

Zechariah 1:18-21

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[0:00] So we were saying God had said to his people through the prophet Zechariah, return to me. And if you remember the backdrop for that was they had been in captivity for 70 years in Babylon.

They'd been out of captivity for a while. A contingent of Jews had gone to Israel to rebuild the temple. And the building process had been interrupted.

And so part of the mission of Zechariah is to get them busy building the temple again. And so he prophesied at approximately the same time as the prophet Haggai.

And during that period, the temple rebuilding carried on. However, the prophecy of Zechariah didn't only deal with that topic, but it also spoke about future history.

And we're getting into the beginnings of that today. Last week, we spoke about the fact that he had had eight visions. Now, this is about three months after his initial message to Israel, which is to say, come back to me.

[1:07] So three months later, he has eight visions in a single night. Must have been a really restless night. And last week, we dealt with the first of those visions.

And the first vision involved the man on the red horse standing among the myrtle trees in the ravine. You may remember all that imagery.

And we concluded after the study that the man on the red horse was Jesus. And the fact that he was surrounded by other horses meant that he was ready to do battle, but wasn't engaged in battle at that time.

And Israel at the time had, as I've said, had come out of persecution, had been in persecution for 70 years. So he was saying to his, that vision was saying to his people, I am among you.

The myrtle trees represented Israel, you may recall. The fact that they were down in the hollow or in the ravine reflected the fact that Israel at this point was in a low place.

[2:11] But the man on the horse, which we concluded was the angel of the Lord, which almost invariably represents an Old Testament manifestation of Jesus or a Christophany, that Christ himself was among them and was ready to defend them.

So this was an encouraging part of the dream. We also gleaned from last week that God had expressed his anger at the people who had set themselves against his people and had been overly harsh with his people.

And so he was saying that he was going to do something about that. And the other visions and dreams will lead us into what that was. But the message in the first vision was that God, Yahweh, remember this word, which we don't really know how to pronounce, but we use the word Yahweh because it's the best we can do.

Yahweh was jealous or zealous over his people. And so he was angry at the nations that had treated them harshly and planned to do something about it.

So that vision feeds into the one that we're going to look at today. It's caught in the four verses. You turn to Zechariah chapter one and just the last four verses of the chapter.

[3:39] And we know this is a fresh vision because every time there's a fresh vision, you get a little phrase like, then I lifted up my eyes and looked and behold. Now that happens.

A similar phrase to that is repeated eight times through this chapter. So we know this is a fresh vision. So then I lifted up my eyes and looked and behold, there were four horns. So I said to the angel who was speaking with me, what are these?

And he answered me, these are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel and Jerusalem. Then the Lord showed me four craftsmen. And I said, what are these coming to do?

And he said, these are the horns which have scattered Judah so that no man lifts up his head. But these craftsmen have come to terrify them, to throw down the horns of the nations who have lifted up their horns against the land of Judah in order to scatter it.

So you've got if you remember when we first started this book, one of the things we said was we have to, as far as possible, allow the Bible to be its own interpreter.

[4:45] Because the two mistakes that are made with books like Zechariah are, one, it's too complicated so we won't even bother to study it.

Now, God didn't put it in his word so that we wouldn't study it. So that can't be right. The other mistake they make is instead of rightly dividing the word of truth, they come up with their own interpretations.

And that brings about lots of different interpretations from church to church and results in confusion. And we don't serve a God of confusion. So what we need to do is allow the Bible to be its best interpreter.

And usually we can, I mean, we're blessed in this passage because we have the help of an angel, an angelic presence that interprets a lot of it for us. But we also have the rest of scripture so that we can look at how the scripture handles similar phrases elsewhere.

So I've gone further than I thought. Look at that. We need to say, what are horns? Right. These are the horns that have scattered Israel. They're not musical horns.

[5:55] They're not car horns, which, of course, they wouldn't be because they weren't cars back then. But it's not a warning device. What it is, the expression horns in the Bible is almost always used to describe a harbinger of power.

So either it's used in the context of God bringing his power to bear, or, as is the case here, it's used to describe the evil use of power used, in this case, against God's people.

So if we, for instance, looked at Psalm 18, if you want to turn there, and you'll find when you get the notes, there are quite a few references, but I won't use all of them today or we'll be way out of time.

