

**The Redemption of Israel**

Scripture: Zechariah 10:1-12

Code: 2166

The tenth chapter of Zechariah is concerned with the redemption of Israel. This is a theme that is very common for the book of Zechariah, one which we've touched on in the past and we'll touch on again as we finish out the book in the remaining weeks. Let me come at it from another chapter in the Bible that talks about the redemption of Israel and that's the eleventh chapter of Romans. You don't need to turn to it, but let me remind you of what it says in the beginning of that chapter. The entire eleventh chapter of Romans deals with the question that is introduced in the first verse of that chapter and the question is: has God cast off His people Israel?

That's a very vital question. That's a question that theologians are still discussing today. That's a question that is highly debated and heatedly discussed in theological seminaries of colleges around America and around the world. Has God cast off His people Israel?

The next verse of the eleventh chapter of Romans answers the question and that is the second verse. And the second verse simply states the fact that God has not cast off His people Israel that that is the remotest possible thought. It says, "God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew." In other words, by the time you get to the eleventh chapter of Romans, God is still dealing in the fulfillment of His promises to Israel, He has not set them aside. And from them as you progress through the eleventh chapter, Paul develops that particular thought...what is in fact God's plan for Israel? And it culminates in verse 26 of Romans 11 which says, "So all Israel shall be saved As it is written, there shall come out of Zion the deliverer who shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." Why is God going to fulfill that? "For this is My covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." And verse 29 says, "And the gifts and callings of God are without repentance."

Should God cast away His people Israel? No, God will not cast away His people. On the contrary, verse 26 and following says, "God will save His People."

I've been in Israel a couple of times. And one of the most wonderful things that you're able to say to those people over there is the fact that there's a great future for you, God is going to redeem this entire nation. God has not cast you off. And one of the reasons that America has been such a great friend of Israel is because of the Christian testimony of America. The Israelis know that there are many of us who believe in the restoration of Israel. They know that. There are many evangelical Christians who have made friends with Israelis.

I was invited, and I don't know exactly the dates for it, but I was invited to be a part of a conference that is to take place in Jerusalem that is being sponsored by the country of Israel itself. And they are inviting at their own request key evangelical teachers and leaders from all around America to come to Israel to be hosted by the government of Israel to proclaim their message. That's quite interesting. They know of our great support. I'll let you know when that happens. But it's interesting that they are so amenable to evangelical Christians. Now maybe they have political ends in mind, but that's all right, we'll go under any invitation to proclaim the truth of Christ.

So, this is a promise that has not been negated. God is going to redeem the nation of Israel. In Isaiah chapter 59 and verse 20 and 21, we read concerning this same fulfillment, this same prophecy, "And the redeemer shall come to Zion." That was quoted in Romans 11. "And unto those who turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. As for Me, this is My covenant with them, says the Lord. My Spirit that is upon thee and My words which I have put in Thy mouth shall not depart out of Thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever."

In other words, God says there is a forever planned for Israel. There is a forever message that will abide in Israel that culminates when the redeemer comes to Zion. Now three things that stand out in that prophecy should be taken note of. One, the redeemer will come out of Zion. He will be Jewish. Two, He will turn ungodliness away from Jacob. Three, He will take away their sins. So there is coming the redeemer who will turn them away from their ungodliness and forgive their sins and that is salvation.

This all comes under what Jeremiah calls the new covenant. The old covenant was a covenant of death. The new covenant is a covenant of life. And Israel will experience the new covenant, according to Jeremiah 31 and verse 33...it says this, "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, After those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts and will be their God and they shall be My people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor and every man his brother saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know Me from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more."

The primary indication of the new covenant in Jeremiah 31 is related to Israel. We have already participated in the new covenant, haven't we? We've already had the law of God written in our hearts. We've already had our iniquities removed. We've already had them remembered no more. God has already done graciously in our behalf, but yet shall do the same to Israel.

Now as we look at the future and we see that we believe that Jesus is going to return, we can add to that concept this reality, that when He returns it will be with the redemption of Israel in mind. When He

comes, Israel will already have undergone a severe spiritual upheaval. They will have experienced political devastation under Antichrist. They will have experienced economic devastation under Antichrist. They will have gone through social devastation because of the wars that they will have been involved in. They will have been under a tremendous spiritual turmoil as the forces of hell and Satan will have grappled against the hundred and fortyfour thousand who will have proclaimed the gospel. There will be a final period of national holocaust as the war of Armageddon rages.

And no question about it in my mind that Armageddon, that great war that occurs in the land of Israel in the end of the times, times of the Gentiles, that great war that will occur will sweep away any Jewish delusion that they could possibly bring the kingdom on their own. It will make them reexamine their resources. Israel for the most part today is very proud because of what they've accomplished...and rightly so, in terms of military things and political ends. But all of that is going to be shattered in the holocaust of Antichrist and the wars of Armageddon. And I believe that all the delusions will be swept away and they will be stripped naked, realizing that they can't do anything for themselves. And in the midst of that monstrous reversal, in the midst of the abomination of desolations, as Daniel calls it and Jesus reiterates it in Matthew 24, when all of that is sacred to them has been desolated and desecrated, the whole nation is going to be brought to a place of really reexamining their spiritual priorities. I think they're going to be brought to the place where they will rethink spiritual truth and they will reflect back on the message of two marvelous witnesses, indicated in the eleventh chapter of Revelation. And they will think back to a hundred and fortyfour thousand of their own people who went about preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. And no question about it, many will respond to that gospel, many will believe in Israel and there were all...there will be already beginning a great revival of faith in Israel directed toward none other than the Lord Jesus Christ.

