

PostExilicProphets 21-10-20b

So we're ready now to resume our study in the book of Zechariah. We're looking at this four-line conclusion to chapter nine, "'Grain shall make the young men thrive "'and new wine the young women.'" They are going to not just be provided for, but they are going to thrive. So this journey we are making through the Old Testament, looking at the combination that we find so frequently of new wine, grain, and oil, informs us and gives us some meat to put on the bones of this promise.

The Hebrew of the verse that we are looking at, which is Zechariah 9.17, when it says, talking about the goodness of the land, this is our familiar friend Tov, T-O-V, Boker Tov, Lila Tov, good evening, good morning, in reverse order there. And the beauty of the land is Yaffe, Y-A-P-H-E. Grain here is going to make the young men thrive and new wine, which is T-Rosh.

And this is fresh or new wine. It's freshly pressed, but it is wine. It is not grape juice, but it's not new juice.

It's new wine. So it's the freshest wine. People who are wine connoisseurs, they might wanna go back and get something that was bottled or vented back in some good year for grapes.

This is this year's vintage, but it is wine. And there's no getting around it. Scripture doesn't deal with grape juice.

It deals with wine in pretty much all cases. And the word here for thrive is interesting because the young men and the young women are covered with the grain and the new wine with this single word, which is nuv, N-U-V. And it means to bear fruit, to flourish, to be fruitful.

You can see the connotation from that denotation, but it literally means that the grain and the new wine are gonna cause the young men and the young women to fruit. And so then you wonder, well, is there going to be childbirth in the millennial kingdom? And you can argue from this passage that for Israel who have not yet received their permanent resurrection bodies, they have been resuscitated. You go back to the vision of Ezekiel, speak to these dry bones, flesh and sinews, cover them, they stand on their feet, they're a mighty army.

This is not the picture of a rapture type metamorphosis in a moment in the twinkling of an eye. We do not know what we shall be like as the church, but we shall be like him. And the Lord Jesus has got his eternal model resurrection body, Israel not so, why is this? Well, a couple of reasons, but one is the millennial age is unique as the church age is unique.

As the age of Israel was unique, each combination of flesh and spirit is designed to make a point. People like to wave the flag about science and the scientific method, being scientific and following the science and so on. As I've pointed out many times before, the eternal realms are the place where angels fell.

All of them were created by God, perfect and unfallen. But at some time in the past, Satan and from what revelation tells us, one third of the heavenly hosts left. They rebelled and they were expelled.

They seem to have objected. It may be that our earthworm minds cannot really grasp all of the ins and outs of this case, but God, rather than just telling the angels, trust me, I know what I'm doing and wiping out the third that rebelled and fell. God says, let me demonstrate to you the independence of free will and the consequences that must be done be imposed when it freely chooses to depart and to be independent.

The five I wills of Satan, we've seen Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 28 many times, but I will be like the most high sums it all up. I will ascend above the heavens. I will put my throne over the stars of God.

I will be like the most high. I can do what he does. I'd rather do it myself and this this was mirrored in what Absalom did in the days of his rebellion against his father, David.

When he would sit at the gate and shortstop people who were going in for justice from the king. And he would say, look, I can adjudicate this for you. And he brokered this activity into an outright rebellion where he was going to unseat his father and actually drove him out of Jerusalem, slept with his concubines, took over the palace, et cetera.

This is an earthly reflection of what happened in heaven. Why are we talking about this? Because in each different age, God has said, look, let me show you why you cannot blame circumstance. You cannot blame influence.

You cannot blame heredity or environment. You cannot blame misinformation for what you choose. Let me demonstrate exactly how the divine design has created this unique, totally free chooser in each individual.

I'm gonna create man lower than the angels. I'm gonna create him perfect, just like I did you angels, and I'm gonna put him in a perfect environment. The earth was not a perfect environment, never has been, even in the millennial kingdom.

It's not going to be the peaceable kingdom anywhere except within the borders of Israel. That's why they will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, not on all of planet earth. That's why there needs to be capital punishment.

