

God exercises authority over all

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[0 : 00] Don't be sorry. We're having...

It's the way it is. We're doing good. All right. There it goes. There we go.

All right. Anybody here ever hear the long way around the barn?

Not a lot of people familiar with that saying. The long way around the barn. It takes you a long way...

You could go just one corner and be at the door, or you could go three corners to get to the door, right? The long way around the barn. I don't bring that up because today's sermon is going to seem like we're taking the long way around the barn, but we're taking the long way around the barn.

[1 : 04] Just deal with it, okay? I had an incredible time studying Zachariah this week, and we'll get there in the end, I promise.

It'll make sense, okay? But it could be a bit of a walk to get there. So let's... Next week, we're going to be taking a look at the third set of visions.

This week, we're looking at the second pair. Next week, we'll be looking at the third pair. And the key... Well, we're not at the key. We're going to start... We're going to read this, and you're going to see why it was such a joyous journey for me.

So if you've got your Bible open to Zachariah, you're way ahead of me, but I'll be there in just a minute. Zachariah, we're going to read the two visions that are paired.

Vision number two and vision number five... Seven. Two and seven. Two and seven. But we'll start in Zachariah chapter one, verses 18 through 21.

[2 : 07] And I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, four horns. And I said to the angel who talked with me, What are these?

And he said to me, These are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem. Then the Lord showed me four craftsmen.

And I said, What are these coming to do? He said, These are the horns that scattered Judah, so that no one raised his head, and these have come to terrify them, to cast down the horns of the nations who lifted up their horns against the land of Judah to scatter it.

And everybody said, Praise the Lord that we read that passage of Scripture, which made perfect sense to me. Amen. Why are you giggling? I had fun this week.

Now we're in chapter five, verses five through eleven. Then the angel who talked with me came forward and said to me, Lift your eyes and see what this is that is going out.

[3 : 29] And I said, What is it? He said, This is the basket that is going out. And he said, This is their iniquity in all the land.

And behold, the leaden cover was lifted, and there was a woman sitting in the basket. And he said, This is wickedness.

And he thrust her back into the basket and thrust down the leaden weight on its opening. Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, two women coming forward.

The wind was in their wings. They had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between earth and heaven. Then I said to the angel who talked with me, Where are they taking the basket?

He said to me, To the land of Shinar, to build a house for it. And when this is prepared, they will set the basket down on its base.

[4 : 38] And everybody said, That was the most amazing passage of life-changing scripture I have ever heard in my life. Amen. I didn't hear a lot of amen. I heard a lot of amen.

As I said, and we'll probably have to say again and again, prophetic visions often include vivid imagery that doesn't lend itself easily to understanding.

It can be confusing. It can be the sort of thing that you sit there and you look at and you go, I don't know, and turn the page. But there's a couple of truths in here that we need to pay attention. Let me start out by knocking down the easy false thoughts. Zechariah chapter 5, verse 7, And behold, the leaden cover was lifted and there was a woman sitting in the basket and he said, This is wickedness.

This does not mean that all women are wicked in comparison to men. That's not what it means. Okay? Don't, Eve was deceived.

[5 : 57] Yeah, well, Adam knowingly chose. All have fallen short of the glory of God. This isn't picking on women. Notice the two angels with storks.

That's not because storks deliver babies. Sorry. Okay? It's just, this is prophetic vision imagery. And we'll get there.

Okay? I promise you, when we get done with this, you'll hopefully have a better understanding of what it means. But we're going to take the long way around the barn to get there.

Key idea today, God exercises authority over all. That all is the same all that we studied when we were going through Greek and when we were going through English and it means most.

No? No, that's the all that means everything. God exercises authority over all. So be wary of the wickedness inside.

[7 : 03] God, the life giver, times two. It's the long way around the barn.

I know. We're getting there. But before we do that, we've got to talk about this. Military appreciation month for May. Don't forget to write Bryce.

Right? Why does everybody have a month? I mean, we've got Veterans Day. We've got Memorial Day. All right? If you want to show appreciation to the people in the military, show appreciation.

We don't need a month for it. How many of you have ever pulled over a patrolman of any sort? You have? What did you pull him over for? No, no, no.

I didn't say how many of you have been pulled over. How many of you have pulled over patrolmen? Yeah, but you were an officer. I pulled over Jim once.

