

Zechariah 5:1-4 – Compromise and Complacency Brings Judgment

TSK, Henry, Handfuls, JFB, Trapp, Poole, Geneva, Clarke, Philips, Barnes, Delitzsch, INT, Eclectic, Gill,

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: This week the Ontario Supreme Court in effect banned Christians from Trinity Western, who pledged to live a moral life, from serving as lawyers in Ontario. A baker who refuses to write perverse messages on a cake will be charged with discrimination and his business destroyed. Some who have disciplined their children the way God says have had the government steal their children and destroy their families. If you speak against Islam or Mohamed publicly, you could be killed. These are just the beginning of God's judgment on the West.

But why do we face these awful judgments? Is it because the governments are bad...or false religions? Yes. But fundamentally we face these awful judgments because of a complacent and compromising church – where only parts of the Gospel is preached and worship ignored or compromised. So God is angry with his church.

You will hear today how an angry God confronted a complacent covenant people – leadership and all- and pronounced judgment on them.

Our headings are:

The Display of the Scroll

The Damnation 诅咒 of the Scroll

Our goals are: That you will be diligent to promote and preserve true worship by your telling of the full Gospel, by your giving of your tithes, and by your investment of your time, knowing that in doing these things you will bring good to the church and glory to Christ.

The Display of the Scroll

1 Then I turned and raised my eyes, and saw there a flying scroll. 2 And he said to me, "What do you see?" So I answered, "I see a flying scroll. Its length is twenty cubits and its width ten cubits."

1. Something drew Zechariah's attention – something that would draw any man's attention. He saw a flying scroll 书卷 that flew all over the land. (V4)

2. A scroll was a roll of animal skin or cloth. A scroll would last for many years but was expensive to make. Because it was expensive, a scroll was used for important writings only. In the Bible, the scroll recorded God's demands for faith in Jesus Christ –with blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience.

3. You know for sure about the blessings, but look at an example of curses for disobedience.

Deuteronomy 28:15 "But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curse will come upon you and overtake you: 16 "Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the country. 17 "Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl 擻盆 18 "Cursed shall be the fruit of your body and the produce of your land, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.

4. The scroll that Zechariah saw was about 20 cubits by 10 cubits (30 feet X 15 feet). This measurements were unique.

a. Look at the temple.

1 Kings 6:3 The vestibule 廊子在 front of the sanctuary of the house was twenty cubits long across the width of the house, and the width of the vestibule extended ten cubits from the front of the house.

In the vestibule of the temple was where the law was read. So this was reminding the Jews that the scroll was coming with Divine authority.

b. These were also the dimensions of the holy place in the tabernacle 会幕 where the menorah, the table of showbread 陈设饼 and the altar of incense, representing the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were. There were triple witnesses against God's people.

6. Lessons:

a. God's law is the only basis on which the world will be judged. So get God's law out to the world. God hates a pluralistic society 多样性社会 that thinks each one can have his own standards. Moral relativism 道德相对主义 is silliness. **Some like to call sin a dysfunction. But sin is sin.** Calling it by some other name does not negate its shame. We don't have dysfunctional families; we have sinful families. We don't have a dysfunctional bureaucracy 官僚 We have a sinful bureaucracy. **To simply call something a dysfunction means that a pill or therapy can fix it.** But the big issue is that there is sin...and that sin must be exposed and confessed in Jesus Christ.

b. God's law is the only basis that you will be judged. Read it regularly. Examine your life. Ask God for help to obey.

c. Not even the most secret sin gets past God's eye. His scroll is on every nation, province, house, and bedroom!
Ecclesiastes 12:14 For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.

Adam and Eve could not hide from the Lord and cover their sin. Cain could not hide his murderous heart and hand. Sarah's doubtful laugh in her heart was like an announcement on a housetop for the Lord. David's adultery was exposed. Achan's hidden gold was uncovered. People could not hide their sins. **When you consider the size of the scroll** you will realize that **it was more like a billboard!** So the people could see it as well.

d. Do you see how God is not a grandfather who might ignore the sins of grandchildren? God identifies sin, exposes sin, and judges sin. Those **who treat God as a grandfather have a false view of God.**

The Damnation of the Scroll

3 Then he said to me, "This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole earth: '**Every thief** shall be **expelled**除滅' according to this **side of the scroll**; and, '**Every perjurer** shall be **expelled**,' according to that side of it." 4 "I will send out the curse," says the LORD of hosts; "It shall **enter the house** of the thief And the house of the one who swears falsely by My name. **It shall remain in the midst** of his house And **consume it**, with its **timber and stones**."

1. The Lord then began to explain the enigma謎 of the flying scroll. **In short, it was the establishment of guilt of the complacent Jews and a declaration of their punishment.** The Jews had returned from captivity but started living like they lived before the captivity.

2. A history lesson first: Look how God warned the Jews before the Babylonian captivity using the scroll.

Jeremiah 36:1 ...in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, that this word came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying: 2 "**Take a scroll of a book and write on it all the words that I have spoken to you against Israel, against Judah,** and against all the nations, from the day I spoke to you, from the days of Josiah even to this day. 3 "It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the adversities which I purpose to bring upon them, that **everyone may turn from his evil way**, that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin."

Jeremiah prepared a scroll for Jehoiakim, the wicked king of Judah, to expose his sins and to warn him of impending doom即將到來的厄運 on him and his nation. (Law and judgment.) And yet, notice the hope God offered to the Jews. Again...