There needs to be rule with a rod of iron. Jesus is gonna need the insight that he gains from the Holy Spirit, just as Solomon needed it, needed wisdom from God, which came in the person and form of the Holy Spirit to guide him. When did Solomon lose that wisdom and start being a dummy, like we've seen in the song of Solomon? The same way the Israelites lost the presence and power of God, the blessing of God, the new wine, the grain, and the oil through disobedience.

Solomon did not retain that wisdom any longer than he retained his faith and obedience. And

that's why in the latter years of his life, he was such a rascal and actually sponsored idolatry and false religion in Jerusalem itself, set up idols on the same hillside that his father trod when he got run out by Solomon's older brother. But what I'm driving at is this, each age you start out with perfect people in a perfect environment, which was the garden.

God would not have had to establish a garden if he didn't need to wall it off from what was outside, which is nature, red and tooth and claw, whatever was out there. There was no carnivorousness in the garden. They ate fruit.

Adam, God brought the animals to the edge of the garden and Adam could name them. He could introduce Eve to them. They could watch them graze.

They could sit on their porch and drink coffee and watch the animals out beyond the confines of the garden, but they were not in the garden. This is why it was such a staggering strangeness when there is a serpent in a tree in the garden. And he's not just any old serpent.

He's a talking serpent. Eve sees this amazing sight, just kind of like Moses with the burning bush. I will turn aside and see this strange sight.

And the serpent basically says, well, you know why I'm smart? I eat this fruit. I'm not just a lowly snake anymore. I'm not just a reptile.

Now I'm as smart as you and smarter than you. And if you eat this fruit, if I went from snake to a talking animal in a tree, think what'll happen when you eat it. You'll be like God and God knows it.

That's why he told you don't eat it. Oddly enough, God doesn't seem to be powerful enough to just take that particular tree out so that nobody can be as smart as him but you see the illogic of it because it is not reasonable. It is a narrative.

You do not have to be truthful and you do not have to have evidence and you do not have to appeal to reason and logic and evidence and fact when you're telling a story. Aesop's fables, Uncle Remus, whatever it might be, your fictional library is full of stuff. Have you ever seen on websites and such, here are the holes in the plot.

Elizabeth regales us with these after pretty much every movie we watch. And there's a commercial on TV right now for something where they're mocking slasher movies and the people say, let's go hide in this dark place and the girl says, why don't we go get in the running car? Et cetera. You know, there are things that if you stop and think about them, they really don't make sense but when you're caught up in the narrative, you don't stop and think, hey, wait a minute.

This is the problem with narrative and you and I are immersed. We are drowning nearly in a world of narrative. So the snake tells Eve a story and she believes it and she eats the fruit.

What you start with is perfect people in a perfect environment. Adam and Eve are perfect. The garden is perfect, but an option is presented and in perfect environment with perfect people, they can choose the bad option because their will is free.

After expulsion from the garden, you have fallen people in a fallen environment. The perfect people in a perfect environment, the decision was, can you choose against God? Can you disobey God? They didn't stop believing in God. They didn't stop trusting in God.

They disobeyed God and there is a difference. All of us, when we sin, we don't lose our belief in God and most of us love God and we don't really want to displease Him, but we get distracted by the snake in the tree and we tell ourselves a story, we let somebody else tell us a story, we let the world, the flesh or the devil mislead us, we fall and we fail and then we have to go back to God in repentance. But we have not lost our salvation nor have we lost our fundamental essential belief in God or desire to be in His good graces and to please Him.

Adam and Eve didn't, quote, lose their salvation in the garden, I'm sorry, but they didn't. Else God could not have made a sacrifice on their behalf and clothed them with skins, made them promises, sent them out from the garden, but they are in His care. He doesn't say, come back when you believe in my far distant son, but for now you're bound for hell.

The people just don't understand the point in the garden is not you were saved, but you sinned, now you're unsaved and you're going to hell. The point is not salvation, the point is volition, volition. And the demonstration is perfect people in a perfect environment, just like the perfect angels in the perfection of heaven could choose against God and disobey.

