

ZECHARIAH

THE RIGHT SIDE OF HISTORY

THE PROPHETS SPEAK OF JESUS

TWO SIDES OF HISTORY

Declare what is to be, present it—let them take counsel together. Who foretold this long ago, who declared it from the distant past? Was it not I, the LORD? And there is no God apart from Me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none but Me. “Turn to Me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other.

ISAIAH 45.21-22

“My Father is always at His work to this very day, and I too am working.”

JOHN 5.17

- ▶ Since the failure of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, God has been at work, pursuing through partnership with people, His plan of redemption and the restoration of His righteous purposes on earth.

- ▶ That partnership, however, has been characterized by continuing failure on the part of those God has chosen to carry out His plans. His initiatives have been frustrated by spiritually traitorous behavior and allegiances, and He has found it necessary to interrupt His plans and put everything on hold while He punished His people for their sin.

“Your children will be shepherds here for forty years, suffering for your unfaithfulness, until the last of your bodies lies in the wilderness. For forty years—one year for each of the forty days you explored the land—you will suffer for your sins and know what it is like to have Me against you.”

EXODUS 14.33-34

Then the angel of the LORD said, “LORD Almighty, how long will You withhold mercy from Jerusalem and from the towns of Judah, which You have been angry with these seventy years?”

ZECHARIAH 1.12

AND YET . . .

The LORD Almighty has sworn, “Surely, as I have planned, so it will be, and as I have purposed, so it will happen. . . . This is the plan determined for the whole world; this is the hand stretched out over all nations. For the LORD Almighty has purposed, and who can thwart him? His hand is stretched out, and who can turn it back?

ISAIAH 14.24, 26-27

- ▶ In reality, God’s plans have not been delayed or sidelined; in His omniscient foreknowledge, He has taken into account every apparent setback and all of the various human agendas that have seemed to dominate the stage of human history and render His activities irrelevant and inconsequential.

- ▶ Like the unseen puppeteer manipulating the puppet, God has been carrying out His plans in spite of and through everything and everyone seemingly at odds with Him.

“This is what the LORD says: Do not deceive yourselves, thinking, ‘The Babylonians will surely leave us.’ They will not! Even if you were to defeat the entire Babylonian army that is attacking you and only wounded men were left in their tents, they would come out and burn this city down.”

JEREMIAH 37.9-10

- ▶ Throughout human history, some people chose to walk in conscientious partnership with God and be an integral part of His eternal plan; others, including nations, serve a temporary purpose and are discarded.

“Sharpen the arrows, take up the shields! The LORD has stirred up the kings of the Medes, because His purpose is to destroy Babylon. The LORD will take vengeance, vengeance for His temple.”

JEREMIAH 51.11

THE DEUTERO-ZECHARIAH ISSUE

- ▶ The first eight chapters of Zechariah's prophecy very clearly deal with the people (Zerubbabel and Joshua) and the contemporary circumstances. Chapters 9-14 are so clearly different and so replete with messianic prophecies that many scholars believe the either Matthew framed the narrative of Jesus' passion to reflect the prophecies in Zechariah, or someone later added these these chapters in light of the events of Jesus' passion.
- ▶ Jesus himself declared that he had come to fulfill everything written beforehand about him (Luke 18.31-32).

A MULTITUDE OF PROPHECIES

► A Branch (cf. *Jeremiah 23.5-5; 33.14-15*)

“Listen, High Priest Joshua, you and your associates seated before you, who are men symbolic of things to come: I am going to bring my servant, the Branch. See, the stone I have set in front of Joshua! There are seven eyes on that one stone, and I will engrave an inscription on it,” says the LORD Almighty, ‘and I will remove the sin of this land in a single day.’” (3.8-9)

(“the Word became human” - John 1.14)

Tell him this is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘Here is the man whose name is the Branch,

(the Church - Ephesians 2.20-22)

(“I will build my church” - Matthew 16.18)

and he will branch out from his place and build the temple of the LORD. It is he who will build

(John 1.51; Hebrews 2.9; 2 Peter 1.16)

(Matthew 25.31; Luke 1.32; Hebrews 1.8)

the temple of the LORD, and he will be clothed with majesty and will sit and rule on his throne.

(Hebrews 8.1-2 etc.)

And he will be a priest on his throne. And there will be harmony between the two.’ (6.12-13)

► A Humble King (cf. *Matthew 21.5-7*)

“Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.” (9.9)

► A Detailed Betrayal

I told them, “If you think it best,¹ give me my pay; but if not, keep it.” So they paid me thirty pieces of silver.² And the LORD said to me, “Throw it to the potter”—the handsome price at which they valued me!³ So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them⁴ to the potter⁵ at the house of the LORD.⁶ (9.9)

¹ Matthew 26.15

² Matthew 26.15

³ Matthew 26.15; cf. Exodus 21.32

⁴ Matthew 27.3, 5

⁵ Matthew 27.8

⁶ Matthew 27.5

► The Shepherd Struck

(Ezekiel 34.23-24; John 10.11)

(John 1.18)

“Awake, sword, against my shepherd, against the man who is close to me!” declares the LORD Almighty. “Strike the shepherd . . .” (13.7)

Then some began to spit at him; they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, “Prophecy!” And the guards took him and beat him.

MARK 14.65

► The Sheep Scattered

“Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered . . .” (13.7)

Then Jesus told them, “This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written:

“ ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’ ”

MATTHEW 26.31

► A Cleansing Fountain

“On that day a fountain will be opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and impurity.” (13.1)

. . . as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

EPHESIANS 5.25-27

► A Mourning Multitude (cf. Revelation 1.7)

“And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son.” (12.10)

► The Blood of the Covenant (cf. *Exodus 24.8*)

“As for you, because of the blood of My covenant with you, I will free your prisoners from the waterless pit.” (9.11)

This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

MATTHEW 26.28

How much more severely do you think someone deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified them, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?

HEBREWS 10.29

Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing His will, and may He work in us what is pleasing to Him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

HEBREWS 13.20-21

THE RIGHT SIDE OF HISTORY

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father’s glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done.

MATTHEW 16.24-27

- ▶ Will you be the kind of person who can participate in God’s eternal kingdom? It begins today by living as one who belongs to His kingdom now and not to this sinful generation (Mark 8.38).