

Journey Into God's Word



Job 15-30

Zechariah 1-9

Revelation 4-14

Dear Brothers and sisters,

Come into God's presence. Abide in His love. Join those around the throne and worship the Lord. This week as we study the Book of Revelation we will first stop before the throne of heaven.(Rev.4,5) We will examine the first 9 chapters of Zechariah and discover comparisons to those shared in Revelation. In addition we will continue our study of Job and the need to trust God in the midst of suffering.

As a "burning stick snatched from the fire,"(Zech.3:2) Jesus says to us as He did to the high priest Joshua, "See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you."(Zech.3:4) These rich garments are the righteousness, holiness and compassion He desires to place upon us as new creations in Christ. Let us now move in the Spirit as John did on the Island of Patmos and be raptured before the throne of God. Please read Rev.4:1-6 and describe the setting around the throne of God. Let us join the four living creatures in giving praise unto God as they declared, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, Who was, and is, and is to come."(Rev. 4:8)

Instead of singing praise unto God at this time many of us may instead find ourselves crying out, "How long oh Lord" from hearts of loneliness and despair. In the midst of my loneliness I must realize God's deep longing for His people to return to Him. I must understand His desire for me to love Him, the God who is Love. In Zechariah 3:8, we see this deep desire to reach out to us revealed in the promise, "I am going to bring My servant, the Branch."(Zech.3:8) A promise of the coming Messiah is further revealed in Zechariah 9:9 where it says, "See, your King comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey." Jesus fulfilled this prophecy on what is now celebrated as Palm Sunday. Jesus came, He died, and rose as God's provision of His tangible love and our opportunity to be set from sin and come into His presence. Can we now respond to this love by joining the multitude of angels in

Rev. 6:12 and declare, “Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!”

Why is it that we don't get more excited about what Jesus has done for us? Could it be our lack of faith? Our refusal to turn loose of the other gods who seem to offer security, keep us from receiving the Living Christ. Did you see from your reading how the Spirit of God took John to the throne of God and gave a revelation of heaven before John witnessed the judgment that was to come upon the earth? How we must learn to trust God and begin to fly in His love under the direction of the Holy Spirit. That great English minister from the 1800's, C.H. Spurgeon, put it this way.” Brother, your failure, if you fail, will begin in your faith. The air says to the eagle, ‘Trust me; spread thy broad wings; I will bear thee up to the sun. Only trust me. Take thy foot from off your rock, which thou can't feel beneath thee. Get away from it, and be buoyed up the unseen element.’ My brethren, eaglets of heaven, mount aloft, for God invites you Mount! You have but to trust Him.” As we trust Him, we are awoken from the sleep of complacency, and tapped into the unlimited power of the Holy Spirit. As you study Zechariah 4, you will see a gold lamp stand with a bowl on the top with seven lights in it. When asked what this meant the Lord declared, “Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the Lord Almighty.” The two Olive trees represent the unlimited flow of olive oil signifying the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. For those who do not see the great movement of the Spirit they would like to see in their lives at this time, verse 10 of Zech.4, says, “Who despises the day of small things?”

When we ask what should we do? “This is what the Lord Almighty says: “Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the alien (homeless) or the poor. In your hearts do not think evil of each other.”(Zech.7:8) Over and over through out the scriptures this message is given but so little is done. Zech7:11-13 says, “they refused to pay attention; stubbornly they turned their backs and stopped up their ears. They made their hearts as hard as flint and would not listen to the...words that the Lord Almighty had sent by His Spirit through the earlier prophets. So the Lord Almighty was very angry.”

Scorned love, the love of the Almighty God, rejected by those He sought. What a tragic event, “A spirit of prostitution is in their heart; they do not acknowledge the Lord.”(Hosea 5:4)

The time has come for us to receive God's love and turn from all that possesses us and pulls us away from Him. Because of the mercy, grace, and forgiveness provided through the resurrection of Jesus Christ we can respond affirmatively when He says, "Do not be afraid, but let your hands be strong. (Zech.8:13) "Do not be afraid. These are the things you are to do. Speak the truth to each other, and render true and sound judgment in your courts; do not plot evil against your neighbor, and do not love to swear falsely. I hate all this, declares the Lord."(Zech.8:15,16)