But in Psalm 18, verse 2, the psalmist writes, well, first of all, let's start with verse 1. I love you, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

So it paints a picture of God having his grasp on salvation and exercising his power to preserve salvation. You will find a similar use of it in Psalm 92, verse 10, and also in the New Testament in Luke, chapter 1, verse 69.

[7:24] The horn here is being used as a way of expressing supreme power. If you turn to 1 Samuel 2 and verse 10, For those who contend with the Lord will be shattered.

You've got the power of God being expressed again. Those who contend with the Lord will be shattered. Against them he will thunder in the heavens. The Lord will judge the ends of the earth, and he will give strength to his king, and will exalt the horn of his anointed.

So when God selects a king, we can expect that he will strengthen his horn. So the horn is, again, a symbol of God imparting power to, in this case, a king.

You may remember that as we study the book of Zechariah, the reason they're rebuilding the temple is because of a decree of a king that was named 150 years before he was born.

So this king had been empowered by God 150 years before he was even born. He'd been empowered by God to set the Israelites free.

[8:31] And so that's what he did when he came to his throne, without realizing that he was being a servant of the living God. So the horns that we refer to in Zechariah, we should expect that it will refer to powerful kingdoms that have in some way subjugated Israel.

And the use of this kind of, I'm not sure whether it's an adjective or a noun, horns could be either, couldn't it? It's always referring to the exercise of power that's either been given or removed.

The Lord is either removing somebody's horn, in other words, taking power from them, or he's giving them the power of the horn to do his bidding. Turn to Jeremiah 48 and verse 25.

And this speaks of Moab, perennial enemies of the Jews. And speaking in judgment against Moab, in verse 25, through the prophet Jeremiah, God says, the horn of Moab has been cut off and his arm broken, declares the Lord.

So there's an example of God coming in and removing somebody's horn, meaning removing them from power or removing any power that they may have. Now, when we come to the reading that we've just done in Zechariah, what we find is we need to look in other places to establish this use of

the imagery of horns, but also to understand that what he's now doing is he's speaking into future history, but he's also calling upon past prophecies from predominantly Daniel.

[10:14] And it just, one of the things we said at the start of studying this book was, it will reveal to us the interconnected nature of God's word. Daniel was approximately 70 years before Zechariah.

But when Zechariah prophesied, he prophesied things that in some way Daniel has already prophesied. And also speaks of events that God had already spoken of in the book of Deuteronomy a long time before.

We'll come to that. So if we look, for instance, at Daniel chapter 8, and you do need to turn there if you have a Bible, because it's, well, it's easier to keep track of it if you follow it in the Bible, if you can.

So Daniel chapter 8, and we're just going to read verses 1 to 10. And this was the King Belshazzar of Babylon.

In the third year of the reign of Belshazzar the king, a vision appeared to me. So Daniel is saying, in the third year of this king's reign, a vision appeared to me, Daniel. Subsequent to the one which appeared to me previously.

[11:21] I looked in the vision, and while I was looking, I was in the citadel of Susa, which is in the province of Elam. And I looked in the vision, and I myself was beside the Yulai Canal.

Then I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a ram, which had two horns, was standing in front of the canal. Now the two horns were long, but one was longer than the other, with the longer one coming up last.

And I saw the ram butting westwards and northwards and southwards, and no other beast could stand before him, nor was there anyone to rescue from his power. But he did as he pleased and magnified himself.

While I was observing, behold, a male goat was coming from the west over the surface of the whole earth without touching the ground. And the goat had a conspicuous horn between his eyes.

He came up to the ram that had the two horns, which I had seen standing in front of the canal, and rushed at him in his mighty wrath. And I saw him come beside the ram and was enraged at him.

[12:25] He struck the ram and shattered his two horns, and the ram had no strength to withstand him. So he hurled him to the ground and trampled on him, and there was none to rescue the ram from his power.

Then the male goat magnified himself exceedingly. But as soon as he was mighty, the large horn was broken, and in its place there came up four conspicuous horns towards the four winds of heaven.

So you've got loads and loads of references here to horns, but you've also got a symbolic reference to a period of history we can look back on and understand that this period of history has been fulfilled exactly as prophesied as we put all various prophecies together.

