**BCM Bible Study – February 8-9, 2023**

**Zechariah 9-10: God’s Care for Israel**

These chapters are another shift in Zechariah, as the book now transitions to a major focus on the future. It is likely that these chapters are composed of various prophecies from multiple sermons that have been spliced together for this book. These chapters are filled with God’s care, especially shining through with references to Jesus.

**Read Zechariah 9:1-8**

* How might this message offer hope or encouragement to the Jewish people that had returned to Jerusalem?
* **Read John 5:22-23 & 8:21-26**
* Why is judgment necessary? How should we understand it (or try to) as people of the cross?
* “The geographical arrangement of the cities and nations is set in the order of a military campaign from north to south through Syria-Palestine. The threat of God’s retribution was realized with the march of Alexander the Great through the region in 334-332 BC.” (Hill)
* **Read 2 Samuel 5:6-10**
* Who are the Jebusites and what happened to them?
  + FYI: This is the moment that Jerusalem becomes part of Israel!!
* How will God interact with Ekron (Zech. 9:7)?
* What do God’s plans for Ekron and what happened to the Jebusites show of God’s care for all people in the Old Testament?
* What hope would v. 8 offer for the Israelites?

**Read Zechariah 9:9-13**

* How does the future these verses offer up sound?
* **Read Matthew 21:1-9**
* “The contrast offered by the specification of his mount is that this king is not coming in a military context (which would have featured a horse, mule, or chariot), but is coming in peace and humility.” (Hill)
  + What is significant about Jesus’ entry being a peaceful, humble one?
  + How does this encourage your faith as there is an approximately 500 year gap between the prophecy and its fulfillment?
* **Read Isaiah 2:2-4**
  + What is the Lord describing in verse 10 of Zechariah? How does it align with the Isaiah passage?
  + This prophecy was not completely fulfilled in Jesus’ first coming, so many have associated it moreso with Jesus’ second coming. It offers a picture of hope not just for the Israelites who first heard it then but for us as well!
* How might v. 11 become more rich for us in understanding in light of Jesus and the New Covenant?
* Why might there be prisoners of hope (v.12)? In what way are we prisoners of hope?
  + Where have you seen God offer way more than expected? (similar to the double restoration in v.12)

**Read Zechariah 9:14-17**

* Reread v. 16-17. What does this imagery suggest about the status of the Israelites?
* Even though this speaks about the destruction of enemies, do you think the tone is different than Jeremiah (hint: Jeremiah 46-51)? How does it vary its focus?
* What hope would this offer to the people of Israel? How can we continue to find hope today in unlikely places/moments?
* How do the various chunks of chapter 9 combine together to make a cohesive message?
  + “The abrupt shifts in tone and theme in Zechariah 9, from a king who brings universal peace (vv.9-10) to a God who brandishes a sword against the nations and attacks like the whirlwind (vv. 13-14), are a stark reminder that the dual reality of war and peace persists into the eschaton [eternity].” (Hill)

**Read Zechariah 10:1-11:3**

* What do these verses say about God’s care for Judah?
* How is the provision between the Lord and idols different?
  + Why might God care about who is leading Israel?
  + What does it practically look like for us to follow Jesus as our shepherd?
* **Read Matthew 21:42, 1 Peter 2:4-7**
  + What is the significance of the cornerstone?
* The language found in 10:6 speaks of how God will strengthen and save both Judah and the tribes of Joseph (the Northern kingdom). The kingdom of Israel had been split into these two halves for around 500 years at the time that Zechariah would have prophesied this.
  + How significant would this reunification be for the people of Israel?
* How would you describe the message found in v. 6-12?
  + “The key idea of the section is found in the repeated phrases that God *will strengthen* and restore his people (10:6, 12) to the degree that it will be as though they had never been *rejected* (v.6).” (Hill)
* 11:1-3 are likely best understood as a poem that “stresses the downfall of the arrogant.” (Hill)

What are some ways that we can approach the Bible well and learn from it when it seems like the message is written for someone else (ie: here the Israelites)?

* Good principle here: 100% of the time the original audience is in fact someone else. So, it is best to work to understand what was being said to the original hearers/readers and **then** work to understand what that might mean for us.