

GLENKIRK CHURCH



WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

The DEVO

JULY 12 - 16, 2021



COURSE SERMON SERIES
5/9 - 8/1
CORRECTIONS

THE MINOR PROPHETS

MONDAY

Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 21:4-5

Where does Zechariah and his book fit in the history of God's people?

First, the context. The people of God had been stripped of everything (land, temple, homes)—everything except God and their history with God, including their deliverance by Him from Egypt, along with the Passover to remember it. With their recent exile in Babylon/Persia for 70 years, what now? What is God up to? What is next?

Zechariah is in a long line of prophets who lived in Israel and Judah. He is a contemporary of the prophet Haggai who focused on the people rebuilding God's house in their time. Zechariah's focus is on what God is building for eternity through His Son and by His Spirit.

Things look bleak with the recent hassles from nearby residents during the time of Nehemiah and the rebuilding of Jerusalem's city walls. Now God is telling them through Zechariah what He has in mind. Zechariah's prophecy will become another chapter in God's book--the canon of Holy Scripture--that will become part of the Greek translation of the Old Testament called the Septuagint. By the time Jesus came 500 years later, people will know of the prophet Zechariah. People name their children after him. For example, John the Baptist's father was also named Zechariah, a priest and also a prophet. (See Luke 1:67-79 for his prophecy.)

The writers of the New Testament gospels knew well the prophet Zechariah's writings and referred to him (and other Old Testament writers) by saying over and over, "This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet" (Matthew 21:4). At least one of Zechariah's prophecies of Jesus has been fulfilled (9:9), and another has been partially fulfilled (12:10).

Jesus and the Scriptures testify of each other. Jesus says, "I came not to do away with the Law and the Prophets but to fulfill them" (Matthew 5:17). "And Scripture cannot be set aside" (John 10:15). "These are the very Scriptures that testify about Me" (John 5:39), Jesus said. Because the Scriptures are such an important means of knowing Jesus, it behooves us to study them diligently, keeping Him in mind.

QUESTIONS

How has knowing Jesus changed your life?

PRAYERS FOR MISSIO CHURCH IN PASADENA

Missio Church is an ECO Church Plant located in Pasadena. We thank God that Missio is back to in-person worship in an auditorium as of June 6! It is wonderful for the congregants to be together, sing together and spend time together.

TUESDAY

Isaiah 53; Zechariah 12:10; Matthew 11:6; 26:57

The prophets, including Zechariah, did a great service in foretelling the coming of Jesus.

Do we want Jesus or a Messiah of certain specifications? The prophets give us hints. Isaiah said He would be rejected by men (53:3). Zechariah said He would come on a donkey (9:9), and that He would be pierced by the “inhabitants of Jerusalem” (12:10). Because people missed the prophets’ words, they rejected Jesus. They denied and betrayed Him. They called Him a blasphemer and crucified Him. But always Jesus was and is the Messiah whom Heaven sent to us.

Really, down deep we want Jesus and not a Messiah of certain specifications. When we sing the song, “Give Me Jesus,” we want Jesus however He comes.

“In the morning, when I rise, give me Jesus.

And when I am alone, give me Jesus.

And when I come to die, give me Jesus.

Give me Jesus, give me Jesus.

You can have all this world, but give me Jesus.”

The disciples weren't always sure about Jesus, although encountering the resurrected Jesus did convince them. For some the conviction was instantaneous. For others it took some time. Even today, we want Jesus to be and to act in a certain way, and He isn't and doesn't always act the way we think He should.

Probably the best plan is to seek Him and find Him and follow Him daily by faith. He really did promise to never leave or forsake us. He really is the Way, the Truth and the Life. We can always join Him in prayer, interceding for others. When Jesus gives us a job to do, we can be faithful to do it to please Him, not with an eye to impress others.

Yes, Jesus is able to do abundantly above and beyond what we ask or think, in and through us and the people we pray for. Let's trust Him today and give Him all we've got.

QUESTIONS

What is Jesus asking of you today?

PRAYERS FOR MISSIO CHURCH IN PASADENA

Continued prayer to find the right part-time staff people. Missio Church is still seeking a Worship Leader and Minister of Discipleship. A hopeful worship director candidate will be interviewed this weekend.

WEDNESDAY

Zechariah 9:12; 2 Corinthians 1:18-29; 2 Peter 1:3-4

Jesus is the guarantor of God's promises.

According to 2 Peter 1:4, God's promises enable us to live in the present world system with all its difficulties and hard times. The fact that God makes promises lets us know we can count on them, even when we do not yet see or experience their fulfillment.

In the prophet Zechariah's time, slavery and exile were just behind them. Still ahead was the promise of a Messiah to save them from their tormentors [Satan, Rome]. Now that resurrection life has been demonstrated by Jesus, God's people can live this new life, even as we are surrounded by a dysfunctional and war-torn world. How do we steward this new God-given life in our culture? Until the "Day of the Lord," when all wrongs will be made right, we are "*prisoners of hope*," in the words of Zechariah (9:12). We are fully trusting in the sure promises of God.

Jesus' Great Commission—world evangelization—is still incomplete and ongoing. Jesus promised we would receive the same maltreatment He received. James (1:12) promises "*the crown of life*" to those who endure.

Paul was literally a “prisoner of hope” when he dictated letters to the churches containing God’s promises. Throughout history, prisoners of faith have leaned on these promises to get through their trials. For example, stories from Vietnam tell of prisoners of war reconstructing from memory as much of the Bible as they could. They credit this exercise for helping them stay alive. (Mitchiner) Knowing and rehearsing God’s promises is like a preview of when our faith becomes sight.

