

Missio Dei Fellowship exists to glorify God by delighting in Him and making Him known through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

War in Israel—A Biblical Perspective, Pt 6

Selected Passages

Keywords: Israel, Hamas, War, End Times, Eschatology, Covenants, Zechariah

PowerPoint Presentation included: none

SermonAudio Blurb: In this series we explore the biblical theology behind the attack by Hamas upon Israel and answer the question of why it matters. Why is Israel so important in the flow of human events? How should we view Israel? Why do so many in the Church seem to dismiss the nation of Israel? Should we? For two messages we will focus on the important prophet Zechariah to see the faithfulness of God to His covenants.

I. Introduction.

- A. We continue in this study on how to best understand the war in Israel right now and how we ought to view it in light of the bible.

- B. Last week we saw several key Old Testament passages that clearly state that God will preserve and restore Israel in the future.
 1. I showed you how you cannot separate Israel from their land. It is inextricably linked with the people, both for blessing and for cursing.
 2. But there are many who will reject that and make two key rejoinders:
 - a. The first is to say that this all was fulfilled in the days of Joshua because Joshua 21:43-45 proves that God fulfilled the land promises to Israel and now He doesn't need to do it again. The response to that claim is that God restates the land promises and the future restoration of Israel to her land in the time of the prophets.
 - b. This leads to the second rejoinder which says that these promises were all fulfilled in the days of Nehemiah and Ezra when the King of Persia, Cyrus allowed the Israelites to return to the land in 538 B.C.
 3. But this is where a key Old Testament prophet becomes very important to consider. And that prophet is Zechariah.

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- C. Zechariah is one of the larger of the minor prophets who recorded many key events and promises of God to the nation of Israel. But he did this after the return to the land in the days of Cyrus.

II. Zechariah and The Faithfulness of God.

- A. As stated, this is a post-exilic book of the Old Testament. Those are comprised of Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Obadiah and Joel.

- 1. So these are the ones who prophesy leading up to the closing of the Old Testament and the silence of God.
- 2. And in them is the consistent theme of discipline and hope for the nation of Israel. How? Through the coming of the Christ.

- B. Zechariah 9-11.

- 1. In this section we have God addressing the Gentile oppression against Israel. We see how He shall judge them for their actions against His people.

- 2. 9:1-8:

- 3. 9:9-10: we see the call for the nation to rejoice in the coming King, who we know now is Jesus Christ—His first advent.

- a. In vs 9 we have his qualifications

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- b. In between vs 9 and vs 10 is the whole of the New Testament and up to this day.
 - c. In vs 10 having died, risen again, ascended into heaven we now fast forward to his second advent.
4. 9:11-17: we have the blessings of the Lord.
- a. 11-12
 - b. 13-17
5. 10:1-12, here Zechariah expands on chapter 9.
- a. The blessings of God through the restoration of the land by making it fruitful is again seen in vs 1.
 - b. The teraphim in vs 2.
 - c. From vss 3 to the end we have the picture of YHWH taking His gathered Israel and empowering them to defeat the nations.
 - (1) Vs 5
 - (2) Vs 6
 - (3) vss 8-12
 - d. To summarize this chapter is to see it as a chapter of redemption for a very sinful people.
6. 11:1-17, God now turns to the worthless/wicked shepherds of Israel. To understand this section it is helpful to understand that God casts Zechariah in the role of the good shepherd.

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- a. Here we shift from a primarily positive blessing of Israel to the stark reality of sin and punishment.
- b. Vss 1-3
- c. Vss 4-5
- d. Vs 7
- e. Vs 8 the three shepherds.
- f. Vss 9-14
- g. Vss 15-17

- (1) In John 5:43 we see an allusion to him by Jesus and it sums up the problem, *“I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another shall come in his own name, you will receive him.”*
- (2) vs 17 we see the ultimate judgment of this false shepherd.

III. Conclusion.

- A. With this as background next week we can look at three of the most powerful chapters in the bible about the nation of Israel and the salvation that comes only from God.
 - 1. It is described by some to be the Old Testament version of Revelation with many, many connections to the final book of the bible.
 - 2. I encourage you to read them prior to coming.

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3. When you read them have a pencil and note phrases that basically say, “in that day” And then circle also the “I will” that are connected to that phrase. Ask yourself what is happening there.
- B. What makes this section of Zechariah so good for the soul is that it shows the greatness of man’s ability to sin and rebel. But it also shows the even greater power of God to overcome sin and gather a people to Himself.
1. Where we see the faithlessness of others as well as ourselves. Zechariah shows us God’s faithfulness triumphing over all of it.
 2. We see the danger all around. We see the difficulties life hurls at us. We see our failings and we retreat from the threats all around. But God turns the weapons of this age against them and then provides the way of salvation.
 3. Let us all make all the more certain of to Whom we entrust our souls.
 4. We can echo the words of Paul as he is seated in the dungeon awaiting his execution because of his faith in Christ. *“For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day”* (2 Timothy 1:12).

Benediction

May our merciful God and Father open our eyes to the glory and vastness of His love toward us through Jesus His Son. May we see ourselves seated with Him in heaven as recipients of His grace. And may God grant us through the Spirit, eyes to grasp the many good works He has called us to love and do. Amen

Small Group Suggestion: Go through chapters 11-14 and try to find all the allusions that point to Jesus Christ. Also look at all the promises God makes to Israel. See if you can enumerate them. Note the number of times the personal name of YHWH is invoked and discuss why that may be.