

February 6, 2011

*"The Great Mistake: Rejecting God, Rejecting His Blessings,
Rejecting Our Lord Jesus Christ"*
Zechariah 11

I almost put off preaching this message another week. I was tempted to preach on Zechariah 10:7 about the "joy" God's people have in Him! Yet, God pulled me past that to this TERRIBLE chapter! What a dreadful, fearful thing it is to REJECT God's grace ...

I. The downfall of the cedars of Lebanon, etc...

Open your doors, O Lebanon, That fire may devour your cedars.² Wail, O cypress, for the cedar has fallen, Because the mighty trees are ruined. Wail, O oaks of Bashan, For the thick forest has come down.³ There is the sound of wailing shepherds! For their glory is in ruins. There is the sound of roaring lions! For the pride of the Jordan is in ruins. (Zechariah 11:1-3 NKJ)

- 1. I do not believe Zechariah is speaking about literal trees here –*
- 2. The reference is to trees used in building the first Temple / Solomon's Temple –*

And behold, I propose to build a house for the name of the LORD my God, as the LORD spoke to my father David, saying, "Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, he shall build the house for My name."⁶ Now therefore, command that they cut down cedars for me from Lebanon; ... (1 Kings 5:5-6 NKJ)

Then Hiram sent to Solomon, saying: I have considered the message which you sent me, and I will do all you desire concerning the cedar and cypress logs.⁹ My servants shall bring them down from Lebanon to the sea; I will float them in rafts by sea to the place you indicate to me, and will have them broken apart there; ...¹⁰ Then Hiram gave Solomon cedar and cypress logs according to all his desire. (1 Kings 5:8-10 NKJ)

- 3. Oaks of Bashan are also mentioned and the thick forest, these represented the fruitfulness of the land, God's people are spoken of in such terms –*

"He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. And I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes

**down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name. (Revelation 3:12 NKJ)
But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, (Galatians 5:22 NKJ)**

"Cedars" here could reference either proud leaders (about to devoured by the fires of God's judgment) OR REAL LEADERS already passed on and dying, men like Zerubbabel, Joshua the High Priest, even Zechariah himself --- the real judgment being the removal of true shepherds, as rebellious people no longer deserved them –

*II. Zechariah's sad, sad, sad prophetic portrayal of
Christ's first coming –*

*1. We know He came to save His people from their sins –
"And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21 NKJ)*

- 2. Yet, this prophecy speaks to what Jesus' coming would mean to those who would REJECT HIM - / These people would first reject Zechariah –*

"that the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation,⁵¹ "from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah who perished between the altar and the temple. Yes, I say to you, it shall be required of this generation. (Luke 11:50-51 NKJ)

- 3. There is a feeding of the flock, which is temporary, which is "for slaughter" –*

Thus says the LORD my God, "Feed the flock for slaughter,⁵ "whose owners slaughter them and feel no guilt; those who sell them say, 'Blessed be the LORD, for I am rich'; and their shepherds do not pity them.⁶ "For I will no longer pity the inhabitants of the land," says the LORD. "But indeed I will give everyone into his neighbor's hand and into the hand of his king. They shall attack the land, and I will not deliver them from their hand."⁷ So I fed the flock for slaughter, in particular the poor of the flock. I took for myself two staffs: the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bonds; and I fed the flock.⁸ I dismissed the three shepherds in one month. My soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me.⁹ Then I said, "I will not feed you. Let what is dying die, and what is perishing perish. Let those that are left eat each other's flesh." (Zechariah 11:4-9 NKJ)

- A. This was Zechariah's ministry –*
- B. This was Jesus ministry –*

"The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon *is* here.³² "The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah *is* here. (Luke 11:31-32 NKJ)

"But I say to you that it will be more tolerable in that Day for Sodom than for that city.¹³ "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.¹⁴

"But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you.¹⁵ "And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades.¹⁶ "He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me." (Luke 10:12-16 NKJ)

They were fattened with light, fattened with truth, fattened with Christ's love, fattened with opportunities to REPENT, yet they did NOT!

4. *The dismissal of three shepherds - :8 Prophets, Priests & Kings?*

5. *There is mutual loathing - :8*

Oh how the Scribes, Pharisees and Chief Priests wanted to kill Jesus – Oh how Jesus abhorred false righteousness –

"I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot.¹⁶ "So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. (Revelation 3:15-16 NKJ)

Judas betrays Christ with a kiss – many pretend "friendship" "worship" of Christ with their lips ---

These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. (Matthew 15:8 NKJ)

6. *There is finally and ENDING of the shepherding ministry - :9 "I will not feed you. Let what is dying die, and what is perishing perish. Let those that are left eat each other's flesh."*

7. *The breaking of the Covenant, the despising of Christ – And I took my staff, Beauty, and cut it in two, that I might break the covenant which I had made with all the peoples.¹¹ So it was broken on that day. Thus the poor of the flock, who were watching me, knew that it*

was the word of the LORD.¹² Then I said to them, "If it is agreeable to you, give me my wages; and if not, refrain." So they weighed out for my wages thirty pieces of silver.¹³ And the LORD said to me, "Throw it to the potter "-- that princely price they set on me. So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the LORD for the potter. (Zechariah 11:10-13 NKJ)

A. *Thirty pieces of silver (1) price of a dead slave (2) severance pay of a despised prophet (Zechariah) and (3) money paid to Judas to betray Jesus Christ "princely price" is sarcasm!*

III. The giving up of Christ's rejecters to a false shepherd

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1. *This is the shepherd they deserve, the OPPOSITE of Christ – And the LORD said to me, "Next, take for yourself the implements of a foolish shepherd.¹⁶ "For indeed I will raise up a shepherd in the land who will not care for those who are cut off, nor seek the young, nor heal those that are broken, nor feed those that still stand. But he will eat the flesh of the fat and tear their hooves in pieces. (Zechariah 11:15-16 NKJ)*

A. *Foolish B. does not care C. won't seek D. won't heal E. won't feed ---- but he will devour them!*

B. *They chose such when they rejected Christ –Matthew 27:16-26; John 19:15*

But they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!" (John 19:15 NKJ)

2. *This shepherd is WORTHLESS – "Woe to the worthless shepherd, Who leaves the flock! A sword shall be against his arm And against his right eye; His arm shall completely wither, And his right eye shall be totally blinded." (Zechariah 11:17 NKJ)*

A. *A withered arm means he has no strength!*

B. *A lost eye means "no vision"*

IV. We need to be careful not to reject Christ ourselves – Serve the LORD with fear, And rejoice with trembling.¹² Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, And you perish in the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him. (Psalm 2:11-12 NKJ)

If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come! (1 Corinthians 16:22 NKJ)