When things are not going well, we may be tempted to doubt God’s faithfulness. But we dare not doubt this. Rather, like Job in his distress, patiently endure. Job made statements of God’s promise that helped him in the midst of his trial. *“I know my Redeemer lives”* (19:25), he proclaimed. *“But He knows the way that I take; when He has tested me, I will come forth as gold”* (23:10), Job exclaimed. He is an example to us of how to rely on God’s promises.

QUESTIONS

What promises of God are getting you through what you are facing right now?

PRAYERS FOR MISSIO CHURCH IN PASADENA

Pray for Cal Tech students to have an openness to the gospel as Missio Church staff prepare for new student outreach in the Fall, for boldness for the current believers, and for favor as they seek to be present at the various orientation activities. Pray also for the church and staff to connect with returning Fuller students who will finally be in-person this Fall.

THURSDAY

Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 1:7-10; Hebrews 2:10-11

God is following through on His building plans.

“Who dares despise the day of small things, since the seven eyes of the LORD that range throughout the earth will rejoice when they see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel?” (Zechariah 4:10)

The plumb line indicates the straight and true manner in which God the Master Builder is building His house (John 14:2). When God made the heavens and the earth, He followed His plans. When God sent Jesus to the earth, He followed His plan of salvation for mankind.

God gave Noah the blueprint for the ark. When God gave Moses the plans for building the tabernacle in the wilderness, He was precise. Bezalel and his fellow craftsmen followed the assembly instructions exactly.

Jesus is building His Church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it (Matthew 16:18). God’s “infrastructure bill” has already passed heaven’s executive, legislative, and judicial branches. What is God up to? What is He building? Can we participate? How can we partner with Him?

On a very large scale, God’s plan is to reconcile all of His created order to Himself under the auspices of His Son Jesus (1 Corinthians 1:10). When Jesus prayed for unity, it was not a “pipedream.” He prayed with

perfect faith that it would happen, so it will. When we are involved in reconciling ourselves to God, or others to God, or people to people, including us to others, we are participating in the answer to Jesus' prayers (John 17:21), and Paul's prayers too (Philippians 2:2).

On a smaller scale, God is sanctifying (Hebrews 2:11) His disciples (spiritually forming them) "*from glory to glory*" (2 Corinthians 3:18). We are being transformed by the renewing of our minds so that we "*will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will*" (Romans 12:2). We are living stones being built into a temple to God (1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Peter 2:5).

QUESTIONS

How do you fit into God's building plans (God's kingdom-wise, community-wise, spiritual formation-wise)?

PRAYERS FOR MISSIO CHURCH IN PASADENA

Pray for Pastor Len as he seeks to equip the congregation to reconnect with neighbors as their relational muscles recover post-pandemic.

FRIDAY

Zechariah 4:6; John 14:16; 15:26; 16:15

The Holy Spirit brings clarity.

“Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit says the LORD.”
(Zechariah 4:6)

Jesus reveals God (John 1:18), and the Holy Spirit brings Jesus into focus (John 15:26).

Simon Sinek writes books on finding the WHY, HOW, and WHAT of people, organizations, ideas, activities, and things. God has a WHY, a HOW, and a WHAT, too. The WHY of God is the love of the Father. The HOW of God is the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the WHAT of God. The Holy Spirit is the means by which God does everything He does.

In the beginning, the Holy Spirit brought all of creation from formlessness into focus (Genesis 1:2). John the Baptist was filled by the Holy Spirit while still unborn (Luke 1:15). Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:35). And when we were born again, Jesus was conceived in us by the Holy Spirit as well (John 1:13; 3:5-8). Paul says, *“For as many as are led by the Spirit, they are the sons [and daughters] of God”* (Romans 8:14).

The Holy Spirit is an Advocate and Helper. We need His help and advocacy in living out the eternal life He has given us (Romans 6:23). This life and this Spirit are both gifts that God has given to us. We receive them and continue to unwrap them every day.

When John the Baptist said, *“I baptize with water, but One comes after me who will baptize you with the Holy Spirit,”* echoing the promise of the prophet Joel, he was speaking God’s sure promise. Have you ever yearned to be so anointed, drenched, saturated, filled with the Holy Spirit? Then this promise is for you. This promise means there are no second-class citizens in the kingdom of God.

It is true that the Holy Spirit is the birthright of every born-again believer. The Holy Spirit is part and parcel of Jesus’ salvation package. Did Jesus not say, *“I will not leave you orphans,”* (John 14). Yes, He handed us off to the most capable Helper. The Holy Spirit brings clarity on everything Jesus wants to share with us (John 14-16), including Himself.

QUESTIONS

Pray in your own words, *“Heavenly Father, please fill me to overflowing so that I overflow on others today. Lead me by Your Holy Spirit. Clarify all I must know. Bring Jesus into focus. Thank You, Lord. Amen.”*

PRAYERS FOR MISSIO CHURCH IN PASADENA

Pray for spiritual renewal when Pastor Len and his wife Amy attend *“The Father’s Heart”* retreat August 1-6; pray that they would receive God’s love in fresh and healing ways.

Sources

- Song “Give Me Jesus,” sung by Fernando Ortega and written by Jacob Knapp; copyright, 1845. Hal Leonard LLC.
- Thomas Mitchiner, “Battleproofing the Inner Person,” *Military Chaplains’ Review*, Professional bulletin of the U. S. Army Chaplain Corps, Summer 1987, page 37.
- Simon Sinek, *Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action*, published by Portfolio, a member of the Penguin Group, USA, 2009.

