Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 464 – Open Thy Doors Through Woe To The Idol Shepherd (Zechariah 11:1-17)

1. Why was Lebanon told to open their doors?

That the fire may devour thy cedars: *"Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars"* (**Zechariah 11:1**).

- It is possible that being called Lebanon can be symbolic, but not literal (**Ezekiel 31:3**).
- Having said that, the previous chapter says a place was not found in Lebanon for the remnant of the Lord (**Zechariah 10:10**).
- The Lord had said He planned to make Lebanon a wilderness (**Jeremiah 22:6-7**; **22:23**).
- A fall by a mighty one (**Isaiah 10:34**).
- Though Lebanon had great cedars, the Lord could bring them down (**Psalms 29:5**).

2. Why was there going to be howling?

The pride of Jordan was spoiled: *"(2) Howl, fir tree; for the cedar is fallen; because the mighty are spoiled: howl, O ye oaks of Bashan; for the forest of the vintage is come down. (3) There is a voice of the howling of the shepherds; for their glory is spoiled: a voice of the roaring of young lions; for the pride of Jordan is spoiled"* (**Zechariah 11:2-3**).

- The symbolism of howling (**Isaiah 13:6**, **Isaiah 16:7**, **Isaiah 23:14**, etc.).
- The shepherds howling (i.e. **Jeremiah 25:34-36**).
- Roaring of young lions like unto what happened to Israel can be a meaning here (**Jeremiah 2:15**). There could also be a meaning that through the destruction the predator no longer has a source of food (i.e. **Job 4:11**).
- Through Isaiah, we learn of the pride in Lebanon that was to be brought low (**Isaiah 2:12-17**).

3. Who was going to feed the flock of slaughter?

The Lord: *"(4) Thus saith the LORD my God; Feed the flock of the slaughter; (5) Whose possessors slay them, and hold themselves not guilty: and they that sell them say, Blessed be the LORD; for I am rich: and their own shepherds pity them not. (6) For I will no more pity the inhabitants of the land, saith the LORD: but, lo, I will deliver the men every one into his neighbour's hand, and into the hand of his king: and they shall smite the land, and out of their hand I will not deliver them"* (**Zechariah 11:4-6**).

- The point herein is that the Lord became the shepherd to feed (vs. 7) the flock that was doomed to slaughter. So, for a period of time He allowed the slaughter to happen. There are both Old Testament and New Testament applications to that (**Isaiah 40:9-11**, **Jeremiah 31:10**, **Ezekiel 34:12**; **34:23-24**, and **I Peter 5:4**).

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- That doesn't mean the people accepted such (**Matthew 23:37** and **Luke 19:41-44**).
- The blindness that existed through prosperity (**Hosea 12:2-8** and **Revelation 3:14-22**).
- Their own shepherds did not pity them (**Ezekiel 34:6**).
- So, the Lord removed His pity (**Ezekiel 8:18**). This principle should stand out to us as we too could face such from the Lord (**James 2:9-13**).

4. What did the Lord call His two staves?

Beauty and Bands: *"And I will feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock. And I took unto me two staves; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bands; and I fed the flock"* (**Zechariah 11:7**).

- The word translated "stave" [מַקֵּל] is a rod or a stick (Strong's # 4731). The Psalmist said the rod and staff of the Lord were a comfort to him (**Psalms 23:4**). The contextual figure is that of a shepherd.
- As addressed in verses 4-6, God would take the role of the Shepherd in both the Old (**Psalms 23:1**) and New Covenants (**John 10:1-30**).
- Beauty (**Psalms 90:17**). That will be broken (vs. 10).
- Bands [to bind; pledge; pervert; destroy] (**Isaiah 8:16**). That will be broken too (vs. 14).

5. How was the relationship between the shepherds and the Lord?

Basically, mutual hatred: *"Three shepherds also I cut off in one month; and my soul lothed them, and their soul also abhorred me"* (**Zechariah 11:8**).

- The numbering of shepherds here could have multiple meanings. There were many in leadership in Israel (i.e. **Jeremiah 2:26**).
- In a month (**Hosea 5:7**).
- God was against the shepherds of His people (**Ezekiel 34:10**).
- It could rightly be stated that the Lord's soul loathed them (**Leviticus 26:27-30**, **Psalms 11:4-7**, **Psalms 78:58-59**, and **Amos 6:8**).
- They abhorred the Lord (**John 15:25**).
- In principle: **Proverbs 29:27**

6. Did the Lord offer to feed the dying to keep them alive?

No, those that lothed God would suffer the consequences: *"Then said I, I will not feed you: that that dieth, let it die; and that that is to be cut off, let it be cut off; and let the rest eat every one the flesh of another"* (**Zechariah 11:9**).

- The principle: **Luke 13:1-9**
- God had been longsuffering many times with them (**Nehemiah 9:29-33**).

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7. In that day, what was broken and what price was offered that was cast to the potter?

"(10) And I took my staff, even Beauty, and cut it asunder, that I might break my covenant which I had made with all the people. (11) And it was broken in that day: and so the poor of the flock that waited upon me knew that it was the word of the LORD. (12) And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. (13) And the LORD said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prised at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the LORD" (**Zechariah 11:10-13**).

- The breaking [making void] of the covenant (**Jeremiah 31:31-34**, **Ezekiel 16:59-61**, and **Hebrews 8:1-13**).
- Thirty pieces of silver (**Matthew 26:14-16** and **Matthew 27:1-9**).
- The changing of the covenant and the tie to Jesus is impossible to miss here (**Hebrews 9:1-10:22**).

8. What brotherhood did the Lord speak of breaking?

Between Israel and Judah: *"Then I cut asunder mine other staff, even Bands, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel"* (**Zechariah 11:14**).

- The binding together of Judah and Israel as a brotherhood changed with Gentiles being brought into the fold of God (**Romans 11:1-36** and **Ephesians 2:1-22**).
- The brotherhood (**I Peter 2:17**) now being all the saved (**Acts 2:47**).

9. Was the shepherd that was going to be raised up going to be wise and help those that were broken?

No: *"(15) And the LORD said unto me, Take unto thee yet the instruments of a foolish shepherd. (16) For, lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land, which shall not visit those that be cut off, neither shall seek the young one, nor heal that that is broken, nor feed that that standeth still: but he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in pieces"* (**Zechariah 11:15-16**).

- Now we have a contextual change. It can be confusing. By deductive reasoning though, we can see this has nothing to do with Jesus.
- Zechariah was told to take the the instruments of a foolish shepherd (i.e. **I Corinthians 1:27**).
- The shepherd that would be raised up would NOT seek those cut off. That was NOT a quality of a good shepherd (**Jeremiah 23:1-2**). Jesus DID seek and visit those cut off [hidden; concealed; desolate] (**Luke 19:1-10**).
- Jesus DID seek the young ones (**Mark 10:13-16**).
- Jesus DID heal the broken, etc. (**Luke 4:18**).
- This shepherd was going to devour (i.e. **Mark 12:40**).

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10. What was said to the idol shepherd?

"Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock! the sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened" (**Zechariah 11:17**).

- **Jeremiah 10:21**, **Jeremiah 23:32**, and **Ezekiel 34:2**
- The sword (**Amos 9:4**).
- Arm, representing strength (cf. **Isiah 62:8**), figuratively dried up (c.f. **I Kings 13:4**).
- Blindness (**Isaiah 29:10** and **Micah 3:6-7**).

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