

Hope has a Name: Zechariah 1:1-6

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[0 : 00] Well, good morning, friends. So we have about a month until Easter, Resurrection Sunday,! And we have some books available.

! If you didn't grab one last week, you actually have a month, and this is a 30-day devotional. So to help you prepare well for Resurrection Sunday, these are available in the foyer, and please grab one.

If you're not, if you don't have a consistent time in the Word, and you're just like, what should I read? Well, now I have figured out the next 30 days for you. So grab one. I think we have enough available for just about all of you.

So with that, I do want to welcome you and bring my greeting along with Pastor Scott and the staff and elders. And we're in a new series, so if this is your first time here, welcome.

We're going to, you timed it well. We are going to begin a new series in the book of Zechariah, and we've got a lot to cover, so let me pray. Father, thank you for the fact that you are a gracious God.

[1 : 04] We're so thankful that you're God, and we're not. Lord, we love that you would sacrifice your own son, that we might have life, and not just life, but in fact that we would be called your children.

And it's just a simple act of crying out in faith, asking that you would forgive us, Jesus, that your perfect life would be accredited to our life, and your death would count towards us, payment for sin, and that faith alone is enough to rescue sinners.

And so today, Lord, we love the fact that we get to gather and think about you, Jesus, and worship you, Jesus, and talk about you, Jesus. And I pray that you would use this study these next three months to heighten our expectation, our hope for your return, and for all that lies ahead.

Good days are ahead. Lord, minister to your people today as only you can. We pray in Jesus' name and all God's people said, amen. So go ahead and turn open to Zechariah.

And if you don't know where that is, just go to Matthew and turn left, and it's second to the last book there in the Old Testament. We're going to be looking at Zechariah 1, verses 1 through 6 this morning.

[2 : 28] Yeah, we are, can you believe it? We're in the minor prophets. For the next three months, we will be in the minor prophets. And maybe you're kind of curious, minor prophets.

It's been a while. There are 17 prophetic books in the Old Testament, five major prophets, 12 minor prophets, Hosea through Malachi. And you're wondering maybe, well, why are we studying a minor prophet?

Let's study a major prophet, Jay. And they're called minor not because they're less important. All right? They're called minor prophets since about the fourth century, Augustine's day.

They've been known as the minor prophets simply because of their size. Generally, they are smaller in size, shorter books. It's not always a consistent standard.

Zechariah is actually the longest of the minor prophets. It's got 14 chapters. So does Hosea, but Zechariah is longer. And in fact, Zechariah is actually longer than one of the major prophets, Daniel.

[3 : 32] So everything I just said, just sorry, it's a little confusing. But generally speaking, they're shorter books. Now, for this book, if I can give you just sort of a very high-level, like, division or organization of the book of Zechariah, you can divide it into two sections.

Okay? You've got chapters 1 through 8 as part 1, and chapters 9 through 14 as part 2. And so the first section, chapters 1 through 8, Zechariah in the first eight chapters, really the first six, but we're going to keep two big parts here this morning, he gets these visions.

Zechariah receives eight, some scholars break it down differently, but we're going to go with eight nighttime visions. So think of Zechariah sort of like Scrooge on the Christmas Carol, and three

ghosts kind of, like, visit him in one single night.

Well, Zechariah receives eight nighttime dreams, visions, in one single night. And these visions that he receives in this first section of this book celebrate God's sovereignty, calling God's ancient people to repentance again.

And really, it's a very hopeful, these visions are, they're promising a coming kingdom. So you can think of it as, like, oh, visions about a future kingdom. And then chapters 9 through 14, the second part, are promises of a future messianic king.

[5 : 04] So chapters 1 through 8, visions of the kingdom. Chapters 9 through 14, promises of a future messianic king. And there are prophecies in the second portion of Zechariah that intertwine his two advents.

In fact, Zechariah is quoted a lot in the New Testament. He is the most quoted minor prophet, some 40-plus times he is actually quoted in the New Testament. And what's cool is, as he talks about the advent of Christ, we have better seats than the original audience.

Because the first advent of Christ has already occurred 2,000 years ago. And yet, for this audience, all of it was future. But for some of us, it's history, it's past.

And yet, the second advent has yet to come, so some of it's future to us as well. Well, we have entitled this series, Hope Has a Name. And why do we call it that?

Because there's a whole lot of Jesus in the book of Zechariah. Especially in that second half, in chapters 9 through 14. So this morning, we're just going to do kind of an introduction to the book, a bit of an overview.

[6 : 18] And I apologize ahead of time. I know it's like daylight savings, and you're going to get a little bit of a history class. It's not a really great combination, right? But we're going to strive to, like, stay engaged.

And I'm going to try not to just give you a lot of content and then run away. But I hope that this will be engaging, and you will be blessed as we begin to wrap our minds around this wonderful book together.

So let's just read these first six verses together. Zechariah 1, beginning here in verse 1. He writes, I love that phrase, did they not overtake your fathers? This word here, it's a hunting word.

Judgment, promise for disobedience actually came upon them. They were taken out of their land, sent into exile. But the thrust of this introduction that Zechariah brings is essentially, Israel, you've been ignoring me.