The angels in Genesis 6 who kept not their first estate, read the latter epistles, did not lose their quote unquote salvation, they disobeyed, they were put on earth to judge, but they got distracted, they took wives of all whom they chose, they didn't rape human women, they took wives, they entered into an arrangement, an agreement, and they corrupted justice for the sake of these wives and they favored some over others, and that's exactly what Satan did when he had the stops and starts up in heaven, he corrupted his ways and he merchandised his influence, that's what the angels who disobeyed down here did. But perfect creatures, perfect environment can choose against God, imperfect creatures in an imperfect environment, look around, look in the mirror, can choose for God. What's coming in the millennium? Imperfect creatures in a perfect environment, where have we had that in the past? Perfect creature, perfect environment, when they became imperfect, they got ejected out of the garden, we haven't had a perfect environment since, but there will be in Israel in the millennium, and the question is gonna be, will there be people in that perfect environment who though resuscitated are not perfected, what will they choose? Well, fast forward a thousand years to the Gog Magog rebellion and the passages that pertain there unto, and you get the answer to that question.

In every case, God changes the constants and the variables solving for choice. And in the ages of the human race, why do angels peer down from heaven and long to look into things? Why are they observing women in church? Why does scripture talk so much about the observation

of angels? We entertain angels unaware, there's angels that are God's ministers, like a flame of fire, and they are involved in human history, why? The same reason we're involved in human history, they are learning about the character of God, they are learning about the plan and purpose and the design of God. How do you find out what a creator is like? You look at his creation.

If somebody's got a chaotic mind, they're gonna make chaotic art. If somebody's got a cut and paste mind, you're gonna get Picasso. If somebody has got a humorous mind, you're gonna get Norman Rockwell.

If somebody's got a scary mind, you're gonna get watches dripping off of tables. You find out about the creator by looking at what they create. Look at music, look at literature.

If you wanna see a sad case, read Hemingway. If you wanna see another sad case, a really sad case, read Eugene O'Neill. If you wanna see a wonderfully gifted young man clipped off in the budding youth, he was just in his early 20s, look at Rupert Owen, who was a British poet that died in the last two days of World War I. Beautiful poetry.

You find out about the creator by looking at his creation. You find out about Satan by looking at what he creates when he's in charge, when he's allowed to have all the other nations of the world except Israel. What do you get? You get the Canaanites, you get the Amorites, you get all of the excreta of humankind boiling alive and burning alive, their children, to Molech and Topheth, and you have all of this heinous stuff.

Watch Pakalupto from, what's his name there? Yeah, Mel Gibson, to get a taste of what the rest of the world was doing. Look at the samurai in Japan and the dismissal of the value of human life almost everywhere in the world prior to the light of Christianity coming and shining there. Judaism did not spread.

Christianity spread. Judaism was confined to the Jews. They didn't have a big Judaistic revival in Egypt.

They didn't have a great flock of converts and proselytes to Judaism in Assyria or in Babylon or in Persia. It didn't spread. The light that has shined across the world and now pervades the world and now is starting to fade from the world is Christianity.

Why? Holy Spirit, presence of God. That's what was lacking. Well, in the millennial kingdom, and this is my point, Israel, this is something new.

I will pour out my spirit on all flesh. This is the new covenant God makes with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. I will pour out my spirit on all flesh.

Flip back a few pages here. If you're in Zechariah, go to Joel chapter two. This is the one that Peter quotes on the aforementioned day of Pentecost.

Look at verse 21, Joel 2, 21. Fear not, O land, be glad and rejoice for the Lord has done marvelous things. Do not be afraid, you beasts of the field, for the open pastures are springing up and the tree bears its fruit.

The fig tree and the vine yield their strength. Be glad then, you children of Zion, you young men and young women, you sons and daughters. Be glad and rejoice in the Lord your God, for he has given you the former rain faithfully and he will cause the rain to come down for you, the former rain and the latter rain in the first.

The threshing floor shall be full of wheat. What's wheat? It's a grain, read Grain Brain. Dr. Perlmutter will tell you all about wheat and the 23 fold amounts of gluten that's in it since they GMOed it.

