



MONDAY 06 JUNE 2016

SERIES: ZECHARIAH

Read: Zechariah 9:1-8 & Romans 5:6-10

Plug In...

Israel's problem throughout history was their land kept getting plundered. This needs to be understood theologically. It was not because the enemy was bigger and mightier. It was because God departed the temple due to Israel's sin. Enemies only have power in so far as God allows them to fill the vacuum once He's gone.

This poem names many of the problem nations for Israel. It describes them as no longer being a threat to Israel because God has returned to His temple. In a twist, it suggests that many of the problem people are no longer a problem because they've miraculously turned to the LORD (v.7).

Chew It Over...

How does God keep watch over us as Christians? Answer this from the perspective of how it is that a Christian can say: "never again will an oppressor overrun God's people".

Prayer Suggestion

Praise God that we are hidden in Christ: no longer does sin, judgement, the Devil have a claim and can overrun us. Acknowledge God's compassion in that while we were His enemies He loved us.



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TUESDAY 07 JUNE 2016

SERIES: ZECHARIAH

Read: Zechariah 9:9-17 & Philippians 4:4-9

Plug In...

How God keeps watch and guards His temple is explained here. Through a king. This king is surprising. Although he battles on behalf of his people, his battle plan involves complete righteousness, humility, inclusiveness, and mercy. Verse 11, people from all nations are freed from their hopeless situation because of atonement provided.

Chew It Over...

We know that what was entirely future for the people of Zechariah's day, has begun for us as Christians. These truths need to capture us. The emotive actions of *rejoicing* naturally flow from this realisation. It is emotive, but also action based. Paul gives some practical actions that come from rejoicing in the work of your king (see: Philippians 4:4-9).

Prayer Suggestion

Praise God for Jesus right now. Rejoice before God that Jesus has been victorious in establishing righteousness amongst his people, of which we are included. Ask to be swept up in a life characterised by rejoicing.



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WEDNESDAY 08 JUNE 2016

SERIES: ZECHARIAH

Read: Zechariah 10:1-12

Plug In...

The LORD points out that the people are wandering around aimlessly because they have no shepherd. The shepherds that do lead them, lead them into bad terrain. Therefore, they are not loving caring leaders at all (vv.2-3). The LORD promises to step in and directly shepherd His flock (v.3).

Chew It Over...

One of the cruel outcomes of evil is that it takes hold of people who have been given the task to protect, care, and lead well the people underneath them. Evil leadership has resulted in this reality: there are groups that need help but are powerless to do anything about it; the people who often have position and power to do something about it often don't have the compassion and mercy to do anything about it.

Prayer Suggestion

Thank God for the Shepherd, Jesus, who has both the position and power to do something about his people's situation; and *also* has the compassion and mercy so therefore does something. Take opportunity to pray for our leaders (at church, within families, institutions, MPs and Senators). Pray that they may see Jesus clearly and run their leadership as they draw on him.



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THURSDAY 09 JUNE 2016

SERIES: ZECHARIAH

Read: Zechariah 11:1-3 & Matthew 9:35-38

Plug In...

If we follow carefully the imagery here, the shepherds of Lebanon and Bashan are not leaders within Judah, but leaders of the enemies of Judah. The reason the Jews have been described as wandering with no shepherd (10:2) is because they've had no good shepherd king for themselves. This is one of the effects of being in exile. To be in exile is to be ruled by foreign nations.

Chew It Over...

Think about how Jesus was filled with compassion when he saw his local community without a shepherd. Do we see our community as a bunch of wandering sheep under the oppressive rule of Satan? Would there be anything about next week's routine that would change if you were filled with more compassion for your local community? How can your compassion to introduce people to the shepherd that cares shape some of the things you'll do next week?

Prayer Suggestion

Ask that God would give you an outlook like the Lord Jesus. Pray that it would be vivid to you that so many around us are lost and wandering sheep. Ask the Lord to raise up more workers for the harvest.



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FRIDAY 10 JUNE 2016

SERIES: ZECHARIAH

Read: Zechariah 11:4-17

Plug In...

Zechariah does some role-playing here. (Dressing up into character in order to make a point.) This is one of the more mystifying pieces of Zechariah. The default is to read it as something about the future. This is natural, for we know that prophecy parts of the Bible point to the future (or at least the future for the people it was written for). Reading this role-play as about the future makes it more perplexing. Reading it as a role-play about the past (God's history with his people so far) it starts to make more sense.

Chew It Over...

Consider what the main point of this role-play is. [Given this short daily reading context, free yourself from the need to lock on to every detail.] As you reflect, draw on what we know from Zechariah chapters 9 & 10. Who has the metaphor of shepherds represented? Who is understood as the flock? Also consider how the setup to Zechariah (1:1-6) helps keep an overall context to everything that is said about in this book?

Prayer Suggestion

Thank Jesus for being a good shepherd and laying his life down for the flock. Confess that you've so often rejected his leadership, and tragically grown weary of God and even betrayed Jesus. Praise God for His relentless forgiveness, daily providing a call to repentance, and the wonderful gift of cleansed heart (1 John 1:9).



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WEEKEND 11-12 JUNE 2016

SERIES: ZECHARIAH

Read: Zechariah 9:9 & Matthew 21:1-12

Plug In...

Back to this week's detail of a king riding on a donkey. This is not just a random piece of trivia. Zechariah seems to be conscious of the life of King David as he speaks of a future king. When David was exiled from his kingdom he spent a life on the run and many times suffered humiliation (especially as someone who should have been recognised as king of Israel). Some of the details that show David was a king humiliated was that he had a meagre army and no war horses, just a few donkeys to ride on. Should you have more time this weekend, you may choose to read some of the story of David (2 Samuel 16-19). This story shows the king trusted in God despite his humiliation. With this background of David, then Zechariah, when we see Jesus riding into Jerusalem – riding towards his death – what we read has so much more impact.

Prayer Suggestion

Rejoice again that your king, Jesus, suffered humiliation so that we would be saved from enduring it ourselves. Rejoice that we have a shepherd king that is full of compassion for his people and acts on that compassion by laying his life down for the sheep.