[8 : 06] That was hilarious. He was a state patrolman out in, and I pulled him over, and just to harass him because he was our classmate, but I also pulled over one just this week.

He was getting ready to drive out of easy's with his lunch, and I pulled him over, basically knocked on his windows because I was walking by, told him roll down his window. Thank you.

I appreciate the fact that you do a hard job, and I walked away because I honor. I was walking. I was walking.

But we can show appreciation every day. We don't need a special month, but it is the Military Appreciation Month in May, which reminds me of some of my most favorite stories, accurate historical events written in a story form in the Bible, okay?

The Bible is just full of them. 1 Samuel chapter 14, the king's son Jonathan and his armor bearer, they're standing on one side of the ravine, and all the Philistine host is standing on the other side, and they're telling each other how much they approve of them, you know?

[9 : 22] Your mama's so fat, and your grandma's so ugly, those sort of things, you know? And Jonathan and his armor better calm down, come up, wipe them all out, the two against however many. Great story, lots of fun.

1 Samuel chapter 23, David's mighty men, love that. One of my, two of my favorites, all right. They're getting ready for a battle, and everybody takes off, and they leave one guy, and he's like, these are my beans.

This is food for the family, this is what we need to eat, I'm not giving it up. And so he stood fast in the field and killed all the enemy. Love that story. The farmer defends his crop, right?

Or, or, if you've been in the military, you know what fire guard is. It's the one guy that's left to watch over the camp to make certain it doesn't burn down while everybody else goes into town to have cultural experiences, right?

We're talking about the military. So this one guy was left on fire guard, right? And the Philistines attacked, and he killed them all. And everybody came back from town like, what happened here?

[10 : 32] You know, and he's standing there with his sword, and it's stuck to his, love that story, all right? But, turn to 2 Kings. This is a military story, but not a military story of Israel's military.

2 Kings chapter 13. 2 Kings chapter 13. A little bit of background.

There was this prophet guy named Elijah, right? And he was mighty and powerful in deeds and in word.

And he had an apprentice, he had somebody that followed him, and his name was Elisha. And when Elijah was taken up in a chariot and dropped his cloak, Elisha picked up his cloak and said, where is the God of Israel?

I want double the spirit of my mentor. And if you read through the entire Bible, you will find that during his lifetime, Elisha did exactly two times as many miracles as Elijah minus one.

[11:49] And now we turn to 2 Kings chapter 13, verse 20. So Elisha died, and they buried him. Almost made it to a double portion.

Almost. One shy. Now, bands of the Moabites used to invade the land in the spring of the year. And as a man was being buried, behold, a marauding band was seen, and the man was thrown into the grave of Elisha.

And as soon as the man touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and stood on his feet. Ding, ding, ding. Two times exactly. My point is this.

God not only gave life the first time, but he is the only one to give life twice. Okay? And it's an awesome military story in honor of Military Month.

In the beginning, God created us. God created everything. God gave life. Life only comes from life. And God, who is the source of life, gave life to us.

[12:57] But how does that story go? I mean, Genesis chapter 1. Yay, baby! We're alive, and we were created. How were we created? No, no, no. Not good.

Very good, right? And then chapter 2. How's it going? Dude, we got a garden. We got all the food we want. Everything's great. Very, very good. This is awesome.

Then chapter 3 rolls around. Sin and death come into creation. And so, though God gave us life, we chose sin.

But through His Son, He gives us new life. In Romans chapter 6, we read this, thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching which you were committed.

That is not the verse I thought it was. So it better be 2 Corinthians 5.17. I know it's 2 Corinthians 5.17. 2 Corinthians.

[14:12] I'm in first. That should have been the right verse. Here we go. For the... I'm in Galatians.

That's not going to be right. Anybody got it yet? Here it is. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. Yay! The old has passed away.

Behold, the new has come. Salvation gives us new life. See, we were created alive. Soul, spirit, body, three parts of humanity.

Soul is eternal. God created it eternal. Spirit, that is basically our relationship with God and our body.

Now, this is eternal and the body, we know it's all going to die, right? In the fall, when sin invaded humanity, our spirit died. God gives us new spirit life when we turn to Him in salvation.

[15:18] That's the new life that He gives us. But here's the thing. The key to this part of it, though God created us very good, we chose sin.

