sadly that your positivity, your attitude, I'm a fighter, I've got the will, I'm gonna beat this thing makes absolutely no difference in the outcome of any given medical issue.

Positive thinking, scientifically documented and proven, dozens and dozens of studies, does nothing. Trying to encourage somebody and say, think positive, fight this thing, doesn't change the outcome at all, but we think it will. And it doesn't.

At most, you get a placebo effect. And the placebo effect is another one. If you pay \$2.50 for a pill, you get better headache relief than if you pay 25 cents for that very same pill.

They've done double blind studies, they've done all kinds of things. And if you tell somebody this is a \$2.50 pill and they take it and it's a sugar pill, they believe that their headache has been relieved. You give somebody that same sugar pill and you say, well, this costs seven or eight cents, they don't really think it did much.

But when you believe, well, this has got to be a good pill because look how much it costs, your mind will tell you that it worked. You can't believe the number of studies that have been done on this. Knee surgery.

They began to suspect that this knee surgery, where they go in and do all of this washing out of

fragments and the rest of it, they began to think it wasn't really as helpful as they initially thought. And so they did a blind study where half the people, they made the incisions, they put them under, made incisions, did nothing to the knee. Others, they went in and took out a little piece of tissue that has been a part of this all along and washed it out with saline.

And a third group of people, they just washed it out with saline, but they didn't take out the piece of tissue. All three groups, exact same results, exact same manifestation of relief. And all of them quit having relief after about a year to a year and a half.

And all they did was just cut the skin and put stitches in it and did nothing. Those people got just as much relief as the people they were doing this very expensive operation on. Insurance companies, millions of dollars being spent on this operation that wasn't any better than placebo.

But what we believe often becomes our truth. We have loss aversion. If you've ever tried to clean out your garage or your closet, the pain of giving up an object is greater than the value associated with acquiring it.

You can find this out if people somehow end up with a ticket to a ball game, if they won it in a lottery and somebody says, what would you sell it for? Well, this is the biggest game of the season and I've got this ticket. This ticket is worth \$750. But somebody who wants to buy a ticket will not spend \$750.

The expectation of enjoyment and stuff is the same, but the person that already has the ticket thinks it's worth a lot more. Same with a car, same with any kind of an item on Craigslist. This is the difference between the ask price and the sell price.

You always think what you have is worth more than what it's actually worth and what anybody else is willing to pay. Always, your house, anything. Well, why am I bringing this up? Let me just give you a few examples.

Anchoring, we have a tendency to regurgitate or to reflect in our decisions the first piece of information that we get in a day. So if you read in the news that the stock market is sinking and then you look at your stock price, it may be up, it may be down, but if the market is going a certain direction, that's gonna prey on your mind and you're gonna make a decision that you would not have made if you didn't have that information. You say, well, that makes sense.

Well, does it really? Just because this is the fallacy of, there are two. One is because my exhaust pipe is hot, my whole car must be hot. There's the fallacy of division and there's the fallacy of everything being together.

If one part is hot, it's all hot, but by extension, you say, well, my whole car is red, therefore the exhaust pipe must be red. And you argue from the major to the minor. And neither one of those is true, but our minds will do that because it's a shortcut.

Here's my point. Here's where we come back to our scripture. This king is going to judge the nations with righteousness.

He is going to rot of iron, those who need the rot of iron, those who are afflicted, genuinely so, those who are poor, genuinely so. He is going to benefit. He is going to judge justly and righteously.

He is going to wreak justice on the earth, both to those who deserve retribution and to those who receive grace and benefit and blessing. So obviously we want to be those people who receive that. Well, we have got to emulate the thinking.

Let this mind be in you that was in the Lord Jesus. So knowing that we are prone to these influences from the outside, what can we do? Well, anchoring. And they've done this any number of times.

If you ask somebody a question about something that's cheap, and then you ask them the value of a completely different thing, they will lowball the value. If you ask them about something expensive, completely unrelated, how much money do you think the Queen of England has? Or for example, this was an actual test question. Do you think the population of Turkey is greater than 35 million? Yes or no? Then you ask them to estimate, they'll come in somewhere in the vicinity of 35 million, a little below or a little above.

If you ask the same question and say, do you think the population of Turkey is above or below 100 million? Their responses are going to be more than double when you framed the question a different way, because you've anchored them to a low number or you've anchored them to a high number. And so the next thing they say is going to be close to that because that's what's in their mind. High numbers are in their mind, low numbers are in their mind.

