



ZECHARIAH

A Glorious Future!

The Glory of God's Warnings and Promises!

Zechariah 5:1-11

Message #6 of 15 – S1012

Sermon given on September 4, 2022



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

The Glory of God's Warnings and Promises!

Zechariah 5:1-11

Opening Comments

- Turn to **Zechariah 5**
- Today, we continue a series through the book of **Zechariah: A Glorious Future**
- As we go through life, we will come across signs in the shape of a triangle and yellow in color
- They are almost universally used to warn you of something
- If you encounter a warning sign, you have a choice to make
- You can take it seriously and avoid whatever the warning is about
- Or you can disregard the warning and experience whatever it is warning you about
- I had lunch with a guy this week and the waitress brought our meals
- She warned us that the plates were very hot
- What do you think I did? I disregarded her warning and touched the plate anyway – guess what? It was hot!
- Warnings like the one the waitress gave me are intended to protect
- She wasn't trying to deprive me of my freedom
- She was attempting to improve my dining experience – that I might experience the promise of a good meal
- One of the roles of the prophets in the Bible was to communicate to God's people His promises and His warnings
- When you read about the judgments God was going to send upon His people and other nations – it was meant to warn them away from the danger they were headed toward
- The New Testament book of Revelation is an example of that
- Most of Revelation deals with terrible judgments that God is going to pour out on this wicked, God-hating, Christ-rejecting world
- Why would God warn us about those things in advance?
- So that we can avoid the danger and so that we can experience all His promises

- Neglecting or rejecting God's warnings exposes people to the consequences of disobeying God – more than a burnt finger
- And deprives them of God's exceedingly great and precious promises
- Let's pray and we will look at the next two visions of Zechariah -
Pray

Teaching

- **The Glory of God's Warnings and Promises!**
- Chapter 5 contains the sixth and seventh visions of eight
- **Zechariah 5:1-2**
- A cubit is about 18 inches – scroll = 30 feet by 15 feet
- It appears to be floating in the air – writing on both sides
- **Zechariah 5:3-4**
- It describes the curses directed at two types of sinners – thieves and perjurers – perjurers = swears falsely using God's name
- A curse is something that causes pain, misery, or misfortune
- There are some things we need to remind ourselves about God and humans so that we can better understand the idea of God cursing people
- First, God is holy – perfectly holy – everything God thinks, says, feels, and does is perfectly holy
- Second, God created humans in His image to reflect His holiness
- Anything that humans think, say, feel, or do that is not as holy as God is holy is sin
- Third, humans have a nature that is corrupted by sin, we are not inclined, in our human nature, to think, say, feel, or do what is as holy as God
- Fourth, God's holiness demands justice
- All sin incurs a debt with God that even our death is not sufficient to pay it
- It would be unjust, and unholy, for God not to punish sin
- Because that is true, God makes a way for humans to atone for, or make up for their lack of holiness – that way is Jesus **John 14:6**
I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.

- Jesus took all our sins to the cross **Colossians 2:13-14**

And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

- As Christians, we claim to be saved – saved from what?
- We are saved from the debt our sin incurred with God
- By faith in Jesus God’s grace cancels all our debt
- And once all our debt is cancelled, we are free to experience all of God’s promises
- When the Bible talks about the curses of God, it is referring to the consequences of rejecting God’s gracious offer of forgiveness
- In our text two sins are singled out – stealing and swearing falsely
- Remember that Zechariah is speaking to the people of God in Jerusalem
- These were not the only sins being committed by the people, probably just the most common ones
- They are also symbolic of the whole law – the tablets of stone
- Two tablets – one, first four Commandments – relating to God
- Second, six Commandments relating to people
- Stealing was a sin against people and swearing falsely was a sin against God
- Breaking one of God’s laws is same as breaking them all **James 2:10**
For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.
- God is warning them that destruction lies ahead for those people
- Listen, this is not directed at people who in the weakness of their flesh do something that God disapproves of
- These warnings are for the hard-hearted, those whose conscience has been seared by a lifetime of sin and rejection of God
- Like the parents, doctors, and hospitals that are giving poisonous drugs and hormone treatments to children with “gender dysphoria”
- And especially those who are butchering those confused children with so-called ‘gender affirming surgeries’ – it is the worst kind of child abuse

