

PostExilicProphets 22-02-16a

This is the 16th of February, 2022. And we're continuing on this Wednesday night, our study in the book of Zechariah as a part of our larger post-exilic prophets study. It is very fascinating.

And what we're going to look at tonight is extremely fascinating because we are going to address ourselves to the topic of these last six chapters, the overall topic, the general idea here is the kingdom, the coming kingdom and enormous oceans of ink have been spilled on the kingdom. We're going to appeal to some of the experts on this subject. If you have ever read Dr. Joseph Dillow, Jody Dillow on the reign of the servant Kings, the entire movement of that monumental work is toward our role in the future plans and purpose of God as worked out in the present in our current obedience and faithfulness related to our security and so on.

We're going to be appealing to Alva J. McLean and Dwight Pentecost and Dr. Lewis Ferry Chafer to get the definitive word on God's kingdom, the kingdom of the son, the kingdom of the father, all of that toward which Zechariah 9, 10 and 11 in the first burden and 12, 13 and 14 in the second burden moves. It will help us put this all in context rather than me trying to reformulate it. We're just going to get a few summary details from the great Bible scholars of the past upon whose shoulders we all stand.

But let's take a moment to ask God's blessing on our time of investigation into his word. This is our spiritual meal time. And in the strength of this meat, like Elijah, we can go 40 days and 40 nights.

And we need to, as you see current events unfolding, as you see the level of hostility and opposition rising toward our biblical Christian faith being attacked from within and without, there has never been a more pertinent time to ensure that we've got the full armor of God securely fastened, properly distributed and ready for use. And that is the goal of our instruction, which results in love from a sound mind, a pure heart and a sincere faith. So we'll ask God to aid us in that endeavor and then we'll begin.

Father, it is such a privilege to be woven into the fabric of your plan to be here at this time and in this location with the strategic value that you place on those of us who are asking and seeking and knocking to shine his lights, to be sources of comfort and encouragement and truth as we share what we have learned from your word, what you have done in our hearts, the presence and power of your spirit and the enlightening truth of your word. There's such a precious gift and set of opportunities for us. We pray that as we look at this portion of the Old Testament tonight, that your Holy Spirit will make it live and flame and breathe in our souls with power and with encouragement so that we can invest the time that remains to us in this life.

We can redeem it and rescue it from its downward travel and convert it into eternal capital that not only results in our blessing and reward, our comfort and encouragement, our ability to bear

fruit, but also aids and makes us useful in accomplishing your plan and purpose both now and in the future. We pray all these things in Jesus' name, amen. Let's take a quick look at our passage.

We have moved largely through this second burden in the book of Zechariah, chapters 12, 13, and 14. We've seen chapter 12 in detail. We saw the mourning in Hadad, Rimman and how fascinating that was.

We have seen the mourning in the houses of David and Levi that are specific and treated as a remnant when you get to the house of Nathan and to the house of Shimei and the significance of the wives who are mentioned specifically. Those who think that women are ignored in the pages of the word of God and particularly in the Old Testament haven't read closely. It is important that these women are mentioned, that these wives are in the household.

They are valuable and important and their attitude and their support in the families is noted. Each family, the family of David, the family of Nathan, the family of Levi, the family of Shimei, the wives are there and their role is noted and it's important. And anyone who feels like they're being overlooked in the plan and purpose of God should look again.

God pays careful attention. He mentions widows over and over again in Scripture. He mentions, and you can see the significance of the women.

We were reviewing in Judges and Ruth. There is a good study at the beginning of the story of Samson. When you get into the Judges study that we undertook some years ago when we got to Mrs. Manoa and that she was barren and we began to look at the other ladies who were barren in Scripture.

And that theme is so significant. If you think, well, who is the first barren woman mentioned in Scripture, unable to conceive and bear children? What would you answer? Sarah, Sarah at the time, Abram's wife, she's barren. What would be the second woman you could think of? That's a good answer too, because most people forget and go to Rachel as Jacob's wife who was barren while Leah and both concubines have 10 of the 12 tribes.