This speaks of the goat with the two horns, one bigger than the other. Now this is the empire of Medo-Persia, which later just became Persia, because Persia got the ascendancy in that relationship, is often depicted as, in this case, a goat with one horn bigger than the other, and in another place that we'll probably touch on later, a bear that was lopsided, one side greater than the other.

These depictions were of a lopsided empire, and that was Medo-Persia, and it was the next empire to come. So the Jews, at the time of Zechariah speaking, had been under Babylon, and Medo-Persia came and annihilated Babylon and took over from them.

[14:06] And what we're reading about here is the one that came next, which is Greece. So Medo-Persia, what you've got is the other goat coming in and smashing the one with the two horns and annihilating it.

But then he elevated himself, and he disappeared. And this is a picture of Alexander the Great, who made an amazing conquest of the entire known world at the time.

And having done that, elevated himself greatly, considered himself to be the greatest thing since sliced bread, died at the age of 30 in a drunken stupor, and four generals took over from him.

And so the bottom of verse 8, you've got, as soon as he was mighty, the large horn was broken, and in its place there came up four conspicuous horns. Now what's interesting about, or one of the interesting things about that, is that these four generals of his, he had no relatives, he couldn't pass his kingdom on to anyone.

So the four generals took over the Greek Empire, one of which was a man called Antiochus Epiphanus, who was the one who slaughtered a pig in the temple and created at least the first round of the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet.

[15:31] So we're not here to study all of that, but I just want you to see the interconnected nature of it all. And although the prophecies are speaking in symbolism, we can look at those, particularly with the hindsight, looking back into history and say, well, it's obvious.

It's obvious that this was Alexander the Great, and it's obvious that those four generals are the four subsequent horns that came up. More of that later. If we stay in Daniel and go to chapter two, what we have is a fairly plain, I'd say it's plain, but it's not detailed picture of what happens after Babylon. Now, the person who was king of Babylon at this time was a man called Nebuchadnezzar. If you've studied history at school, he was a famous figure in your historic studies at school.

And he had had, I'm going to do a potted version of this part. He'd had this dream, and he was really bothered by this dream.

And we've talked before about how these cultures placed a lot of store by dreams and their interpretations. So he'd had this dream, and he was worried. And he called on all his magicians and said, I want you to interpret my dream.

[16:51] But not only that, because I don't think you're going to tell me the truth. I want you to tell me what I actually dreamed. And when you've told me what I dreamed, then you can tell me what it means.

And of course, all the magicians said, there's no man on earth that can do this. And so he sent them all for execution. And while they were waiting for execution, Daniel puts his hand up and says, I know God, and he knows what your dream's about.

So that's a potted version. And if we look at verses 31 to 43, Daniel says this after consulting the Lord. You, O king, were looking, and behold, there was a single great statue.

That statue, which was large and of extraordinary splendor, was standing in front of you, and its appearance was awesome. Now keep in mind that in this scripture, the picture that's being painted through this statue is of something magnificent, which is the world's eye view of it.

Later on, we'll see that Daniel gives us another view of it, which is the Lord's eye or the Jew's eye view of it. So verse 32, the head of that statue was made of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.

[18:09] You continue to look until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them. Then the iron, the clay, and the bronze, and the silver, and the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors.

And the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone, and typically who does the stone refer to? But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

Then we've got a few verses of interpretation. This was the dream. Now we will tell its interpretation before the king. You, O king, are the king of kings to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, and the strength, and the glory.

And wherever the sons of men dwell, or beasts of the field, or birds of the sky, he has given them into your hand and has caused you to rule over them all. You are the head of gold. After you, there will arise another kingdom inferior to you, and then a third kingdom of bronze, which will rule over all the earth.

Then there will be a fourth kingdom as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron crushes and shatters all things. So like iron that breaks in pieces, it will crush and break all these in pieces.

[19:34] In that you saw the feet and the toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it will be a divided kingdom, but it will have in it the toughness of iron, inasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with common clay.

As the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of pottery, so some of the kingdom will be strong, and part of it will be brittle. And in that you saw the iron mixed with common clay, they will combine with one another in the seed of men, but they will not adhere to one another, even as iron does not combine with pottery.