Ezekiel 2:9 Now when I looked, there was a hand stretched out to me; and behold, **a scroll of a book** was in it. 10 Then He spread it before me; and there was writing on the inside and on the outside, and written on it were **lamentations**哀歌 and **mourning and woe**.

Ezekiel was pre-captivity as Jeremiah and he too announced lamentations, mourning, and woe on Judah for her sins.

3. Now back to the present scroll. The scroll highlighted 2 specific areas of terrible sins from the 2 tables of the law that would be the basis for Divine judgments.

a. Thieves. But these were not ordinary thieves who might steal your jewellery or car. These were people who robbed God of his proper, faithful, and corporate worship. Maybe they worshipped God in the home, but that was not sufficient. Look how God continued this accusation years after! They still had not changed.

Malachi 3:8 "Will a man rob God? **Yet you have robbed Me!** But you say, 'In what way have we robbed You?' In tithes十一奉獻 and offerings.

Nehemiah 13:10 I also realized that **the portions for the Levites had not been given them**; for each of the Levites and the singers who did the **work had gone back to his field**.

The one who steals from God is the worst thief of all.

b. False swearers – or better, light swearers. These were not just regular liars, but they were those who promised to worship God and then cast their vows aside – treated the vows lightly. This was an abomination厌恶 to God. They promised to rebuild the temple, but when a little pressure came, they abandoned what they promised. **And the leaders fell asleep.**

Malachi 3:5 And I will come near you for judgment; I will be a swift witness Against sorcerers, Against adulterers, Against perjurers, Against those who exploit wage earners and widows and orphans, And against those who turn away an alien — Because they do not fear Me," Says the LORD of hosts.萬軍之耶和華說，我必臨近你們，施行審判。我必速速作見證，警戒亾師的、犯姦淫的、起假誓的、虧負人之工價的、欺壓寡婦孤兒的、屈枉寄居的、和不敬畏我的。

The Jews could not blame the Samaritans or the Edomites. God accepted no such excuses. These same false swearers... swearing to build God's kingdom...then swore to destroy the Lord and his people 500 years later.

4. Now look at the curse written on the scroll. The curse would enter the man's house and consume the house –not the timber and bricks... not the building but the people who are there...but the people. They would be cut off.

The timber and stones represent the people... We build the house of God... we are stones. But the Jews refused to build up the house of the Lord, so God **would the refore tear down their houses.** See the irony? And remember the curse God announced through Haggai... they would work, but their grains would only be shells... they would put money in their pockets but they would have holes in them... they would eat and never be satisfied? This was the same curse from Moses 1000 years before.

Deuteronomy 28:17 "Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. 18 "Cursed shall be the fruit of your body and the produce of your land, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.

Deuteronomy 28:61 "Also every sickness and every plague, which is not written in this Book of the Law, will the LORD bring upon you until you are destroyed.

5. The destruction of wives and children of the wicked men showed the consequences of covenant failures.

Proverbs 3:33 The curse of the LORD is on the house of the wicked, But He blesses the home of the just.

Job 18:15 They dwell in his tent who are none of his; Brimstone 硫磺 is scattered on his dwelling.

And didn't this happen literally as well when the Romans killed the Jews and destroyed Jerusalem?

Luke 19:44 "and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, **because you did not know the time of your visitation.**"

The temple and the people were destroyed in AD70.

6. Lessons:

a. Those who refuse to be reformed in their lives and pursue true worship and service to the Lord will find themselves run over by God's justice. This particularly applies to nominal 挂名 churches and states that ignore God's truth. Ever notice how some parents say: "At least they are going to church?" Does that meet God's standards? No. God wants the temple repaired, worship restored, and the people readied for kingdom expansion. Even though it is easy to do, do not steal from God.

b. Thank God he continues to provide the Gospel. May the church preach it loudly and clearly.

Revelation 14:6 Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth — to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people —

And may those who hear it repent and be **saved from temporal and eternal judgment.**

c. What you do affects your children. If you are lazy... and don't bring your children to worship... or you don't teach them at home... guess what will happen to them? **Yes, there may be pasta in the pantry, but there is flood on the foundations.** You children may seem to be well adjusted socially, but spiritually they will be heading to hell.

Conclusion:

God revealed a large, visible scroll of judgment on those Jews who were careless about his worship – the leaders and the people. They stole God's tithes and did not participate in worship. So God uprooted their houses – children and all – and the curse took up residence in their homes... until they repented.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. What is your part in the kingdom? What is your part in the home? Are you fulfilling it... as a mother, father, husband, wife, or child? What about your part in the church? Are you playing any part in attending worship, supporting worship, and encouraging worship... proper worship? The Lord wants you to be active – to be workers not observers! Don't steal his time. Keep your vows. Only this will halt the present judgment.

2. Don't let pride control you. Don't let the desire for wealth and position push you to ignore the kingdom. Remember, you were bought... bought by the blood of Jesus when you were a slave to sin.

3. And all of God's people are to be involved in finding stones! This is evangelism 101. Show the scroll so men may see their sins and turn and be saved.

Finally, if you are outside of God's kingdom, at the end of the world a scroll will be opened with a record of everything you have done against God. Your only hope is to have your record cleaned by asking God to accept that Jesus took the punishment for all your sins. Will you do this today?