But actually Rebecca was barren and Isaac prays. And as a result of Isaac's prayer on behalf of his wife, Rebecca, the twins are conceived. And God states their future fate before they are ever born.

And it's hugely significant. So Sarah, Rebecca and Rachel, the mother of Joseph and Benjamin, she ends up being the grandmother, if you will, of mother and grandmother of three tribes because Joseph splits into Ephraim and Manasseh. And so Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin all are Rachel tribes.

Fascinating story. But the inception of the people of Israel who will become the nation of Israel stems from three barren women in a row. And it is enormously fruitful to reflect on the role that these women played and the role of their barrenness, which is something incorporated

into the plan and purpose of God, requiring faith, requiring prayer, requiring time passing in what seems to be a hard circumstance, a disappointment, seemingly without resolve.

As Sarah hits 90 and has had no children, you can think of Naomi and her saying, I'm too old to have children, Ruth, it's gonna be up to you and so on. But tracing the barren women and on down to others that are mentioned in scripture, very significant points in Israel's history, including Hannah, the mother of Samuel and so on and down. The lady who appeals to, you remember in the days of Elijah and Elisha, the woman that appeals to God for a son.

And at the word of the prophet and the prayer of the prophet she conceives. At any rate, we are here looking at this notion in the Old Testament and we saw the households, including the wives, mourning and gathering together. And this is a healthy mourning.

This is mourning as a result of recognition of genuine spiritual truth, which is looking back at failure and rejection when it comes to the plan and purpose of God. And there is godly sorrow. There is a healthy sense of disappointment in ourselves and in those that we are associated with as a larger group.

The entire first part of the ninth chapter of Daniel is Daniel mourning over his people and their failures and confessing the sins of the people. And on the heels of that comes that wonderful revelation from Gabriel, famously so of the 70 weeks. But that revelation followed a time of intense analysis and reflection and sorrow and repentance.

So then we saw in chapter 13 of Zechariah in that day, and the resonating sounding gong in this second burden is in that day. You find it in verse three, it shall happen in that day, I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone. Verse four, in that day says the Lord, I will strike every horse with confusion.

In verse six, in that day, I will make the governors of Judah like a fire pan in the woodpile. Verse eight, in that day, the Lord will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Verse nine, in that day, I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

All of this is future. We are not preterists. We are not allegorists.

We are not spiritualizing what is clearly presented as literal prophetic anticipation. More about that when we get to our gray heads and wise interpreters here shortly. You see it again as they mourn for the one whom they have pierced in verse 11.

In that day, there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem. Verse 11, then you get to chapter 13. Verse one, in that day, a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.

It's a little bit unfortunate in my mind that we have the chapter 13 division there because this ties closely with the preceding verses that talk about those in the house of David and in the house of Levi who are mourning and are dividing into small groups and collectively mourning.

And in that day, that day, when there is a great mourning in Jerusalem, verse 11, who's in Jerusalem? The house of David, the house of Nathan, house of Levi, house of Shimei, and their wives. They are in Jerusalem.

And all those who remain in verse 14, every family by itself and their wives by themselves in Jerusalem. So then without a break, and you can just put a double headed arrow from verse 14 of chapter 12 to verse one of chapter 13 and just skip all of that intervening space because the very next verse, every family by itself mourning, their wives by themselves in that day, that same day of mourning, a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Notice how the very first house that is mentioned, the house of David and all of those in Jerusalem, which were just mentioned in the verse above, that fountain is open for all of them.

He could have easily repeated each of those houses and each of those groups of wives, but there is a strong link between the recognition and the mourning and then this fountain of cleansing being open. God cannot and will not cleanse the unrepentant. Those who do not reflect.

This knee jerk sort of confess my sins, rebound and keep moving with no thought of the seriousness of shortcoming. The wages of sin is not scriptural. And there have been those who, like every other truth of scripture, have found ways to abuse the grace of God and assume that simply by tossing off the names of a few sins in a quick prayer, that all is forgiven, all is forgotten, there is no consequence, there's no aftermath, there is no ongoing burden as a result of almost willfully disobeying and then saying, well, I'll just catch it up and confess my sin after the fact.