So we're going to leave that scripture there. But the point that's being made in Daniel 2 is that there are four kingdoms that Zechariah's time need to be aware of.

One is the one they've just been set free from, which was Medo-Persia, sorry, which was Babylon. They are currently under Medo-Persia, the second kingdom.

They have Greece to look forward to and Rome beyond that. And after that, Messiah. Fascinating. We'll do a bit more on this. So Zechariah's vision of the four empires, he's having a vision of four empires that God's going to use to discipline his people.

[20 : 51] And if we just turn to Deuteronomy 28 a moment, Deuteronomy chapter 28, this is what God said to the Jews, and he said it when he was giving them a pep talk just before they went into the promised land.

So they are waiting to enter the promised land and they get this through Moses from God. And if we go, we're going to look at verses 15, 36, and 48 and 49.

So he's giving them this talk. And in verse 15, he says this, Now I'm not going to read all the curses. You'll be glad to know. But if we go down to verse 36, he says, And then if we go down to verse 48, One more verse.

The Lord will bring a nation against you from afar, from the ends of the earth, as the eagle sweeps down a nation whose language you shall not understand. So the Jews had been warned.

[22 : 27] So the crowd that caused them to finish up in Babylon should have known that this would be their destiny because they were disobeying the Lord. And he'd already told them what that would bring to them.

Should have been no surprise. But now they're set free and they have a choice. And we've noticed from chapter one, they have a choice now. Do I obey the Lord and walk back into blessing with the Lord?

Or do I continue in disobedience and therefore carry on in cursing rather than blessing? So these four kingdoms that God has described for us in Daniel 2 are quite attractive from the world's point of view.

And they've been in one. They've been in Babylon. They are now in Medo-Persia. And the next two kingdoms are yet to come.

But they've been painted from a worldly perspective as attractive. So turn back to Daniel and find chapter 7. Daniel 7.

[23 : 32] Now there is another vision here with four beasts. And it seems very clear that the same four beasts are now being described from a different perspective.

The evil side of them is being seen. And if we start reading in verse 17, when you get home and you read it for yourself, you can read all the visions.

This is just the interpretation. As for me, Daniel, my spirit was distressed within me and the visions in my mind kept alarming me. I approached one of those who was standing by, an angelic presence, and began asking him the exact meaning of all this.

So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things. These great beasts, which are four in number, are four kings who will arise from the earth.

So we've got four kingdoms again. Now between Zechariah or between, you want to remember Daniel was in Babylon 70 years before Zechariah spoke. So Daniel had been in Babylon and he was foreseeing Medo-Persia and Greece and Rome.

[24 : 40] And as he does that, this angelic presence is saying, there are four kings that will arise. Hang on. These great beasts, which are four in number, are four kings who will arise from the earth.

But the saints of the highest one will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever for all ages to come. So you've got four kingdoms plus an eternal king at the end.

Then I desire to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all other beasts, exceedingly dreadful with its teeth of iron and its claws of bronze, and which devoured, crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet.

And the meaning of the ten horns which were on its head and the other horn which came up and before which three of them fell, namely that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts and which was larger in appearance than its associates.

And now I'll go on to verse 23. I kept looking and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them until the ancient of days came. So we're back to the big rock or Jesus basically.

[25 : 50] Until the ancient of days came and judgment was passed in favour of the saints of the highest one. And the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom. So we've got the same picture, but this is painted as a sinful.

These are oppressive, violent kings. Their empires might be glorious from a worldly perspective, but from God's perspective, they are utterly sinful. And we notice, if we think back to what we read from chapter two, each of the beasts as it came forward was of a less precious metal than the previous one.

So it seems that sin abounded as these horns, if you like, progressed. So when you read the vision here, these four beasts came out of the sea.

Now normally in scripture, when something comes out of the sea, it's the sea of humanity. I will tell you that lots of people who produce studies on this suggest it was simply the Mediterranean.

In actual fact, it doesn't change the outcome, whichever you choose to believe. The Mediterranean being close to Israel, it could have been. The vision could have been coming out of the Mediterranean, but normally what it means is out of the great sea of humanity, these horns arise, and therefore they are a testimony to human ambition, which normally involves sin.