At that time, the nation will have been scattered. Multitudes will have fled into the wilderness under the protection of Michael, the great angel. Others will be stuck in Jerusalem and the surrounding area under the sentence of death at the hands of Antichrist. But whether they're in Jerusalem or whether they're being hidden and protected by Michael, there will be the surging of a revival of faith because everything else that they've known will be shattered and God will, by His Holy Spirit, begin to prepare their hearts for the arrival of their Messiah.

And when Christ comes back, somewhere in that time...and I don't know exactly all the chronological intervals...but somewhere when Jesus returns, there is going to be not only a great physical deliverance for Israel as we know when He comes riding on a white horse with all the armies of heaven following Him, He slaughters all the armies of the world, He judges all the ungodly and He delivers Israel and gives Israel the Kingdom, there will be a great physical deliverance. But in addition to that, there will be a salvation as well. There will be a spiritual deliverance. Zechariah chapter 10...pardon me...chapter 12 verse 10 says that. It is at that time when Christ returns, He says, "I will pour out upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and of supplication. And they shall look on Me whom they have pierced and mourn for Him as one mourns

for his only son and be in bitterness for Him as one is in bitterness for His firstborn. And there shall be great mourning.

In other words, in that day when Christ returns, God will pour out His Spirit on Israel. And the Spirit, as always, poured out will do initially the work of conviction and they'll look on Christ and they'll mourn for what they did to Him. And in that same day, verse 1 of 13 says, there will be a fountain opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for cleansing. And at the end of verse 9 of 13, it says, "I will say it is My people and they shall say, The Lord is my God."

When Jesus returns there will be a great revival in Israel. They will meet the Lord Jesus Christ. They will be redeemed. In fact, in 13:6 it says, "And one shall say unto Him, What are these wounds in Your hands? And He shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of My friends." They'll recognize Him. And they'll be saved. Their souls, I believe, will literally be jolted into salvation by the vision of the returning Christ who once they crucified. What a day that will be.

In Isaiah 53:4, we have what I think they're going to recall. I think they're going to remember these words, "Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted, but He was wounded for our transgression, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him and with His stripes we are healed." They're going to remember that. They're going to focus on Christ. And at that point in the words of Paul in Romans 11:23, they will be grafted back into the stock of blessing, back into the place of blessing. And they'll enter into the Kingdom.

Now when Israel is saved, what happens? What all is involved in their redemption? That is the theme of chapter 10. Just exactly what occurs? What are the constituent benefits of salvation? Well, this morning I had eight points to my sermon and that's how many there are tonight. I must have been thinking in terms of eight this week, but that's the way this chapter broke down. It's a short chapter. It will go by quickly. Watch as we look at it.

These features are the features that will really come to Israel in the day of their salvation. This is what you can tell any Jew or any Gentile, for that matter, about what God is going to do for Israel in the day when Jesus comes. Feature number one, and I'm going to jump into verse 4 for number 1 and then backtrack...feature number one, the first thing Israel will receive is a divine redeemer...the divine redeemer. Verse 4, "Out of Him..." and the "Him" there refers back to its antecedent in verse 3 which is the house of Judah, so out of the Judah..."came forth the corner, out of Him the nail, out of Him the battle bow and out of Him every oppressor together."

Now let's go back and look at this verse. Zechariah reminds the people that the Messiah is coming and he identifies Him in this verse. Really this is one of the richest Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament and it's not one that's studied very often and yet it's just really loaded. I don't even think

tonight I have time to cover all the things that are here in this one verse. In many of the former prophets...now you've heard of the former prophets and the latter prophets...you haven't heard of the former prophets and the latter prophets...okay? The former prophets are the prophets who prophesied prior to the Babylonian exile. The latter prophets are the prophets who prophesied after they came back from exile. Now the former prophets had many things to say about the Messiah, many things about what He would be and how He would look and how He would fulfill prophecy and so forth. Many of the things that were clearly stated in the former prophets are then picked up again by the latter prophets.

Now Zechariah, as a latter prophet, after the exile, picks up three things about the Messiah that are from the former prophets. He calls the Messiah a cornerstone, a nail and a battle bow. Now these three things gives us a tremendous insight into the Messiah. He will come from the house of Judah, because it says out of Him, and we know that the Lord Jesus Christ is called the lion of what tribe? The tribe of Judah. We know that is the source. He will come from the nation Israel. He will come from the tribe of Judah. He will come from the town of Bethlehem and we know that from Micah 5:2, "O thou Bethlehem, Ephratah, though thou be little among the sons of Judah, out of thee shall He come forth." So the nation Israel, the tribe Judah, the portion of land will be Judah's and the very village in Judah's portion will be Bethlehem. So out of Judah will He come.

How tremendous it is that Jesus fulfilled that prophecy, that He was from Israel, that He was from the tribe of Judah, and that when He was born, His people were in a portion of land belonging to Judah in a very obscure nondescript village called Bethlehem, exactly as the prophet had said in Micah chapter 5 and verse 2.