I was associated with some people who felt like this was okay. And it's horrifying. You want to talk about something to make you mourn, to see someone trivialize sin, trivialize the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanses us is to trivialize Christ himself.

If we can not care that we sin and fail, we don't really care about the work of Christ that was the high price paid to redeem us, to cleanse us, to reconcile us to God. Sin is not a small thing. Failure is not minimized just because the Lord Jesus Christ has given his life and suffered the punishment that he undertook on the cross.

It doesn't give us a 007 license to sin and any light and casual look at our personal sin and a simple formulaic citation of 1 John 1, 9 is so wrongheaded that there will be fiery judgment from God upon it at the judgment seat of Christ. I tell you this, even weeping from the word of God, there are those who crucify the son of God afresh and put him to an open shame by trivializing his work. So in that day, those who recognize that the great shepherd has come, but the sword has struck him down and the sheep have been scattered as we're going to see in verse seven and following, a fountain shall be open for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

These who are mourning, these who recognize that when the spirit of grace and supplication comes, it makes a difference in their hearts. Their eyes are open. The scales fall away.

The heinousness of missing and rejecting the Messiah is evident and there is this mourning. So in that day, the fountain is opened. Verse two, it shall be in that day, says the Lord of hosts.

I will cut off the names of the idols from the land. They will no longer be remembered. I will cause prophets and unclean spirit to depart from the land.

Verse four, it shall be in that day. Every prophet will be ashamed of his vision. He tries to speak up and add something to what has already been spoken.

And he'll say, I'm not a prophet, I'm a farmer. And he'll try to explain away people beaten on him for trying to say something when there is no need. Everything will be open.

Everything will be clear. As I've said before, the millennial kingdom is not a time of faith. Faith is what you can't see.

Substance of things hoped for. Evidence of things not seen. Everything is going to be visible and there is going to be perfect justice and perfect government emanating from Jerusalem and spreading outwards with a dimming glory as distance increases from Jerusalem.

And there will be places in the world where there are still a lot of problems. And those who refuse to acknowledge, who refuse to send tribute, who refuse to come and observe the feast of tabernacles and so on, there's going to be judgment. Swift, equitable, and this is going to engender tremendous hatred over the course of the 10 centuries.

Then in verse seven, we saw this awake O sword against my shepherd against the man who is my companion, says the Lord of hosts, strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered. I will turn my hand against the little ones and two thirds will be cut off and die, but one third shall be left in it. What is going on here? This is every time you see in that day, we're getting a snapshot related to the inception of the kingdom or the initial setting up of the kingdom.

Some of the conditions are right before, others are conditions right after this transition period in that day. It is a day of change. It is a day of the Lord where his just rule begins.

And this is some of it is out with the old. Some of it is in with the new in that day. You can have in that day upwards of 15 times in this context, it's very significant.

I've marked them in my Bible with a pencil just so I can see them. But this striking of the shepherd, this is something that Jesus quotes with regard to his arrest and the disciples being scattered. And it anticipates in a larger sense that after the crucifixion, the nation of Israel is on borrowed time.

And within a generation, the entire nation of sheep is going to be scattered, scattered among the nations for an indeterminate period of time. And it is sort of anticipated and symbolically

portrayed in the scattering of the disciples themselves. But the nation of Israel, the lost sheep of the house of Israel are going to be scattered among the nations much as they were after the monarchy, the 10 Northern tribes after 721 and the two or three Southern tribes after 586.

There is a remnant that returns, but remember it is a remnant that returns. The days of Ezra and Nehemiah, this is not the exodus from Egypt and the delivery of the entire people of Israel into the land. This is a trickle and it is a few.

And even they are poorly motivated. A lot of them are absent any real enthusiasm. They're apathetic, they're indifferent.

