

# Zechariah & Luke: The Returning King

## Lesson 13: The Savior King

**Key Verse:** *I will whistle for them and gather them in, for I have redeemed them, and they shall be as many as they were before. Zechariah 10.8*

The idea of a “lost and found box” is intriguing. Everything found inside of such a box is in a suspended state: lost but owned; found yet lost. Likewise, **idolatry** can place us in a metaphorical “lost and found box”: we are found by God, chosen by Him to love Him and serve Him with singular, absolute devotion, yet lost in our own heart’s sin-driven temporal desires, expectations, and requirements. What a relief to have a **Savior** who removes us from the suspended status of being “lost and found” through His powerful, fortissimo “whistle”, gathering His redeemed people (10.8) and giving us hearts “glad as with wine” (10.7) so that we may “walk in the name” of our King, Jesus (10.11).

*Blessed be Your Name, King Jesus! We praise You as our Savior and King. We worship You as the cornerstone of all faith in You. We worship You as the “tent peg” nailed to a cross, securing our priceless value to You. We worship You as the “battle bow” who defeated death’s sting. We worship you as the King of all kings. As you warn us throughout this week’s lesson, may we listen well. And in Your grace, may we also hear your clear whistle to return, to serve, to love, to adore, to worship You alone and above all our hearts desires and demands.*

**Zechariah 10.1-11.17: CH 10** Ask rain from the LORD in the season of the spring rain, from the LORD who makes the storm clouds, and he will give them showers of rain, to everyone the vegetation in the field. **2** For the household gods utter nonsense, and the diviners see lies; they tell false dreams and give empty consolation. Therefore the people wander like sheep; they are afflicted for lack of a shepherd.

**3** “My anger is hot against the shepherds, and I will punish the leaders; for the LORD of hosts cares for his flock, the house of Judah, and will make them like his majestic steed in battle. **4** From him shall come the cornerstone, from him the tent peg, from him the battle bow, from him every ruler—all of them together. **5** They shall be like mighty men in battle, trampling the foe in the mud of the streets; they shall fight because the LORD is with them, and they shall put to shame the riders on horses.

**6** “I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph. I will bring them back because I have compassion on them, and they shall be as though I had not rejected them, for I am the LORD their God and I will answer them. **7** Then Ephraim shall become like a mighty warrior, and their hearts shall be glad as with wine. Their children shall see it and be glad; their hearts shall rejoice in the LORD.

**8** “I will whistle for them and gather them in, for I have redeemed them, and they shall be as many as they were before. **9** Though I scattered them among the nations, yet in far countries they shall remember me, and with their children they shall live and return.

**10** I will bring them home from the land of Egypt, and gather them from Assyria, and I will bring them to the land of Gilead and to Lebanon, till there is no room for them. **11** He shall pass through the sea of troubles and strike down the waves of the sea, and all the depths of the Nile shall be dried up. The pride of Assyria shall be laid low, and the scepter of Egypt shall depart. I will make them strong in the LORD, and they shall walk in his name,” declares the LORD.

**CH 11** Open your doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour your cedars! **2** Wail, O cypress, for the cedar has fallen, for the glorious trees are ruined! Wail, oaks of Bashan, for the thick forest has been felled! **3** The sound of the wail of the shepherds, for their glory is ruined! The sound of the roar of the lions, for the thicket of the Jordan is ruined!

**4** Thus said the LORD my God: “Become shepherd of the flock doomed to slaughter. **5** Those who buy them slaughter them and go unpunished, and those who sell them say, ‘Blessed be the LORD, I have become rich,’ and their own shepherds have no pity on them. **6** For I will no longer have pity on the inhabitants of this land, declares the LORD. Behold, I will cause each of them to fall into the hand of his neighbor, and each into the hand of his king, and they shall crush the land, and I will deliver none from their hand.”