I mentioned before, girls, if they remind them that they're Asian, they do better on tests than if they remind them that they're girls. In just word scrambles, they're just unscrambling words that mean mother, wife, sister, daughter, or technician, China, Asia. These are Asian women.

Asian are known for being smart and Barbie says, math is hard. So you remind them that they're female and the same group of girls get lower test scores when you remind them that they're girls, when you anchor them to that idea than when you anchor them to their Asian heritage, which makes them think they're smart. They actually do better.

You ask them questions about old people and then they timed them as they walked out of the test room. And people that were asked questions about youth and sports and things, walked half again as fast out of the test room and down the hallway. The real test was walking down the hallway and they didn't even know it.

They brought them in, they did word scrambles about youth and athletics. And these people walked with a spring in their step and got out like a minute and a half faster out of the building than the people that were asked about age and being crippled and having a knee injury and all

of that. Their walking speed was affected by what they had been anchored to.

Believe me, the studies are just fascinating on this. I could go on and on, but here's my point. What should we be anchored to? If we remember Psalm 55, 17, evening and morning and at noon, I will pray and cry aloud and he will hear my voice.

If we discipline ourselves so that our early waking thoughts in the day and we interrupt our day in the middle and return to our spiritual identity, the things that we heard or learned in Bible class, or we turn on a, we're driving, we turn on a radio program, doesn't matter who it is or what he's saying, it's Bible. Maybe you agree, maybe you disagree, but it's Bible. Our minds will be anchored.

The human mind is built this way by whom? By God. Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength. Why? His heart departs from the Lord.

And anchoring is a part of this. These exhortations that we have to soak ourselves in the word of God, to be, pray with the frequency of a hacking cough, returning our mind to the things of God actually physically influences the way we make our decisions and how our choices go. Whose mind is stayed on thee because he trusteth in thee is our mind stayed on him.

If all of these different influences get pushed into the background and all of these prejudices, all of these shortcuts, all of these hidden influences, do you want an interesting thing? Google hidden influences on decisions. There's a Harvard Business Review article that has got just, it's called Hidden Traps in Decision-Making and they just talk about eight of them. And they're talking about the effect it can have in business.

Business decisions can go horribly wrong because people have been manipulated by others who they're entering in a partnership or who are marketing to them who understand these principles and will anchor them or will prejudice them or will put these subtle influences in and they decide differently than they would have otherwise. Well, the short answer for this is regularly exposing ourselves to the word of God is not just something we ought to do. It's something we have to do because if our mind is in the world, our decisions are going to reflect the world, mechanically so.

We're built to be this way. And the reason God exhorts us to cast all our cares on Him because He cares for us to focus on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, is because this actually has a measurable, scientifically observable effect on the way we decide. If we watch the news and then turn our attention to our marriage or our family or our business decisions after watching the news, we're going to be of the world.

If we pray, if we review in our minds recent Bible that we've read, that we've heard, that we've consciously listened to or just flipped on the radio, that influences us in the spiritual direction. Our decisions can be just. Our decisions can reflect humility and dependence on God because

we are choosing to expose ourselves to those things that will direct our minds, our conscious thoughts and decisions, unconsciously they will be influenced in a positive direction.

The Holy Spirit will have more room to work. So anchoring, Psalm 55, 17. We are influenced by past events.

If you walked down a slippery boat ramp and fell and broke your wrist, the next time you see a slippery boat ramp, that history is going to have a profound effect on how careful you are around that boat ramp. I can tell you from personal experience, past events influence our current judgment about what we're going to do. Well, the Bible is full of past events.

If those are in our mind, those are going to influence what happened to the children of Israel? What happened to the disciples? What happened to the apostles? What happened in the Bible? Those past events will be uppermost in our mind. The Holy Spirit can use those to influence our decisions, our values, our goals in a positive direction. Anchoring, the status quo.

We have a strong prejudice to maintain the status quo. It's risky to make a change. I don't know what this change might do.

It's as simple as rearranging the furniture. Well, I don't know if, is that going to change the flow? Am I going to like this? Am I just going to have to change it back? If I get rid of this car and get a new one, what will that car be like? Maybe I won't like it. Maybe I had, we'll bump the ceiling or whatever.