The threshing floor shall be full of wheat, full of grain and the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil. Grain, new wine and oil. So this is the promise, skip down to verse 28.

It shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. Also on men servants and maid servants, I will pour out my spirit in those days.

I will show wonders in the heavens and the earth, blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord. Then it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, there shall be deliverance as the Lord has said among the remnant whom the Lord calls. Among the remnant whom the Lord calls. Why isn't it everyone? Why is it only the remnant? Remember all of those conditions for the grain and the new wine and the oil, that's why.

Why is it there are so many Christians and there are so few that really seem to be exploiting the riches of God's grace with strength for the journey, with power under pressure, with joy in adversity. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I don't have fear. I don't have uncertainty.

Why? Thou art with me. How is God with us in this age? It's his spirit. It is through the spirit that the father and the son come and make their home with us when we have God's word and keep it.

That's the condition. Jesus does not live in your heart just because you're a Christian. That's why in Revelation 3.20, Jesus is on the outside of the door of a believer's heart knocking.

That is not salvation. This is a letter to a church. And he's not saying, well I know there's some terrors amongst the wheat there and some false professors.

That's nowhere in the context. Jesus does not dwell in the heart of every church age believer. He dwells in our hearts by faith.

He dwells in the hearts of those who have his words and obey them, keep them, live by them, prioritize them. It's the same in the Old Testament as it is in the New. The physical blessing of the grain and the new wine, what's the third element? The oil.

Not mentioned, why? In Zechariah. It's mentioned in another context because that's the Holy Spirit component. Remember we saw in the vision of the olive trees and the lampstands and all that? So the young men and the young women, the Holy Spirit's already been poured out in all the flesh, but the young men and the young women are going to be sustained and blessed with this grain and new wine.

Now, the flip side of this, turn back one more time to Deuteronomy, this time to chapter 28, Deuteronomy chapter 28. And we're going to be picking up in the vicinity of verse 49. When you look up above at the blessing section of this, you can see what Haggai was talking about.

In the second part, you can see the blessings in the first part of that chapter. You go through the first 14 verses. Do not turn aside from any of the words which I command you this day, to the right or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

Remember that, other gods to serve them. It shall come to pass, if you do not obey the Lord, your God, I do not have time to read all these verses. You can start at verse 15 and get all the way down to verse 45, all these curses shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you until you are destroyed.

Why? Because you did not obey the voice of the Lord, your God, to keep his commandments and his statutes, which he commanded you. They are to be upon you for a sign and a wonder and on your descendants forever. What is supposed to be on them for a sign and a wonder? The curses.

That's why the destruction of the Northern Kingdom and the destruction of the Southern Kingdom, the captivity and the elimination of Israel as a nation, the loss of all of their covenant promises and blessings are a sign. It's a sandwich sign around Israel's neck from that day to this. Because you did not serve the Lord, your God, with joy and gladness of heart for the abundance of everything, therefore you shall serve your enemies.

I'm in verse 48. You shall serve your enemies whom the Lord will send against you in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness and in need of everything. And he will put a yoke of iron on your neck until he has destroyed you.

The Lord will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, swift as the eagle flies, a nation whose language you will not understand, a nation of fierce countenance, which does not respect the elderly nor show favor to the young. And they shall eat the increase of your livestock and the produce of your land until you are destroyed. Note, they shall not leave

you grain or new wine or oil or the increase of your cattle or the offspring of your flocks until they have destroyed you.

That's an almost verbatim quote of what is promised earlier in Deuteronomy in chapter seven and in chapter 11. This human curse. Assyria is the rod of my anger and the staff of my indignation.

God sends physical judgment that consumes these divinely appointed blessings for those who are faithful and obedient. It's cause and effect. It is perfectly logical.

It is perfectly reasonable. God says, I will bless those who bless you and I will curse those who curse you. Well, I will also bless those who bless me, says God.