- Listen, I always try to lean toward grace, but the more I hear about what is happening to the vulnerable children – the more I wish fire and brimstone falling from heaven was a more common occurrence
 - This sixth prophecy is both a warning and promise
 - It is a warning to sinners that there is a price for sin
 - And it is a promise to those who are seeking to be holy that God will punish the wicked for their wickedness
 - The seventh vision has some unusual stuff in it
 - **Zechariah 5:5-8**
 - The symbolism of the basket and lead disc (cover) is a little hard to discern
 - What is important is the woman, Wickedness
 - It is also not clear why Wickedness is symbolized as a woman
 - One clue is the Great Harlot in Revelation 17, also depicted as a woman – a picture of godless religion
 - In the book of Hosea, Israel is depicted as an unfaithful wife to God
 - The sixth vision focused on the sins of individual people
 - The second focuses on the nature of sin in the nation
 - The angel thrust Wickedness down into the basket = indicates a struggle to break free
 - The Israelites were back in the Promised Land after having been exiled for seventy years – a curse God had warned them about
 - Idolatry had been one of the main sins that led to the exile
 - As a people they never returned to idolatry, but they were not sinless
 - God expected them to be holy **Zechariah 2:12**
- And the LORD will take possession of Judah as His inheritance in the Holy Land, and will again choose Jerusalem.**
- When God called Abraham, He set the Jews apart from the rest of the world – not to be like the nations around them – wicked and rebellious
 - God was not going to overlook wickedness in the Jews forever
 - **Zechariah 5:9-11**
 - The seventh vision is a warning that God would kick them out of the land again if they insisted on their wickedness
 - Sadly, that would happen again in about 70AD

- And then instead of 70 years, they were dispersed for almost 1,900 years
- Shinar goes all the way back to Genesis 10 and in Genesis 11 we have the account of the Tower of Babel – the beginnings of godless government and religion – also Babylon – place of the exile
- God’s land is holy – expects the people living in it to be living holy lives by faith, trusting and obeying God
- If they wouldn’t do, God would remove the wickedness, even if it meant removing the people out of the Promised Land
- The New Testament has similar warnings
- God expects His people, Jews and Christians to be holy
- To the church of Ephesus, Jesus said, **Revelations 2:4-5**
Nevertheless I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love.
⁵Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place— unless you repent.
- ‘remove your lampstand’ = remove your church
- And to the Laodiceans Jesus said, **Revelation 3:15-16**
I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. ¹⁶So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.
- The Bible, Old and New Testaments are filled with warnings and promises
- The promises are the fruit of the grace of God through faith in Christ
- Every believer, young, old, novice, or experienced is promised the same promises as everyone else
- The warnings indicate the boundaries of faith
- Neglecting one or more of the warnings, crossing the boundary of faith means separating ourselves from one or more of the promises
- It also exposes us to the curses
- If you see a ‘Wet Floor’ sign in a restaurant, what is the danger?
Slipping, falling, and missing your lunch for a trip to Emergency Room
- I ignored the warning of the waitress = burnt finger
- The best life we can live is where God’s promises are
- But just like Eve, we are all tempted to ignore the warning, because **Genesis 3:6**

So when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make *one* wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

- God's warnings are not there to keep you from something good – they are there to keep you in something good – God's promises

- We'll close with one of my favorites Scriptures **2 Peter 1:3-4**

His divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, ⁴by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust.

- Heed God's warnings for your own good and for God's glory

- Through faith in Christ and obedience to God and His Word, let's live in His promises

- Pray