Status quo. Well, because we have a prejudice toward keeping things as they are, what's the Bible's antidote to that? Examine yourself and see if you're in the faith. And if you're not, you need to make a change.

This is repentance, change of mind. Maybe my mind needs changing. I've got a tendency to not change my mind, to not change my priorities, not change my values, but biblically, I need to look at that and see if a change is needed.

That's called repentance. Homo Legao, look at myself and cite where I've gone wrong. Why do we like the status quo? We're trying to protect our ego from damage.

Well, listen, it's like Chet Atkins said about guitars. They ask him, what do you think about people smashing guitars on stage? You know, Ozzy Osbourne and some of these types, lighting them on fire and such. And Chet said, well, you know, there are guitars that need smashing.

And there are egos of ours that need changing. They need to be unprotected. Those rocks in our soul need to be broken up.

Omission is more attractive to us than commission. We would rather sit still than do a thing. But there are some times when we need to get up and stop being passive and be proactive.

That's faith, stepping out in faith. We have a prejudice on sunk cost. If we've already invested a

bunch in a thing, we don't want to get rid of it.

We will throw good money after bad in the hopes that maybe it will turn around and get better. You've got a car and you've already spent X number of dollars and you say, well, I'll just keep that one and put a little more money into it. Maybe it'll last longer.

Where an objective person, if somebody else gets that car or has that car and they haven't put all that money into it, they may say, well, this is a lemon. I'm getting rid of this thing. I'm going to trade it in.

But we are influenced by our past investment in a person or in a relationship or in a pastime. And we say, well, but I've done this for so long and it's not objective. What does the Bible say about that? Once again, I need to look at it in the light of the word of God.

I need an objective standard instead of my subjectivity to come into play. We often subjectively decide what we're going to do and then we find a way to justify what we've kind of already decided. And this comes back to that confirmation bias.

I already kind of think things ought to be a certain way. And then I find, see, look, here's a study that proves it. I don't want to wear a mask and look, here's a study that says masks are useless.

Well, are there any other studies? I've already found the study I like. I'm going with this. Well, you know, objectivity.

This is what the word of God and the spirit of God give us. This is what gives us power. How does power come into the life of the believer? How does the power of God come in? It's the spirit of God and the word of God.

What does that power do? It does for us what it does for the king. Humility, dependence on God, justice and righteousness, objectivity. We need it.

We are bent. We are bent by things we don't even know about. Look up this study.

They got 50 hidden influences that can wreck your decisions online somewhere. Look at these prejudices and you will recognize them in yourself. This predictably irrational book really opened my eyes to how perverse our decisions can be.

And we think that they're just completely balanced and objective and we weren't influenced by anything. So what should influence us? Well, our anchoring, our examples, our history, all of the things that tip us in one direction or another, if it comes from the word of God, we're golden. But we have to consciously choose to be influenced by the word of God and the spirit of God.

That takes all of that machinery in our minds and makes it operate to the glory of God. For service in this life, blessing and opportunity in the next. So that's the short answer.

How do we get to be like the coming king? This is how. Bad company corrupts good morals.

Remember Paul telling in the pastoral epistles, bad company corrupts good morals.

That's a summary of everything I just said. Too much time on the news, too much time in the world, too much time on the internet. Not saying throw all these things out.

Babies can go with bath water, but be mindful, be aware. That to which we expose ourselves shifts our thinking in unconscious ways. If we make a priority out of exposing ourselves to the word of God and the spirit of God on a regular frequent basis, prayer is a great way to do this.

Reflecting on the last Bible class we heard, turning on a new Bible class, spending time reading scripture, just open the Bible and read it. You'll be amazed at the difference it makes at a molecular level in the way our minds work. It's scientific as well as biblical.

But we'll close here for tonight in a word of prayer. We're going to pick up next time at verse 11 in Zechariah chapter nine, as for you also, as for you also. That's what we'll pick up next time.

Father, thank you for the truth of your word. Thank you for how fearfully and wonderfully we are made and the design that is reflected in our minds and our hearts and our souls can work in our favor under the influence of your word and your spirit, or it can work against us when it is co-opted by the world. We pray that as we reflect on these things, God, the Holy Spirit will shine a light on us.

The word of God will cut to the soul and spirit and joints and marrow and help us discern our thoughts and intents. We pray that as a result, we can be more closely conformed to the example and the image of our savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray it in his name.

Amen.