It takes them 18 years after they lay the foundation of just the building for the temple. They're not anticipating and hoping for the return of God's presence, a Shekinah to shine forth as was in the days of the tabernacle and the days of Solomon. So to understand this particular section, verses seven through nine, striking of the shepherd, the sheep being scattered and bringing the one third through the fire.

This really alludes and ties back to something that we saw in our Ezekiel study. Turn back to Ezekiel chapter 20, beginning at verse 36. Ezekiel chapter 20, beginning at verse 36 or 26.

If you look at the chapter, chapter 20 in Ezekiel is a long chapter and God rehearses the history of his people. He delivers them and then they fail. He delivers them and they fail.

You can look at verse 16. They despised my judgments, did not walk in my statutes. They profaned my Sabbaths.

Their hearts went after their idols. Remember, we just saw that the idols are gonna be cut off from the land in chapter 13 of Zechariah. They keep going back to idols.

Nevertheless, verse 17, my eyes spared them from destruction. I did not make an end of them in the wilderness. I said to their children in the wilderness to not walk in the statutes of your fathers, nor observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols.

What does Jesus say in Matthew chapter 23? Those who sit in Moses' seat, listen to the law of Moses, but don't follow their example. Don't buy into their teaching, his doctrines, the traditions of men and the rest of it. God has been saying this for centuries to his people.

Skip on down now to verse 33. As I live, says the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with fury poured out, I will rule over you. I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm and with fury poured out.

And I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples. There, I will plead my case with you face to face. This has never been fulfilled.

When does Ezekiel prophesy? Where is he? Remember the context of Ezekiel? By the river Kabar

in the Babylonian captivity. We hanged our harps on the willows, et cetera. Ezekiel is a prophet of the Babylonian captivity.

He is a captive. To see the temple and to see Jerusalem, the spirit has to lift him up by the hair of the head and carry him in prophetic vision back to the land. Ezekiel is an exile.

He is a captive in Babylon. So when he gives these predictions of a return to the land, we have to ask ourselves, did we ever see anything matching this description happen circa 520, circa 500, in the days of Haggai and Zechariah and Malachi, in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, in the days of Esther the queen, did we see anything approaching this description? With a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with fury poured out, I will rule over you. I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm and with fury poured out.

Verse 35, I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples and there I will plead my case with you face to face. Has God ever been face to face with his people from 500 BC down to circa 25 AD? AD 25 is the right way to say it, Anno Domini 25. The next time God's gonna be face to face with the people, it is in the person of Jesus Christ.

Now, does Jesus Christ come with an outstretched arm and with fury poured out and gather the Jews from every place that they've been scattered and deal with them in the wilderness? Verse 36, just as I pleaded my case with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will plead my case with you. How did God plead his case in the wilderness after they came out from Egypt? Pillar of fire, pillar of cloud, thunder and lightning and smoke on Mount Sinai, the glowing face of Moses coming down with the law enshrined on tablets of stone. Has anything even remotely approaching this ever happened? It has not.

This is future. There's no way to spiritualize this. There's no way to find an analog and you say, well, you know, Jesus just really preached.

All you hear about these days is the gentle Jesus and the Jesus of love and compassion and treat your enemies like royalty and so on. You see nothing of this God face to face in anything remotely resembling wilderness after Egypt. This is future.

Verse 37, I will make you pass under the rod and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant. I will purge the rebels from among you and those who transgress against me. I will bring them out of the country where they dwell, but they shall not enter the land of Israel.

Then you will know that I am the Lord. What are we seeing in Zechariah chapter 13? Very same thing. Verse eight, shall come to pass in all the land.

Two thirds in it shall be cut off and die. I will bring the one third through the fire, refine them as silver is refined, test them as gold is tested. They will call on my name and I will answer them.

I will say, this is my people. And each one will say, the Lord is my God. These two passages in

Ezekiel and in Zechariah refer to the same event.