Now having established that, the Spirit then gives Zechariah three pictures of the Messiah, three pictures of the divine redeemer, this great prophet who will come, this great deliverer. The first one is that He is called in Hebrew pazaz and that means the cornerstone, verse 4 calls Him simply the corner. That's a Messianic title and in the former prophets, such as Isaiah 28:16, it says, "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation and he that believeth shall not be ashamed." So Isaiah prophesied that He would be a stone, a tested stone, a precious stone, a cornerstone, a foundation stone. That has to be Jesus Christ, none other than Jesus Christ. And as you look at the New Testament, you find that Jesus Christ repeatedly is stated to be the cornerstone.

In Romans 9 verse 32, it says they stumbled at the stumbling stone as it is written, Behold I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and a rock of offense, and whosoever believe on Him shall not be ashamed...and it's clear that Paul is referring to Jesus Christ who is the stumbling stone over which is real stumble. In 1 Corinthians chapter 1 and verse 23, we preach Christ crucified unto the Jews a stumbling stone. In Ephesians, the stone takes a little bit of a different approach and in Ephesians 2:20 it says, "And you are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ

Himself being the chief cornerstone." So sometimes He is a stone of stumbling and sometimes He is a cornerstone. And sometimes He is a precious stone. But that is a common Old Testament designation.

Daniel chapter 2 verse 34 calls Him a stone. In fact, Daniel calls Him a stone cut out without hands, and He is the crushing stone that comes in judgment to destroy the Gentile world powers. So Jesus is a stone. The Messiah will be a stone.

Here it is not the crushing aspect that is emphasized, that's emphasized in other parts of the Bible that He is a smiting rock, Matthew 21:44, a crushing stone of judgment. That is not the emphasis here. Zechariah says He is a cornerstone. He is a stone that holds up the walls. He is a supporting stone. He will give support and He will give stability, that's the idea. For the safety and stability of a building, almost everything depends on the foundation. Anybody who builds knows that.

I was always interested, when they were building this building, to watch them lay the foundation. On the back wall where everyone of those pillars is, you can see a little wooden plate that's been painted over...if you haven't seen it you can turn your neck and look it now or see it when you go out, hard to see now. That little plate is a hole in that pillar. And that hole is there because when we put a balcony in, steel beams will slide through those holes and they'll hook with those huge pillars outside and those huge pillars are anchored in the ground, I think it's eight to ten feet deep full of steel and concrete. And that's what will hold that balcony up. The foundation is vitally important.

And what Zechariah is saying here is really the same thing. He is saying Christ is the one who will come and give stability to Israel. And that's the thing they've needed for so many centuries. Barron(?), David Barron in his great commentary on Zechariah, says, "The great architect of the universe has purposed for Himself from all eternity to raise out of frail imperfect human materials a glorious temple for His own eternal habitation through the Spirit, which when completed shall show forth even more than the material temple of the universe, to principalities and powers the infinite power and manifold wisdom of God. And in order to insure that temple's eternal safety, He has bestowed great care on the foundation. He Himself has laid it and the tried and precious cornerstone which He has laid as the basis of this mystical structure is His own Son who is perfected forever more against whom the gates of hell cannot prevail."

And so we can say, let the storms rage and let infidelity assail and let men and devils do their utmost. When God sets Jesus as the cornerstone, the foundation stands sure. And we know that now, don't we? Because Christ is the cornerstone of the foundation of the church. And we have seen the church stand and weather the storm. And some day, He'll become the cornerstone of Israel.

Now there's something else about this cornerstone concept that struck me as I was studying it and that is that a cornerstone holds up two walls in the corner. It holds up two walls. And without pushing

the point too far, I think it's kind of interesting to realize that the cornerstone Christ holds up the two walls that make up the redeemed people and that is the church and Israel. And where there used to be a wall between us, we now have a common cornerstone. And some day when Israel enters its kingdom, we'll enter it with Israel. And when we go into eternity, we'll go in together. And I daresay, by the time we hit eternity, there won't be any way to tell us apart. In fact, for all those who know and love the Lord Jesus Christ today who are a part of Israel, they'll have to find a spot in both walls. He is the cornerstone for two people and He will give stability and solidarity and foundation to Israel. That's the promise of God for them. The day is coming when you're going to get solidarity.

The second thing he calls this divine redeemer is the nail. Now that's a most interesting term in Hebrew. It refers to two kinds of nails, it's used in the Old Testament, one is a tent stake. When they would put a tent up, they would run great pieces of rope out from the extremity of the tent on its outer part and they would drive a stake into the ground to hold the tent. You've seen it at any tent you've ever seen.

But the word not only has to do with the tent stake, but it is also used, and I'll show you where in a minute, to refer to the great nail that they drove into the middle post of the tent. Now when they put up a tent in those days to live in in their traveling, it was a big tent, it wasn't some little dinky pup tent. It was a big tent. And in the middle they would have a pole, almost like a ship's mast. And there weren't any walls to hang anything on, so the pole in the middle, into it was driven a big nail in which the valuable ornaments of the house were hung. Whatever glorious art displays were to be hung in the tent, they were hung on the nail driven into the post. Often, according to one writer that I was reading, the wealth of that entire family would be hung on that peg for the admiration of all who came in.