**7** So I became the shepherd of the flock doomed to be slaughtered by the sheep traders. And I took two staves, one I named Favor, the other I named Union. And I tended the sheep. **8** In one month I destroyed the three shepherds. But I became

impatient with them, and they also detested me. **9** So I said, "I will not be your shepherd. What is to die, let it die. What is to be destroyed, let it be destroyed. And let those who are left devour the flesh of one another." **10** And I took my staff Favor, and I broke it, annulling the covenant that I had made with all the peoples. **11** So it was annulled on that day, and the sheep traders, who were watching me, knew that it was the word of the LORD.

**12** Then I said to them, "If it seems good to you, give me my wages; but if not, keep them." And they weighed out as my wages thirty pieces of silver. **13** Then the LORD said to me, "Throw it to the potter"—the lordly price at which I was priced by them. So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the LORD, to the potter. **14** Then I broke my second staff Union, annulling the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

**15** Then the LORD said to me, "Take once more the equipment of a foolish shepherd. **16** For behold, I am raising up in the land a shepherd who does not care for those being destroyed, or seek the young or heal the maimed or nourish the healthy, but devours the flesh of the fat ones, tearing off even their hoofs. **17** "Woe to my worthless shepherd, who deserts the flock! May the sword strike his arm and his right eye! Let his arm be wholly withered, his right eye utterly blinded!"

**Diamonds:** Just like Texas in 2023, God's people were in the middle of a drought. Unlike Texas during a drought, they couldn't run to their local H-E-B (a popular Texas grocery store chain) to grab salad, vegetables, and proteins for a well-balanced meal! Instead, their meal was directly sourced from the autumn rains which sprouted their seeds, followed by spring rains which brought about a harvest for their community. Just as today, despite water management technologies and foresight, they required and depended upon rains in both seasons.

1. Read Zechariah 9.16-17 with 10.1-2. What was God's promise in 9.16-17? How does it differ from what we learn in 10.1-2?
2. Who were the people asking for rain (V 2)? What does this reveal about their theology and their knowledge of God?
3. Consider a time when God corrected your bad theology. What error did He correct with the knowledge of His character?

The people were praying to everything and everyone (V 2)! Their pursuit of a magic combination to unlock the rain their lives depended upon caused them to be lost. God holds "the shepherds" and "leaders" of His people accountable for His wandering, lost, afflicted people (V 2-3).

4. Using Zechariah 10 and 11, identify at least three consequences of the neglectful shepherds and self-seeking leaders (there are many more consequences that are inferred and directly stated):

God's response to the moral and spiritual failure of the people He placed as His people's leaders is not unfamiliar or new news to the people. Again, God reminds His people to look forward in faith and hope for the Messiah, rather than looking down and directly at their circumstances (10.3-11).

5. Review Rabbi Jesus's answer to His disciples' request to learn how to pray from your answers to Questions 8 and 9 in Lesson 8, "The Rabbi King" (Luke 11.1-13). Where do you need to apply this same lesson? Where do you need this same hope in the promises of God through the Messiah? How can your group members pray for you?



“An effective mediator is one who is able to make peace between parties who are in conflict or estranged from each other. This is the role Jesus performed as our perfect Mediator (Romans 5.1). The mediating work of Christ is superior to all other mediators. Moses was the mediator of the Old Covenant. He served as God’s go-between, giving the Israelites the law. But Jesus is superior to Moses (Hebrews 3.3-6).

“Whereas in the Old Testament the mediating offices of prophet, priest, and king were held by separate individuals, all three offices are held supremely in the one person of Jesus. Jesus fulfilled the messianic prophecy of Psalm 110. He is the one who is both David’s descendant, and David’s Lord. He is the Priest who is also the King. The Lamb who is slain is also the Lion of Judah. To gain a full understanding of the work of Christ we must not view Him merely as a prophet, or as a priest, or as a king. All three offices are fulfilled in Him.” (Lesson 7, “The Promised King”, Deity: The Branch) (Sproul, footnote 1)

9. Read Zechariah 11.15-17. Zechariah warns of the awful shepherd God is allowing to lead, nurture, and oversee His people. How does God’s intentional installment of a horrible shepherd help you understand the necessity of having a Savior who holds *and* fulfills the roles of prophet, priest, and king? (Consider using the contrast of the Deity “Good Shepherd” from Lesson 10, “The Shepherd King” to help you think through this question.)

