

GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide
SB 04.25.2021

THE BRANCH OF GOD— Zechariah 3:1-10

Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles, or observations stood out to you from this week's message? Discuss with your group.

This weekend we heard from Messianic Jewish believer, Dr. Erez Soref, President of ONE FOR ISRAEL. Erez grew up in a traditional Israeli household, attending Synagogue every week and studying the Old Testament all the way from 1st to 12th grade, but to him, God felt distant, as all of the teachings were applied more as the general history of the Jewish people, rather than a spiritual one. After his tour in the IDF, Erez left for southeast Asia on the "Mysticism" trail, wanting to better understand spirituality. "I was exposed to some Hindu and Buddhist literature, I got to realize that there is a spiritual reality, but that spiritual reality that I saw was very, very scary—it is negative, it was dark—but it was very real." Erez fell on hard times, finding himself in Amsterdam selling merchandise to make ends meet. It was there however, that he met a group of enthusiastic Christians, who asked why he didn't believe in Jesus, as Jesus himself was Jewish. Erez found himself drawn to the group, curious about their idea of a personal relationship with God, and their knowledge of the Hebrew scriptures that even he was unfamiliar with. His encounter urged him to reread the Hebrew Scriptures, and to his surprise, he found these "hidden" Messianic verses within his Hebrew bible, skipped over by his teachers throughout his life. After much trepidation, he began to read the New Testament, and found himself utterly surprised; he has never heard anything about Jesus or his teachings, despite growing up in Israel. "I have never heard of Jesus of Nazareth, I have never seen a Christian person, I have never seen a New Testament, I had no idea what it meant. It is particularly ridiculous, as I had first degree family living on the shores of Galilee." This revelation led Erez to compare the traits of the Messiah listed in prophecy to the fulfillment of these traits by Yeshua in the New Testament, and found them to match up completely. "I became convinced, first in my head, and then in my heart, that Yeshua is indeed the promised Messiah of our people." Let's get into Zechariah 3...

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion:

1. What struck you or stood out to you from this week's sermon?
2. When you grew up, after playing all day outside, how did your parents feel about cleanliness?
3. What did cleanliness have to do with life and learning?

God had shown Zechariah that there was still a future for the nation of Israel. However, the nation must be cleansed before God so He could bless Israel. This cleansing had to begin with the high priest because he was the spiritual leader of the people. As the high priest stood before the Lord, Satan was also there to accuse him.

Digging Deeper in God's Word: Life Lessons

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ZECHARIAH 3:1-5

1. How many characters are seen in this 4th vision to Zechariah? Name them...
2. What part does each play? And who or what does Joshua represent?

The Lord said that He would rebuke Satan because the Lord was the One that had chosen Jerusalem. In the same way we can look to the Lord to answer when Satan tries to accuse us. Here we see that God was going to rescue Israel from the judgment because God still has a future plan for the nation of Israel.

Visitation/Restoration in 2021

3. How will their guilt be removed, initially? and ultimately?
4. In what way can every person relate to Joshua in verse 3?
5. We don't like to talk about it, but why is it important for us to understand that we are sinners before a holy God? Who is able to relate to Joshua in verse 4? Why?

Sin, any sin, doesn't make us pretty bad off, it makes us totally bad off! Sin kills, separates and destroys. Ephesians 2:1 tells us we were dead in our sins. We had no hope. But this is not where we stay when we turn in faith to Christ. Satan hopes we will continue to sit in our depravity and feelings of worthlessness. God, though, finds us worth dying for, saving, restoring to wholeness. And that is who we are in Christ Jesus. First John 1:9 assures us that "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

6. Read Philippians 1:6. What hope and confidence can you have today, even in a difficult season?

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ZECHARIAH 3:6-10

1. Why would it have been important for Joshua and the other leaders to know that they were a symbol of God's Servant Jesus who was still to come?
2. What are the things to come? (vs 8 -10) What does "the Branch" as a name for Jesus say to you about Him?
3. What is the stone with 7 eyes? And how will the Lord remove sin on a "single day"?
4. What does it mean to walk in God's ways and keep his requirements, for Joshua, for church leaders, for you?

Applying God's Word

What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.

Joshua gives us a picture of the spiritual condition of Israel as well as the spiritual condition of all people before they placed their trust in Christ. However, we are also told how to be cleansed of our filthy condition. The Lord is the One that must cleanse people from their sin. The Lord said that He would clothe Joshua in new clothing so that he would be pure as he stood before the Lord. After the Lord had clothed Joshua with new clothes, the Lord told him

1. God is your protector, provider, and defender. How does that truth encourage you today?
2. What would change in your life this week if you were to truly trust in God to provide for you? To protect you? To defend you?
3. How can you point others to Jesus when they feel exposed and at risk, seeking to build walls around themselves that will ultimately crumble?

PRAYER - Thank God that He is your protector, provider, and defender. Confess your tendency to put your circumstances as a wall between you and Him. Thank Jesus for tearing down the wall between you and God and restoring fellowship with Him. Ask Him to help you see spiritual drought in people around you and to give you opportunities to point them to Jesus, the only hope of the world.

"...If you will walk in my ways and keep my requirements, then you will govern my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you a place among these standing here." Zech. 3:7