Now I really believe that that's precisely what God is going to do with Jesus Christ. It is possible that he's referring here to the idea that He's the nail to hold the tent of Israel together. But I think if we connect up with what else we find in the Scripture about this nail concept, what God is really going to do is that God is going to make Christ the nail in the midst of His Kingdom on which all the glory of the Kingdom hangs. Do you see? That's the essence of the picture.

If you go back to Zechariah 6:13 it says, "He shall build the temple of the Lord and bear the glory." In other words, Christ will build the temple and within that temple, He will bear the glory, see. He will bear the glory...the glory will be hung on Him...full millennial splendor will be His.

Let me give you another reason why I believe this is probably the meaning here. Look in your Bible at Isaiah 22, Isaiah 22. There was one old preacher I heard said, "Turn to IZIAH," Isaiah 22 verse 23...now watch this, and this is talking about, as so often we've told you, it's talking about a human fulfillment and then a future fulfillment in Christ. The human fulfillment of this prophecy is Eliakim. Eliakim was a very wonderful man, a very godly man. And Eliakim is the historical fulfillment but Messiah is the ultimate. And verse 23, he says, and we'll go right to the Messianic element, "I will

fasten Him like a nail in a sure place and He shall be for a glorious throne to His Father's house." Now watch 24, "And they shall hang on Him all the glory of His Father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity from the vessels of cups to the vessels of flagons."

Now you could see there...and in the next verse he says, "The nail that is Eliakim will be removed, but the nail that is Messiah will never be removed." In other words, the ultimate fulfillment of this nail is forever. And he says, "I'll put that nail in a sure place and I'll hang on it all the glory of the house, all the vessels and so forth." And you can see by that verse that they hung everything there. They hung any paintings or portraits or representations of the people in the family. They hung all their fancy pots and pans, they hung it all on there. You can't put a nail on a tent, folks, it had to be on that post in the middle. And so it is that they shall hang upon Him the glory of His Father's house. He will be the cornerstone and He will be the nail on which the splendor of the Kingdom will be hung. All the glory of the Davidic house will hang on the nail fastened in a sure place...and verse 25 of Isaiah says, "In that day, saith the Lord of host, shall the nail that is fastened in a sure place be removed and be cut down and fall and the burden that was on it be cut off, for the Lord has spoken it."

Now the only way we can interpret that verse is that the Eliakim nail will be cut off, not the nail that is referring to Christ. And sometime when we get the time to study that chapter, we'll look at that in more detail. But Christ is the nail that will never fall. Eliakim will, not Christ.

Chapter 10 again in Zechariah, we come to the third term to describe the redeemer. He is called the battle bow...the battle bow. Now the Lord has already given us indication of what this is. Go back to chapter 9 verse 13. When he judged Greece, Antiochus Epiphanes, he says, "I bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee like the sword of a mighty man." There you could see God already pictured as if He is an archer pulling a bow. And here God is seen as the battle bow itself. He is a conqueror without equal. He is a warrior who will come and destroy the enemy. Read Revelation 19:11, He comes in power to conquer and destroy.

So, the first part of their salvation is that they will receive the divine redeemer who is a cornerstone, nail and battle bow. Now the result of this is that every oppressor together shall be scattered. What the verse is saying actually in the Hebrew is that all oppressors will be put out together. Israel will no more be oppressed. The divine redeemer will conquer the enemy.

So, promise number one in Israel's redemption...a divine redeemer. Number two, and we'll hurry, divine rain...verse 1. A divine redeemer and divine rain. Look at verse 1, "Ask of the Lord rain in the time of the later rain, so the Lord shall make bright clouds and give them showers of rain to everyone, grass in the field.



Now first of all, let's back up to verse 17 of chapter 9. When he's talking there about the Kingdom and what it will be like, he says, "Grain shall make the young men cheerful and new wine shall make the maids cheerful," is implied. In other words, God is going to bring great harvests, grain will flourish, grapes will flourish. And all you have to do is ask the Lord for it, verse 1 of chapter 10. "In the time of the latter rain, God is going to bring rain."

Now people have discussed whether this is literal rain. I think it is, yes, first of all, literal rain. I think in the time of the Kingdom, God is going to make it rain in order that crops will flourish. Stuff is going to grow like it has never grown before. Now I've been out on the desert outside of Jerusalem to the east, down to the Dead Sea, a couple of times, and that is real desert. I want you to know that. There's nothing significant growing out there...scrub things here and there. But when the Lord makes it rain, and I mean it is going to rain in the Kingdom, watch what happens. Isaiah 35:1, "And the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them," this is when the Kingdom comes, now listen to the next one, "and the desert shall rejoice and blossom like...what?...the rose..."

"It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice even with joy and singing, the glory of Lebanon shall be given to it." And if you've ever been to Lebanon, Lebanon before it was denuded so much, the only thing I can tell you about Lebanon is, Lebanon is so fertile and so green and so lush, parts of it look like Lake Arrowhead area. Incredibly beautiful area. And he says the desert is going to look like Lebanon. And it's going to look like Carmel. And it's going to look like Sharon, the Valley of Sharon is the coastal valley which is so green and beautiful. And Carmel is the range of mountains that goes up the coast to the north that is so green and nice. And the desert is going to look like that.