When questions are raised in the midst of suffering, trials and tribulations answers can be found in Jesus. The book of Job is an example of questions that are asked for which we can find answers in Christ. For example in Job 9:2 we see the question asked, "how can a mortal be righteous before God?" The answer is given in I Timothy 2:5,6. "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all." In Job 14:14 the question is asked, "If a man dies will he live again?" In John 11:25 we see Jesus answer that question when He declares, "I Am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die." When Job declares in Job 16:19, "Even now my witness is in heaven; my advocate is on high," we see who that is in Heb.9:24. "For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; He entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence." Job declares, "I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end He will stand upon the earth."(Job 19:25) In Heb.7:24,25 we see that our Redeemer, "Jesus lives forever, He has a permanent priesthood. Therefore He is able to save completely those who come to God through Him, because He always lives to intercede for them. The question is raised in Job 21:15-17, what is important in life? In Matt.16:24-26 we see Jesus answering by declaring, "If any one would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for Me will fit it. What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?" In John 3:16 we read, "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believe in Him shall not perish but have eternal life." In Job 23:3-5 Job asks the question, where do we find God? Jesus answers, "Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Don't you believe that I Am in the Father, and that the Father is in Me?"(John 14:9,10)

As we live in the last days the book of Revelations makes it clear, if we are going to survive we must know that Jesus is the answer. "I watched as the Lamb

opened the first of seven seals.”(Rev.6:1) As each seal is opened Jesus the Lamb sets in motion events that will bring about the end of human history. The four horses spoken of in this chapter appear as the first four seals are opened. The image of four horses is also found in Zech.6:1-8.

“When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the Word of God and the testimony they had maintained.”(Rev.6:9) As you read Revelations 6 and 7 please describe the events that take place as these seals are opened. In Rev.8:1-5, we see the opening of the seventh seal, which results in thunder from heaven. “The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of the saints, went up before God from the angel’s hand. Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and hurled it on the earth; and there came peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lighting and earthquake.”(Rev.8:4,5)

In Rev.8:6--Rev.11:19 we witness the seven trumpets being sounded. There are three purposes for these trumpet blasts. #1. The Trumpets are sounded to warn the nations. #2. The trumpet blasts also serve to call the forces of good and evil to battle. #3. They also announce the return of Jesus the Messiah. Please study the events described in these chapters and note how they are mentioned in other sections of scripture. For example Rev.11:4 say this about the two witnesses. “These are the two olive trees, and the two lamp stands that stand before the Lord of the earth.” In Zech. 4:3,11 and Zech.4:14 we see direct references to this verse. Please look these verses up and share what they have in common with Rev.11:4.

Some have convinced themselves that God doesn’t care what happen to the environment on planet earth. They do not see themselves as earth keepers but instead feel it is alright to be earth breakers for their own self benefit. Yet as the seventh trumpet is blown we read in Rev.11:18, “The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who reverence your name, both small and great—and for destroying those who destroy the earth.” What does this tell you about the importance of creation? How do you respond to someone who says, “What difference does it make what happens to the earth it is going to be destroyed on the last day anyway?”

Please read Rev.12:7-12 and note how Satan and his angels are thrown out of heaven. Look how they are overcome. “They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.”(Rev.12:11) How we must learn to resist and overcome the devil through the blood of Jesus Christ and the word of our testimony of His love

and power at work in our lives. “Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury because he knows that his time is short.”(Rev.12:12) The fact is even as the devil rages we do not need to fear for Jesus is Lord and God has everything under control.

As the beast goes forth in Revelation 13 and given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them (verse 7) we are told the following in verse 10. “This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of the saints.” In what way does the second beast mark the people in verses 16-18 of Revelation 13?

“Fear God and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come. Worship Him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water.”(Rev.14:7) Following those words of the first angel in Rev.14 what do the second and third angels say? “Then I heard a voice from heaven say, Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’ ‘Yes,’ says the Spirit, ‘they will rest from their labor for their deeds will follow them.’” (Rev.14:13)

As we read of these events taking place immediately before the return of Christ we must remember God has everything under control. Yes, our world may be falling apart. Yes, the reaping described in Rev.14:14-20 may be taking place but we must never forget the awesome power of God’s love. As Paul declared, “No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”(Romans 8:37-39) How I must remember this promise each and everyday. Please join me this next week in reading Job 31-42, Zachariah 10-14, Malachi, and Revelation 15-22.

Now may we remember to “Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”(Philippians 4:4-7)

Yours in Christ,

Larry Rice