**Doctrine: Idolatry**<sup>3</sup>~ (Zechariah 10.2; 11.5) “Sin is not only a physical act of rebellion against God, such as lying or stealing, but it is also a matter of the heart. The physical displays of sin are the fruit of what has been birthing in the heart of a person (Matthew 15.10-20).

“In scripture, idolatry usually refers to bowing down to a statue made of wood or gold, worshipping created things instead of the Creator. But idolatry can take more subtle forms: a seeking of approval, security, power, pleasure, etc. We can diagnose the idolatry of our heart by examining the areas where the desires of our heart have turned into idolatrous demands (James 4.1-2).”

In Lesson 9, “The Covenant King”, you studied God as jealous in tandem with His “great wrath” (Zechariah 8.2). In this lesson we see God’s jealousy (His unwillingness to share their devotion with any other gods) in tandem with His desire to transform His people from wandering sheep (10.2) to a “majestic steed” able to defeat God’s enemies (10.3).

10. How is mud made (10.5)?

Notice God says that His people will be “mighty men in battle” who “trample their foe” in the mud! This means that God *will* provide rain! Even as His anger “is hot against the shepherds”, compelling Him to “punish the leaders” (10.3), He deals with His people in compassion, mercy, and provision. Rather than His jealousy driving Him to wrath-filled total destruction of His people, He is driven to transform His people from wandering sheep (10.2) to a “majestic steed” able to defeat God’s enemies (10.3). He wants His people to remain singularly devoted and dependent upon their God who alone makes rain for them (and so much more!).

11. How does God’s desire to love you with compassion, mercy, and provision – even as you struggle with idolatry – increase your faith in God’s promise to make you “strong in the LORD” so that you “walk in His name” (10.11)?

While the prognosis for God’s people is grim, God’s judgment against the leaders of His people is fierce (11.1-3)! The people’s rejection of Zechariah and his cleansing leadership (11.8), alongside the business leader’s decision to pay Zechariah the wages equal to a dead slave (11.12), are direct prophecies of the transactional

<sup>3</sup> The Gospel Project, *The 99 Essential Doctrines: #40 Sin as Idolatry*, Lifeway Christian Resources (2018)

nature by which God's people will treat His own Son.

It is tempting to shake our heads in righteous disbelief of the callous and cold-hearted nature of the leaders of God's people, as well as those who became just like them. However, this is the outcome of idolatry! And though you may not worship a talisman, or any object in such an obvious manner, idolatry's boundaries are not kept only to what is tangible.

12. How does Jesus provide us, His disciples, a warning against not only tangible idolatry, but also idolatry kept in our hearts in Luke 11.34-36?

13. Identify idolatry that is keeping you in the "lost and found box". What idolatry do you need to confess and repent of so that you will be "wholly bright"? How does God's promise of #newwineskins in Zechariah 10.7, alongside His promise in the final sentence of Zechariah 10.11, stir an eagerness to repent of your idolatry?

### Your Scripture-Soaked Prayer:

#### **Lecture Outline:**

. **Aim:** Our wholehearted devotion belongs to the True Shepherd of our souls.

- I. Messiah's Redemption (Zechariah 10) **T1:** Wholehearted devotion to the True Shepherd keeps us from the sin of idolatry.
  - a. How wholehearted is your devotion to Jesus, the True Shepherd of your soul?
  - b. What idols are diluting your devotion to Him?
- II. Messiah's Rejection (Zechariah 11) **T2:** Wholehearted devotion to the True Shepherd keeps us in His care.
  - a. What specific steps will you take to increase your devotion to the True Shepherd, Jesus Christ?
  - b. In which areas of your life are you rejecting His tender care, perfect provision, and wise guidance?
  - c. Are you a sheep doomed to slaughter or destined for the Good Shepherd's safekeeping?