Well, in order for that to happen in the desert, folks, you're going to have to have some real rain. God is going to make it rain real rain. And verse 6, "The lame man's going to leap like a deer. The tongue of the dumb is going to sing. And in the wilderness...watch this...shall waters break out and streams in the desert and the parched ground shall become a pool and the thirsty land springs of water. In the habitation of jackals where each lay shall be grass with reeds and rushes." Water everywhere. It's going to be like a water field in the desert, literal rain.

But it's more than that because while the Bible always promises a literal Kingdom with literal rain and literal water and literal fields growing with literal crops, it also speaks of spiritual blessing outpoured on the people of God. It's a truth in and of itself and it's also an illustration of a spiritual truth that God is going to pour out the rain of marvelous blessing. In fact, in Hosea 6:1, "Come let us return to the Lord for He's torn and He will heal, He has smitten, He will bind us up. And after two days He will revive us and the third day He will raise us up and we shall live in His sight...now watch this...then shall we know if we follow to know the Lord, His going forth is prepared as the morning and He shall come to us as the rain, as the latter and former rain to the earth."

In other words, God's outpoured blessing is likened to the rain. And so the latter rain here, the latter rain is the spring rain that comes in March and April that's so indispensable to the crops. And he says you're not only going to get literal latter rain, you're going to get the latter rain of God's blessing. I think all of that is encompassed in this thought in Zechariah 10:1. And the word here is most interesting. It says He will give them...look at this...showers of rain. And the word there is a very special word in the Hebrew. It doesn't mean a violent destructive rain, but the Hebrew means a productive ample rain. It isn't going to be flooding them out. So the rain clouds will pour their water and the clouds of God's blessing will pour their blessing.

So what is Israel going to get in the Kingdom? A divine redeemer and divine rain. Thirdly is going to come divine recompense...divine recompense, verse 2, "For the idols have spoken vanity and the diviners have seen a lie and have told false dreams. They comfort in vain, therefore they went their way like a flock, they were troubled because there was no shepherd."

Now here is the picture painted of Israel's dilemma. They've been obeying idols in their past. By the way, this is a reference to Israel's life before the captivity, this is in the past cause after the captivity they had not entered idolatry. But they worshiped idols and they followed diviners, the occult, fortune tellers, witchcraft, soothsayers, all of that. They were into that just like our society today. They had their idols and their diviners. And their idols spoke in vain and their diviners told lies and gave them false dreams and comforted them in vain. They went therefore out like a flock and they were troubled because they were a flock without..what?...without a shepherd. And they were looking out for all these phony shepherds and none of them ever gave them the truth. They were fake. Their past experience with idols and their past experience with the occult was a disaster. The word "idols" there is teraphim and the Hebrew word teraphim is a most interesting word that demands a tremendous amount of study, really. But simply reducing it, it has to do primarily with household gods. The people actually did not only go to temples and worship, but they developed these little self-styled household gods and a demon would impersonate the gods that they had made in their little household and then the demon would hold them to this false system.

Here they were...and this was not unusual in Israel, read Genesis 31; 1 Samuel 15; 2 Kings 23 and you'll find in all of those chapters this problem. And here they were worshiping these things absolutely forbidden by God, these things that were utterly wicked, speaking vanity and uselessness. They were like a sheep without a shepherd. They were being misled by these phonies.

Ezekiel talks about this and how tragic it was in Israel's history to be without a shepherd. It says in Ezekiel 34 and verse 6, "My sheep wandered through all the mountains and upon every high hill. Yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth and none did search or seek them. Therefore ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord. As I live, saith the Lord God, surely because My flock became a prey and My flock became food to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd," and He's indicting the priests and the prophets here, "neither did My shepherd search for My flock, but the

shepherds fed themselves and fed not My flock. Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord, thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I am against the shepherds. I will require My flock at their hand and cause them to cease from feeding the flock, neither shall the shepherds feed themselves anymore for I will deliver My flock from their mouth that they may not be food for them."

He says you and your selfishness and in your self centeredness have used the flock to feed yourself. You've used them to make your money and to provide your food by all the offerings they bring and you've never fed them at all and I'm against you because you've left them to wander without a shepherd. But such a shepherd would come. Further in the chapter in verse 23, Ezekiel says, verse 22 starting, "Therefore will I save My flock, I will set up one shepherd over them and he shall feed them, even My servant David." And, of course, He has in mind ultimately greater than David. "He shall feed them and he shall be their shepherd and I the Lord will be their God." And then He closes by saying, "I the Lord have spoken it."

There was a time when they didn't have a shepherd. This is what he's saying in verse 2. There was no shepherd. And then in verse 3 he says exactly what Ezekiel said, "Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds and I punished the goats." And that's literally hegoats and it's a term used in the Old Testament to refer to leaders. Sometimes it refers to the chiefs. It is used as a synonym for the chiefs in Israel in other passages. "I will punish the shepherds and I will punish the chiefs for the Lord of hosts has visited His flock, the house of Judah and made them as His majestic horse in the battle."