And I will curse those who curse me, who ignore me, who take me for granted, who ignore and become apathetic. They will besiege you at your gates until your high and fortified walls in which you trust come down throughout all your land. They shall besiege you at all your gates throughout all your land, which the Lord your God has given you.

What is the promise that we just saw in Zechariah nine? In the land, the young men and young women, the sons and daughters are gonna enjoy the new wine. They're gonna enjoy the grain and the oil will have been poured out on everybody who's in there already. You shall eat the fruit of your own body, the flesh of your sons and your daughters, whom the Lord your God has given you in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemies shall distress you.

And that was literally fulfilled in the siege of Jerusalem. In the third time Nebuchadnezzar came, read Josephus about what happened in 70 AD when the Romans were besieging Jerusalem and they were throwing corpses over the walls. Thousands of corpses were thrown over the walls.

100,000 Jews went into slavery and there was just this incredible historic level of slaughter. It's the first big Holocaust. And it is the direct fulfillment of these prophecies.

God is not slack concerning his promise, Peter says. He's not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. All, that's in the faith, outside the faith.

Those of us in the faith that are apathetic and indifferent need to have a change of mind and come to repentance. Those who are outside need to have a change of mind and come to God. Turn ye at my reproof, why will ye die? Oh, house of Israel, God's people, turn at my reproof.

Why do I have to slaughter you? It's because of faithlessness and disobedience. And the church, in my observation, does not take this seriously enough. There is hilarity.

We have people that are drunk on new wine. And where is the substance of the word of God? Is the Holy Spirit gonna try to appeal to two Sundays ago when you really had an emotional high because of the music and the praise and worship and the applause and the positive points? God is with us, praise the Lord, praise Jesus, praise the Holy Spirit. You're not giving the Holy

Spirit anything to work with when you're up against it and the rubber is on the road and the pressure is on, the devil is seeking who may devour, the flesh is wearing on us because we're getting tired and we have need of perseverance.

We need the strength of God. It's not gonna come from trying to remember an experience. When you get down and you get depressed and you're not feeling so hot, do you think back, you know, I remember when I went to Disneyland, that was such a good day.

I feel better already just thinking about Mickey Mouse and the whirling teacups and, you know, the pirates and what was that song the pirates sang? I feel better already just thinking about Disneyland. I mean, it's nonsense. We do not appeal to past pleasant experience to get through trials and crisis.

We need God's power, which is the Holy Spirit and the word of God. That's what we need. Nothing else will suffice.

It is the truth of God. That's the reason the wonderful old hymns of the faith that aren't 7-Eleven songs of praise, that distill divine truth out of the scriptures, rock of ages cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee. I am standing on the promises of God, my savior.

Whatever befalls me, I'm listening to the spirit's call, resting in my savior as my all in all, not on some happy experience I had with a bunch of my friends at church last week or the week before. The reason the church is weak and ineffectual, the reason Christianity is weak and ineffectual and being run over like a possum in the middle of the road in these recent years is because it has no divine power. Look and learn.

As Christianity is going nationally and internationally, we are gonna go if we don't do something different than what the church at large is doing. And that is, I love the name of that radio show, Back to the Bible Broadcast. Read it, think about it, call it to mind, give the Holy Spirit something to use as his voice.

That's where the power of God is. That's where the power of God is going to be in the millennial kingdom. It's still going to come the same way.

Can you believe it? It's not enough having Jesus on the throne. The reason the millennial kingdom is gonna stand for 10 centuries is the people in it are spirit-filled. They are young men and young women who are living on the grain and the new wine and the oil that God provides to those who qualify.

God doesn't let any Israelites into that kingdom except those who qualify, who are going to imbibe those things. Those without them are gonna be in the darkness which is outside. Many will come to me in that day and say, Lord, Lord, we had a wonderful party in your name.

We did wonderful things in your name. Depart from me, you workers of iniquity. I never knew you.

He was talking to Israel when he said that. That's an example from Israel that applies to us, but he was talking to Israel when he said that. Scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites, you put on a great show.

You pat each other on the back. You smile and shake hands and contribute money. You're full of dead men's bones.