This is the inception of the millennial kingdom. This will take place at the resurrection of Old Testament saints that is mentioned in Daniel 12, one and two. Many who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake.

Some to a resurrection of righteousness, others to a resurrection of shame and contempt. What is the shame and contempt? Read Ezekiel chapter 20. Read Zechariah chapter 13, verse eight and following.

Literal millennial kingdom. Test them as gold is tested. They will call on my name.

This is bringing them into the bond of the covenant, isn't it? Claiming the name of God. They will call on my name. I will answer them.

I will say, this is my people, not those who were tapped on the head and turned away to live outside the land. They are taken out from the nations, out from amongst the people, but they're not allowed into the land. They are in the darkness, which is outside.

And this being taken from among the peoples, I think is an allusion to their resurrection from all the places they perished in captivity, in being carried away, in being defeated in battle and so on. They are brought back, but two thirds of them do not qualify to go into the land. Well, this brings us to the topic of the kingdom.

And you see it in the day of the Lord in chapter 14. The day of the Lord is coming. Your spoil will be divided in your midst.

I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem. We saw this already earlier in chapter 12. I'll make Jerusalem a very heavy stone.

I'm gonna strike the horses with confusion and so on. The city shall be taken, the houses rifled and the women ravished. Half the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations as he fights in the day of battle. In that day, his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives. This is at the end of the tribulation period.

Those who listen to the voice of the Lord Jesus, when they see the abomination of desolation, they will flee. They won't go inside to get their coat. They're gonna head for the hills.

But those who remain, this is more detail now. And half the people in the city are going to be captured and killed. Women are gonna be ravished.

There's gonna be pillage and plunder. Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations. Notice he is going to allow the assembled armies of the nations into Jerusalem to wreak havoc and judgment on those who need it.

But in that day, verse four, the Lord Jesus is going to descend. This is the second coming. His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, facing Jerusalem on the east.

Mount of Olives will split in two from east to west, making a very large valley. Half the mountain moved toward the north, half toward the south. Then you shall flee through my mountain valley, for the mountain valley shall reach to Azal.

You shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah. Thus, the Lord my God will come and all the saints with him. It shall come to pass in that day, there will be no light.

The lights will be diminished. It shall be one day, which is known to the Lord, neither day nor night. But at evening time, it shall happen that it will be light.

And you can remember when we went through the seals, trumpets, bowls, and what we have of the thunders, which is nothing more than the mention, that the sun is darkened and the moon is turned to blood. And there is a twilight that is neither darkness nor light at the close of the time of Jacob's trouble. And it is a strange time.

Is this the glow of some nuclear holocaust? Is it the intense amount of artificial light that is generated now around the world where it is never truly night anymore because we have so much by way of man-made artificial light and generators and so on. In that day, the living waters shall flow from Jerusalem, half toward the Eastern Sea, half toward the Western Sea. In summer and winter, it shall occur.

This looks forward to the days of the kingdom where as seasons pass in summer and winter, this is not a seasonal wadi that troughs spring rains through and then dries up in the summer. It is a constant source of fresh water, not salt, that flows in both directions. And the Lord shall be king over all the earth.

In that day, it shall be. The Lord is one and his name is one. All the land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem.

More about Rimmon. Will be raised up and inhabited from Benjamin's gate to the place of the first gate, the corner gate from the tower of Hananel to the king's winepress. People shall dwell in it.

No longer be utter destruction. Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited." Well, this is another anticipation of the kingdom about which so much is said and about which there is such confusion. You cannot believe the disparity and widespread disagreement and misunderstanding about passages such as this that anticipate, prophesy and detail the kingdom.

Which kingdom? What kingdom? Kingdom then, kingdom now, spiritual kingdom. Well, we're going to pause here and take our break. And when we come back, we're going to survey the

opinions and interpretations that have prevailed and do prevail up to this point.

And there is a new prevalent view that puts us in an ever, can I say ever increasing minority? And we'll take a look at that when we come back. But let's pause here and enjoy fellowship and wonderful music.