Now you say, "Wait a minute. What's going on?" Now watch. Implied here is that what occurred in Israel's past...now watch this...what occurred in Israel's past, idolatry and the occult, for which God brought judgment on those shepherds will occur again. And I think there is a latent prophecy here that the prophet sees in the future, another idolatry in Israel, another involvement in the occult in Israel because of the false leaders and the false teachers that will rise up in the future. And God will come again and He will punish them. In visiting His flock, He will literally turn His flock into a battle horse to act in judgment against these false teachers.

Now you say, "You mean that's actually going to happen in the future?" I believe it is. "You mean you believe that Israel's going to turn to worshipping idols and Satan and the occult?" Yes. In fact, let me give you one illustration that will remind you that you probably believe that too. With whom does Israel make a pact in the Tribulation? Antichrist. What does Antichrist immediately do? He sets up in the midst of Jerusalem what? An image to himself and requires all of the humanity to bow to that image. The people, no question, will be trapped in this. The image, it says, will even speak. And so there will be occultism and there will be demonism. Believe me, when the Tribulation says that the doors of hell are open and the demons are all let loose, there will be demons in the world like never before. And the occult will reign supreme. And no question about it, in my mind, that Israel will get engulfed in this kind of idolatry, they will make a pact with the Antichrist, according to Daniel 9:27. They will get engulfed in that system before they're pulled out of it and that is really what Zechariah is saying. But

then in the end, God will look with mercy on His people and He will take that very nation which has been victimized by these phony leaders and He will turn that flock of helpless sheep into a battle horse that will do war against those very shepherds and destroy them. And Jesus Christ Himself will ride, as it were, on the back of the battle horse which is itself Israel.

Another passage that indicates this to us, that Israel will indeed be brought into a belief in idols and so forth is in Matthew 24. Because repeatedly in Matthew 24, it warns them along these lines. "For many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many." Many false prophets, many false shepherds are going to come. Verse 11, "Many false prophets shall rise and shall deceive many." Same statement. Verse 23, "Then if any man shall say, Lo, here is Christ and there..believe it not for there shall arise false Christs, false prophets showing signs and wonders in so much if it were possible it would deceive the very elect."

You see, Matthew says they're going to come. All the phony shepherds are going to come and they're going to deceive many people. Paul in writing to the Thessalonians in chapter 2 of 2 Thessalonians points up the fact that the Thessalonians need to be aware that Christ has not yet come because the apostasy hasn't yet come, but when the apostasy does come, there will come lying signs and wonders, deceiving many.

So, there's coming a day when God's people are going to experience a delusion, a deception that's incredible. And believe me, God is even going to allow it because He's going to allow, as it were, all hell to break loose right up to its limits. And when its blown its last gasket, He's going to destroy it all. We know this is all the allowance of God because Isaiah 66:4 says, "I also...watch this, talking about the end times...I also will choose their delusions and I will bring their fears on them because when I called, none did answer. When I spoke, they didn't hear. But they did evil before My eyes and chose that in which I delighted not. I will choose their delusion," says God. I'll bring them on. And so God is going to allow the world to come into a delusion and Israel will be engulfed in it somehow and God in His wonderful grace will come in the midst of that delusion with a true shepherd to offer to them, the true shepherd as it were will get on their backs as they are transformed into the battle horse and they'll go out to conquer the ungodly.

Verse 3 tells us essentially the same thing that we find in Isaiah and Ezekiel and the book of Revelation. Christ is going to come in judgment using the nation Israel as His war horse. In Zechariah chapter 12 we'll see this in detail...as we go from verses 1 to 9. We won't take the time to read it right now, but in verse 9 it says, "It will come to pass in that day, I'll seek to destroy all the nations that come against Israel." So God is going to use Israel as part of the force to destroy the nations. Chapter 14 of Zechariah tells us the very same thing. How He's going to come and fight against the enemy.

A great principle here. The Lord is going to come and bring divine recompense and judge all oppressors, the end of verse 4 of chapter 10, "All oppressors will be thrown out." So the divine

redeemer is part of Israel's redemption. The divine rain, wonderful blessing both physical and spiritual. And divine recompense as God judges the ungodly and the false teachers.

Fourth, divine restoration...divine restoration. Verse 5, this is very simple, we'll look at it just briefly. And here the Holy Spirit promises them marvelous power. Look at verse 5, "And they shall be like mighty men who tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle; and they shall fight because the Lord is with them and the riders on horses shall be confounded and I will strengthen the house of Judah and I will save the house of Joseph," those are just names for Israel, "and I will bring them again to place them in their land for I have mercy on them and they shall be as though I had not cast them off, for I am the Lord their God and will hear them and they of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man."

Now I want to just pull that one thought out of there...a tremendous restoration is going to come. They will be literally transformed into the power of God. You know, if you study Israel's history, the only time they ever won a battle was when the Lord was in it, right? The only time they ever won. Israel never did win unless the Lord was with them. And that will be the case at the end. They will literally trample their enemies in the mire of the streets because, verse 5, the Lord is with them. And verse 6, "He is the one who will strengthen them and the riders on the horses," that is the enemy, "will be confounded." And the Hebrew word means they will be confused or they will be ashamed. It can mean either thing and it probably means both. In their confusion they will be ashamed of their inability to withstand and to be defeated. The world is going to go into a state of shock in the day when the King of Kings comes with His mighty people from Israel to win the great and final battle before the Kingdom. By the way, Jeremiah 32:37 prophesies this very same thing so this also appears in the former prophets.