For how many people have sinned? Even the great Mrs. James burnt the toast once. For all have sinned. That means that all of us in our basket have wickedness.

The heart is deceitful and wicked. Who can know it? We all deal with sin. We all deal with wickedness.

Now, God gave us life and has offered to give us new life if we turn to Him for salvation. salvation. But we still live on this earth.

And this is important when we take a look at Zechariah. Let's go ahead and go back to Zechariah real quick. Because we learn in Zechariah that God punishes the wicked and disciplines His children.

[16:27] Zechariah. Here we go. Now, we read earlier in chapter 1 the story of the four horns, right? Chapter 1, verse, what is it?

18. I'm having a great time today. Here we go. Chapter 1 of Zechariah. In verse 18, it says, I lifted my eyes and behold, four horns.

And I asked the angel, what are these? And he said, these are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem. curiosity. Anybody know who Israel is?

Ever heard of them? God's what? God's children. God's chosen nation. They were chosen by God. They were special to Him. I will be your God and you will be my people.

They had that preferred, preferential relationship to God. God chose Israel. And yet, how did Israel do? Were they sunshine and happiness following God all the time?

[17:30] No. And so, God chooses to discipline them. And what these four horns represent, and you can read up on it different, they represent the disciplining of God.

Notice what it says. these are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem. Most people believe these are the nations that came, attacked, took captives, led them away.

Okay? But the idea was that Israel had sinned and God came to teach them that sin is not a good idea. Okay? But, but, but they took it, oh, oops, I gotta, there, let me hear, the horns, all right?

The horns were to discipline Israel, but they went too far. Why did I shut my Bible? Now, I gotta find it again. Zechariah, chapter 1, read with me, verse 20.

Then the Lord showed me four craftsmen and I said, what are these coming to do? These are the horns that scattered Judah so that no one raised his head.

[18:50] They came to, to, to discipline. Discipline is not punishment. Discipline is training.

Discipline is teaching. Discipline is me taking you and having you do your multiplication tables time and time and time again until you get it.

We, we did a little discipline today up here on stage on one of the songs we were working on. We tried something different and we did it again differently. Then we did it one more time to lock it in.

Then we did it one more time to prove we could.

Discipline. Wasn't punishing anybody. It was training, trying to get things right. God had sent these four horns to discipline Israel, but they took it too far. They took it to the point of oppression to where nobody could even raise their head.

They crushed the spirit. That's not what God wanted. And because they took it too far, what happens? God sends the four craftsmen. These are the four horns that scattered Judah so that no one raised his head, and these have come to terrify them, to cast down the horns of the nations who lifted their horns against the land of Judah to scatter it.

They would have been fine if they had just done what God had intended for them to do, but they took it too far, and God came in and snapped them. Okay?

[20:13] The horns were to discipline Israel, but they went too far. And then let's take a look in chapter five about that basket.

The basket represents the nation of Israel that is being taken out of Jerusalem and taken to the land of Shinar, which is Babylon. Right? And why is that?

Because within the basket, there was still wickedness. What happened as soon as the lid came off? Go ahead, look at it.

Look at it. What happened as soon as they popped the lid? What did wickedness try to do? She tried to get out.

You know, he goes, here, look at this, and wickedness is like, let me out, I'm going. He's like, no, get back in there. Just something for you to think about. If we're not careful what's going to happen in our own lives, the wickedness will try and come out.

[21:22] We need to be careful about that. Just throwing it out there, just so you know. All right.

Though Israel was God's chosen people, they still had to deal with, look at, anybody ever read Romans, book of Romans?

Great book in the Bible, right? Written by the apostle Paul. There's this, there's this chapter in there, I think it's chapter seven, where Paul, right? The guy who wrote most of the New Testament, the guy who traveled all around the Mediterranean starting churches, the apostle to the Gentiles chosen by God, trained for three years by Jesus, that guy?

Chapter seven, book of Romans? That which I want to do, I don't do, and that which I don't want to do is what I find myself doing. Every time I turn my back, I'm doing the wrong thing. Ah, who will deliver me from this?

Even the apostle Paul struggled. You are not unique in this. If you look around the church, you will find people who struggle with sin.

If you struggle with sin, raise your hand. Everybody, raise your hand. That's right. That's the reality. Because we have wickedness within us because we were sinners.