[27 : 10] So in Daniel's vision, the first beast is described, if I could have picture number one, is as a winged lion. Now this was the symbol of Babylon, and archaeologically they find all of these symbolisms, but the main one is this one here, because they believe that the lion gave strength to their goddess Ishtar.

Now this is actually a fairly obscene statue, because what you have is the lion in a sort of copulative position over the god, the goddess Ishtar.

And so this was, in their view, this was Ishtar received her strength from the lion through intimacy with the lion, which is perverse and obscene, and we'll take that photo down now, thank you.

But it makes you realise that what was being seen by the prophets, both Daniel and Zechariah, was a kingdom that was completely perverse and idolatrous.

Then you have the next beast, because we have the next photo. This was a bear, a lopsided bear.

[28 : 28] Archaeologically, you can't find too much about bears to do with Persia, although it is known that it was one of their national symbols. But the picture was a lopsided bear with three bones hanging out of its mouth.

Now, Medo-Persia conquered Egypt, Lydia and Babylonia. So you can see how they would get this imagery of the bear being Persia and the three bones being the three big nations that it had conquered.

Daniel then goes on to dream of a leopard-like beast. So if I could have the next picture. Now, I put a bit of a write-up there. The leopard was not generally a national symbol for Greece.

But what they did believe is that the god of wine, Dionysus, is often depicted riding a leopard. And of course, the leopard was a fast beast.

And Alexander the Great, when he conducted his conquest, went through the world. I mean, he was only 30 when he completed it all. He went through the world very fast. So you've got this.

[29 : 37] When the goat that is Alexander is described, he's not touching the ground. He's going through so fast. But the leopard symbolizes Dionysus' wild and ecstatic and untamed nature, having speed, cunning and hunting prowess.

So all of these, what I'm trying to say to you is that all of these things that were foreseen, not only were the events foreseen, but the imagery was foreseen, that would alert us to the fact that this is what the Bible is talking about.

Now, when we think of, well, what empire was associated with a leopard, well, Greece. The associations come together for our benefit because we're looking back into history, not forward.

And of course, as we've already said, he died at the age of 30 through abuse of alcohol, passed the kingdom on to his four generals, one of which was Antiochus Epiphanes, who's the one who committed the abomination of desolation.

Now, the last of these was Rome. We can take that photo down there, thanks. The last of the empires was Rome. And this will become very significant in a moment, but Rome was this incredible beast.

[30 : 57] And it talks about 10 horns and 10 kingdoms and so on. And I'm deliberately not going to go into depth with Rome because it's a whole study all of its own. But we do know about Rome.

We have evidence of the Roman conquest all over our land. Rome was a very uncompromising, violent empire, hence the association that it was like steel that crushes in pieces and so on.

But we will talk a little bit more about Rome in a moment. So the testimony of history confirms that Zechariah's prophecy was absolutely right. So we can get two things from this so far.

One is God's prophecies are true. And the second is that God's word is perfect and interconnected. People who say things like...

And the people who say it don't realise that they're being quite asinine, really, when they say things like, oh, well, you know, you can't trust the Bible. It's bound to have changed over the years and all this.

[32:01] What we see here is it's a true account of history coming from all sides. You've got the prophet Haggai. You've got the prophet Zechariah. You've got the prophet Daniel before them.

You've got the book of Ezra that also confirms what was said in those prophecies. We've even already explored some prophecies from the book of Jeremiah that were confirmed during this time, the end of the 70 years of captivity.

The word of God is perfect and interconnected. And that could be a whole study on its own, couldn't it? So then we move on, going back to Zechariah.

How much time have I got left? Oh, I should just about be able to do it. Zechariah, if we go back to Zechariah and look at chapter 1, verse 19...

No, verse 20, sorry. Then the Lord showed me four craftsmen. And I said, what are these coming to do? And he said, these are the horns which have scattered Judah so that no man lifts up his head.

[33:06] But these craftsmen have come to terrify them, to throw down the horns of the nations who have lifted up their horns against the land of Judah in order to scatter it. So what are the craftsmen?

We've kind of got our head around the horns. But in fact, if you've got an old King James Bible, it will say carpenters. And the word craftsmen simply means people who make things, people who craft things.