So turn with me finally to Psalm chapter four, the fourth Psalm. We looked at this when we did Psalms, but we didn't draw out this particular truth from it. Let's look at it again.

Psalm four, hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness. You have relieved me in distress. Have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

How long, O you sons of men, will you turn my glory to shame? How long will you love worthlessness and seek falsehood? See I, but know that the Lord has set apart for himself him who is godly. The Lord will hear when I call to him. Be angry and do not sin.

Meditate within your heart on your bed and be still. See I, offer the sacrifices of righteousness and put your trust in the Lord. There are many who say, who will show us any good? Remember good, tov, was the description of the land and God's people who are planted in that land in the millennial kingdom are gonna fly over like banners.

Lord, lift up the light of your countenance upon us. You have put gladness in my heart more than in the season that grain and wine increase. More joy than the grain and new wine bring is the light of God's countenance.

Remember when he said he will be seen above them? It's the presence of God surrounded by people who appreciate him, who are enjoying the grain, the new wine and the oil, why? It's not an accident. It's not just an abstract, unconditional promise of God that well, one day everybody's gonna be in the land and everybody will be happy over there. It's a condition.

Read Deuteronomy. It doesn't come automatically. It comes to those who are faithful and obedient.

And the same is true. This is an example. All these things were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

We're going straight to the resurrected status. We don't get any kind of a redo in the millennial kingdom. What we do now, what we do here has eternal consequences.

And as near as I can tell, they are not shiftable. There's no mulligans. There's no do-overs.

There's no, let me try again. Can I just go live another human life? I'll be more faithful this time. I'll be more obedient this time.

Just give me another shot. It is appointed for man once to live, once to die, after that, the

judgment. So that's Psalm four.

Show us the good. There is joy beyond what human circumstance and human prosperity can provide. And it is the joy of God's presence.

Do we have it? Is it a fruit of the spirit in our soul? For our last passage, turn over one book to Proverbs chapter three. Proverbs chapter three. I don't have a good crease in my Bible at Proverbs, like I should.

There's 150 Psalms and then you get Proverbs. Here we go. Proverbs chapter three.

We're looking at verse seven. You can start anywhere in here. You can start at verse five.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways, acknowledge Him.

He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes. Fear the Lord and depart from evil.

It will be health to your flesh and strength to your bones. Honor the Lord with your possessions and with the first fruits of all your increase. So your barns will be filled with plenty and your vats will overflow with new wine.

What do you keep in a barn? Grain. It's grain. So honor the Lord with your possessions and with the first fruits of all your increase.

That's how your barns will be filled with plenty. That's how your vats will overflow with new wine, grain and new wine. Consistently throughout scripture, it is conditioned on don't be wise in your own eyes.

Fear the Lord, depart from evil. Trust the Lord with all your heart. Do not lean on your own understanding.

Acknowledge Him in all your ways so that He can be involved in the entire course of your life. There is no grain and new wine in the future. You cannot be a prisoner of hope and claim the promises of God without meeting this condition.

We can't do it. So who are we? Why are we here? It's a great question. Here's the answer.

We are here to be vessels into which God can pour His spirit and store His word. Treasure in earthen vessels, but treasure nonetheless. Treasure that God can use for His purpose, for His pleasure and for His glory.

Let's close here in a word of prayer. We'll pick up in our Zechariah study next Wednesday. Father, thank you for how clearly and powerfully you communicate to us.

We would have to be extremely recalcitrant to not recognize the truth of your word from Genesis through Revelation. We pray that as we look at this truth, as we remember it, as we

think about it, that your Holy Spirit will impress it on us, use it as a fire and a hammer to break the rocks up in our souls so that we can dedicate every day, every waking hour to our faith and obedience, that our light can shine. And not only are we blessed, not only do we secure a future of service and opportunity and reflecting glory, but we can shine as lights in the midst of our generation and be a beacon of hope to those who are searching for truth, searching for answers, searching for strength, searching for meaning and purpose in life, searching ultimately for a relationship with you through the Lord Jesus Christ.

We pray all these things in his name, amen.