There's one interesting note, in verse 6, the "house of Judah" refers to the southern kingdom. And the "house of Joseph" to the northern. And the beautiful thought is here that God is going to restore the whole nation, north and south, one nation with one destiny. That's God's plan. And He'll bring them, I like this, to place them. After it's all over, He'll place them. Boy, what a great message it is to the wandering Jew, isn't it? Whose been wandering for so many years all over the world. And I love this, "They shall be as though I had never cast them off." It will be just like it was meant to be. I don't see how people can say God will never restore Israel. I don't see how people can say they'll never have a place in His final plan. God says here, "It will be as if I never cast them off...for I am the Lord their God and I will hear them and they of Ephraim," another name for Israel, "shall be like a mighty man." They'll be restored to the place of blessing. They'll be given the power that I intended for them from the beginning. I will place them. God is merciful.

You say, "Why is God going to do this?" I'll tell you why. He says in verse 6, "Because I am the Lord their God," that's why. In other words, I am Jehovah and Jehovah is My covenant keeping name. And I made a promise and if I make a promise, what? I keep it. I'm going to do it because I promised to do

it. And I make a covenant only to keep it. No longer will I be related to them Lo' Ruchamah or Lo' `Ammiy, the periods of Israel's history when they were separated. But from now on it will be you are My people and I am your God and no longer will Ichabod be written.

So, a great restoration with great power and great place of blessing. So, the redemption of Israel...divine redeemer, divine rain, divine recompense, divine restoration. There's one other one that we ought to look at...well, maybe we'll take time to look at a couple. This great restoration brings what I've chosen to call divine rejoicing, the end of verse 7. This is what it says, "And their heart shall rejoice as through wine." Hahaha, that's kind of good, isn't it? They're going to get happy like they've had just a little too much. "Yea, their children shall see it and be glad, their heart shall rejoice in the Lord."

What a wonderful truth. Their heart shall rejoice in the Lord. Naturally when God does all these things, when the redeemer comes and everything begins to rain blessing, and justice is meted against the enemy, and restoration is brought to the nation, the natural response is joy. The joy here is intense, it's as if they had just had a little too much to drink. And the children are going to see it and they're going to chime in. And everybody's going to be happy and rejoicing in the Lord. I guess maybe you might say they could even resurrect the song of Hannah. That's a great song of joy. Do you remember the song of Hannah? Remember recently we studied it? And Hannah said, "My heart rejoices in the Lord, my horn is exalted in the Lord, my mouth is enlarged over my enemies because I rejoice in the Thy salvation. There is none holy like the Lord. There is none beside Thee, neither is there any rock like our God," and on and on goes Hannah. They're going to sing a song of joy. And they're probably going to pull out some Psalms.

You know, Isaiah predicted joy in the Kingdom. You know, when you think about it for Israel, this will be pretty great. They've been through a lot of sorrow. Listen to what Isaiah said would happen in the Kingdom. "Rejoice with Jerusalem, be glad with her," Isaiah 66:10, "all ye that love her, rejoice for joy with her all ye that mourn that ye may nurse and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolation, that you may drink deeply and delighted with the abundance of her glory, for thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river and the glory of the nations like a flowing stream. Then shall you be nursed, you shall be born upon her sides and be dandled on her knees." In other words, Jerusalem is going to be the mother and she will be the rich and she will be the full and everybody else will just kind of bounce on her knee. And the joy that she has will be transferred to us. "As one whom his mother comforts, so will I comfort you and you shall be comforted in Jerusalem. And when you see this, your heart will rejoice and your bones will flourish like an herb and the hand of the Lord shall be known toward His servants." That's what's promised...great, great joy. The whole world bouncing, as it were, on the knee of Jerusalem.

So, what does God promise Israel in the redemption? Divine redeemer, divine rain, divine recompense, divine restoration, divine rejoicing and how about another one...divine regathering.

They're all going to be together again. Now watch closely, I'm going to through this quick. This is so good. Verse 8, your version may say, "I will hiss for them," the Hebrew says, "I'll whistle for them." God is going to step on the edge of His Kingdom some day in heaven and He's going to go "Schweet" or however you do that, and they're all going to come. It's a great thought.

"And I'm going to gather them because I've redeemed them," He says. "I'll whistle for them." Check out Isaiah 5:26 and you'll find another reference to that whistling of God. Why? "Because I redeemed them." It's My plan, folks, it's all My plan. I did it. I'm going to bring them back. I'm going to gather them. And then He says, "And they're going to increase as they have increased." What do you mean by that? Well, they've been growing. Ever since they went into Egypt...you remember in Exodus chapter 1, when they went into Egypt, they increased like mad? They really increased. Phenomenally. And He says, "As they have increased in the past," and at this time there were many Jews, "as they have increased in the past, they will increase perhaps commonly to what happened in Egypt, the phenomenal increase there, they're going to flourish in the Kingdom, they're going to go like mad, they're going to populate."