So it could be carpenters, it could be plumbers. In our time, it could be bricklayers, it could be anything that involves someone who carefully crafts an outcome.

And so it describes that God will provide people who will craft the response to those who have terrified Israel. With me thus far.

So what you have then is each successive... Because the purpose, as we've just read, is to terrify them. Whoever's come against Israel, the craftsmen are there to terrify them.

[34:06] So if you look at Babylon, who were very oppressive and had taken Israel into captivity and treated them abysmally, who then came to terrify them?

So it was the next empire, the Medo-Persian Empire. And you can read about the downfall of Babylon in Daniel chapter 5.

And they came and in a single night they destroyed, effectively destroyed Babylon. So the craftsman against Babylon was the Medo-Persian Empire.

So then you've got the Medo-Persian Empire misbehaving against the Jews. Now they started well because Cyrus the Great was a Persian and they set Israel free. But it didn't last.

And over time, they became oppressors of the Jews again. And so who was it that terrified them? Well, it was the Greeks. So God used the Greek Empire as the craftsman to terrify the

Medo-Persian Empire.

[35:11] And what you see is God manipulating history. Now the Greeks were awful to the Jews. And I'll give you the short version.

So the Romans then came in and defeated Greece and took over and subjugated the Jews once more. And at the time of Jesus, the Jews were still under Roman subjugation.

So could I have the other chart up, please? The last slide. So what we have is Babylon's craftsman that took them down was Medo-Persia.

Medo-Persia's craftsman that took them down was Greece. Greece's craftsman that took them down was Rome. Who is the craftsman that takes Rome down? And it's a very good question because there was no clear event that defeated Rome.

It kind of fizzled. It was political unrest. It was economic failure. It was all sorts of things. And by the time we get to 476 AD, you had one Roman emperor who was opposed by a German chap called, I'm not sure how to pronounce it, Odessa or Odoessa or something.

[36:21] He defeated Romulus Augustus in 476 AD. And that was kind of the collapse of the Roman Empire. But it didn't, there wasn't any big defeat event.

It kind of fizzled. Well, we shouldn't be surprised because in Daniel 7 verses 19 to 24, we read that the beast that is representing Rome, there is a final king that will arise, a horn, a final horn.

And this final horn, when people study Revelation and Daniel together, they will always come to the conclusion, this final horn is the Antichrist figure who is yet to come.

And I'd so love to do another hour on that, but we won't. But this Antichrist figure, if we just briefly turn to Revelation 17 and just read verses 8 to 11.

The beast that you saw was and is not and is about to come up out of the abyss and go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, will wonder when they see the beast that he was and is not and will come.

[37 : 40] And here is the mind that has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. And they are seven kings. Five have fallen. One is and the other has not yet come.

And when he comes, he must remain a little while. The beast which was and is not is himself also an eighth. So this tells us that the beast that was and is not, which tracks with Rome as we've studied thus far.

Rome went, but is going to come back as an eighth. So the craftsman against Rome hasn't yet acted. Now, what I'm saying to you, an awful lot of folks out there would disagree with.

So don't take my word for it. Study it for yourself. But a lot of people would disagree with this interpretation. But it's the best. I think it makes the best sense of scripture.

So. So. If that is the Antichrist figure and it's you'll hear some scholars refer to the revived Roman Empire, it means the Roman Empire is not finished and it will yet return for a final performance, if you like.

[38 : 52] Who is then going to be the craftsman that deals with Rome and sets up an everlasting kingdom? And the Sunday school answer to all questions is Jesus.

Jesus. So I think I need to stop there because I heard the alarm go off. I can't speak for you, but this excites me because God was talking us through history in a way that is a little bit esoteric because we can see it because we're looking back upon it and because of the Holy Spirit.

But it would be a complete mystery to those who ignore God and can't see these things because these things are spiritually discerned. So, Father, we thank you for your amazing word.

And I do pray that as we go on through Zechariah, this is certainly not the first of the difficult studies or not the only difficult study we will have to do. But, Lord, I thank you that, as it says in Isaiah 42, you are the God who knows the end from the beginning and can teach us all things.

And we thank you that you're doing that right now. You're taking us under your wing and you're teaching us from your word. And we thank you for that in Jesus' name. Amen. Bless you all.