You see, now watch this, when Jesus comes at the end of the Tribulation, those Jews that are redeemed will not die. They'll go into the Kingdom in physical bodies and they will occupy the earthly Kingdom in their physical form. And they will have children and they will live a long time. In fact, if someone dies at 100 years, they die a baby. So as long as they're living, after the age when you can begin to reproduce, they will be having children. And the earth will literally proliferate with children. In fact, in Zechariah 2:4 it says, "Jerusalem will be inhabited like a town without a wall because of the multitude of men in it."

Now before that happens, verse 9 says God has another plan. "I'll first will sow them among the peoples." He's done that, hasn't He? From 70 A.D. they were scattered and dispersed all over the world. He says, "I'll sow them among the peoples and they'll remember Me in far countries and they'll return again, not alone, but with their children. And I'll bring them again out of the land of Egypt and gather them from Assyria...and those are just symbols of all the countries where they're scattered...and I'll bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; and place shall not be found for them."

There's going to be so many, they're going to be crowded all over the place. Maybe that's why He has to broaden out and make a new valley. Maybe that's why He has to make the desert blossom like a rose cause they've got to start moving east.

So, God says I'm going to bring them back. They've been scattered, I sowed them all over the world, but I'm going to whistle for them some day. And when I whistle, they're going to come. And they're going to come from everywhere. And their hearts are going to be turned toward Me and they're going to remember Me in far countries. And they're going to come back and I'm going to bring them

because I've redeemed them. And place won't even be found, there's going to be so many of them, the Kingdom is going to be so full and populated, they're going to be spilling all over the world.

That's not just Zechariah's thoughts. Isaiah writes about that, too. I think it is...Isaiah 54:1, "Single barren, thou who didst not bear, break forth into singing and cry aloud, thou who didst not travail with child, for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, says the Lord. Enlarge the place of your tent." Now He's talking about the Kingdom. He says when you get in the Kingdom, you better get a bigger tent...even if you've never had a baby. You better widen the curtains and lengthen the cords and strengthen the stakes. Going to be some population coming to that tent...some child bearing.

In Isaiah 49:20, "The children whom thou shalt have after thou hast lost the others shall say again in thine ear, The place is too narrow for me, give me a place that I may dwell. Then thou shalt say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me thee seeing I have lost my children and am desolate, a captive in moving to and fro, and who hath brought up these. Behold, I was left alone, these..where had they been?" In other words, all of a sudden the barren will flourish and they'll say, "How did this happen? I never could do this before."

"And thus says the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up Mine hand to the nations and set up My standard to the peoples and they shall bring thy sons in their arms and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers and their queens thy nursing mothers," and He moves into a second area and says not only will you be having children, but the whole world is going to be moving in and you're going to have to make room for them.

Now in order to gather all these people when God whistles, and in order to make sure they all come a running, God's going to have to remove some obstacles. And so in verse 11 He tells about that. And He says, "He shall pass through the sea of affliction and smite the waves in the sea; and all the deeps of the river shall dry up; the pride of Assyria shall be brought down and the scepter of Egypt shall depart." In other words, if He has to, the sea of affliction reminds us of the Red Sea when it was divided...the deeps of the river refers no doubt to the Nile which was is commonly designated by the context...or I should say by commentators in this context...and it would remind us of when the Jordan was divided. As God moves to bring them, if He has to He'll dry up a sea, if He has to He'll dry up a river, He'll smash the pride of a belligerent nation like He did of Assyria, He'll remove any kind of dominance that Egypt might want to hold, or any other nation. And again, Assyria and Egypt are...were traditional enemies of Israel that speak of any nation that would try to withhold God from fulfilling His will. And so, He comes in 11 to say, "I'll wipe out any obstacle to get My people back." That's what He'll do.

And so what does God promise? All these wonderful things. And then finally and lastly, a divine renovation. "I will strengthen them in the Lord and they shall walk up and down in His name, saith the



Lord." That verse simply says there will be a total and complete spiritual revival. Maybe you'd rather call it divine revival. They shall walk up and down in His name, says the Lord.

Well, beloved, that's what's going to happen for Israel. That's the future. That's where history's going. It's great to know it, isn't it? And how infinitely greater it is to be a part of it. And we who know Christ will be there to experience it all.

Father, thank You for our time tonight and just been so good to enrich ourselves. The time has gone by so fast. Don't even realize because of the joy we share in knowing Your truth. Thank You for these precious people here tonight. Thank You for what everyone means to You and to each other and thank You for this fellowship we have here. Father, I am so grateful that there are folks like this who faithfully week after week come to search the Scriptures and to throw their hearts open to the search light of the Word of God to be convicted, to be challenged, to be encouraged. Thank You for that openness and that desire on their parts.

And thank You, Father, for the privilege You've given me to teach. Somehow, Father, help me to be faithful. Help me to get past my own inadequacies and failures and be useful to You to meet the needs of these people who are so faithful. Make us ever faithful, Father, to reach out to Israel to assure them of this wonderful truth, but to also assure them that once a man dies, judgment is appointed and then it's too late. There are many people alive right now who won't be alive, perhaps, when Jesus comes to do all this and for them it will be too late. Give us a heart for Israel. Give us a heart for all those who will never be a part of Your Kingdom because they don't know You. And may we take Christ to them in the way we live, and the way we speak. Thank You again for this time tonight in Jesus' name. Amen.

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