[8 : 22] Repent. And as you repent, blessing will return. Blessing will follow. And that's really the thrust of the way that Zechariah introduces this book to us this morning.

Now, why tell this audience to return to the Lord? Because he says, return to me. Why tell them to return to the Lord?

What's going on in the nation of Israel in the history at this time? Well, a bit of context around where does Zechariah now fit into the Old Testament narrative?

And this is a little bit of the history portion. So put on your seatbelt and here we go. We know that in the Old Testament, God meant to be the king of his people, his chosen people.

And he led initially through prophets and priests and judges. And that just wasn't enough for Israel. What did they want?

[9 : 23] They wanted an earthly king. They wanted to be like everyone else. So they came to the prophet, at the time Samuel, with a request. And they said in 1 Samuel 8, verse 5, appoint for us a king to judge us like all the other nations.

God relents. And then he tells Samuel, it's not your leadership they're rejecting. It's actually mine. And so Israel gets their first king.

And we know that guy's name is King Saul. Yeah. He's the first king of Israel. And he ends up being a bit of a disappointment.

And the problem with Saul is, man, he was beautiful on the outside. Handsome, like, head and shoulders above all. I mean, he was the guy. The problem is the interior didn't match the exterior.

And his heart was not fully devoted to the Lord. And so he is replaced. The next king is King David.

[10 : 30] You guys, you're knocking it out of the park this morning. This time, a man is selected that has a heart after the Lord. A man after God's own heart.

And we know the story of David. He is this shepherd boy and desires to enter the mix of battle. So he offers to slay the giant.

Uses his sling to kill Goliath. And then, I don't know if this scene is in the Action Bible. I don't think it is because it's for children. But then David chops off his head.

And the Philistines from Gath, they flee. Samuel anoints David as king despite some later moral failures. The people of God, they flourish during his 40-year reign.

The economy is good. The military is strong. And this is really kind of the high point in Israel's history when David was king. This was a great time to be an Israelite.

[11:35] Much like when I was at the University of Washington in 1991 and we won the national title. It was a great time to be a Husky. In fact, Carissa, it's always a good time to be a Husky.

And you guys will figure it out someday. Well, David, despite his failings, it was actually a pretty good time to be there in the Holy Land.

Well, David's son then, Solomon, he is then entrusted with the kingdom. He begins to reign well.

What did he ask for? Recall, it says in 1 Kings 10, he asked for wisdom.

It paid off. And it says in 1 Kings 10, he excelled beyond all the kings of the earth in riches and all sought an audience with him. So again, there's a blessing on the Israelites, on God's ancient people.

But there was a contradiction in now this man as well. It says in 1 Kings 11, 3, he had 700 wives, 300 concubines.

[12:47] And so as a result of this disobedience to God related to his sexuality, his wives turned away his heart from the Lord.

And I know for some of you that read the Old Testament, you're like, polygamy is kind of everywhere. And I just want to just mention an aside here, polygamy has never been God's design for marriage.

Genesis 2, 24 sets the blueprint. It's one man, it's one woman. This has always been in God's heart. God endures with polygamy in the Old Testament.

But the Bible actually gives testimony of how broken that approach to marriage is. Because wherever it shows up, you always see problems.

There's problems. There's jealousy. There's conflict. There's dysfunction. There's erosion of character. And it often leads to idolatry.

[13:49] Solomon had 700 wives. Trust me, he had at a minimum 700 problems. And so there's division in, I'm not equating wives with don't, please.

Send those emails to Scott, okay? I'm not saying that. You guys connect dots differently. There's division in Solomon's house.

But there's also now division in the nation. Because after his death, the kingdom is divided. And the 12 tribes of Israel decide that they're going to divvy up, pick teams, and separate.

And they fall into two groups. And you have 10 of the tribes that go north. And they settle in Samaria. And we know this as the kingdom of Israel. And then two of the tribes, they stay in the south.

And they settle in Jerusalem as their capital. And we know this as the kingdom of Judah.

Regardless of whether you're part of the northern kingdom or the southern kingdom at this time, in large measure, God's people stop listening to God.

[15:01] And we have a perfect example of this. Jeremiah the prophet, he actually prophesied in Judah to the southern kingdom. And it actually says in Jeremiah 38, how much do they love his words, the words of the prophet?

They love it so much that they, what, throw him down into a cistern. That's how much they love listening to God's prophets. Those speaking on behalf of the living God.

And so no one's listening to God. Both in the north and the south. And so God disciplines. And so let me give you a key date. 722 B.C.

In 722 B.C., the northern kingdom is decimated by the Assyrians. And so those 10 tribes, they scatter across the known world.

And then not much later in 586, another key date, 586 B.C., the southern kingdom now falls to Babylon, to the Babylonian siege led by King Nebuchadnezzar.

[16:03] Man, it's a smart group. Scott, we got a smart church. Yeah, listen to this. 2 Chronicles 36, 19. It says, The southern kingdom falls.

The Babylonians destroy everything. God's people lose everything because they ignore the prophets. Which goes back to what we heard Zechariah already say here in verse 4.

Hey, they did not hear or pay attention to me, declares the Lord. And as a result of the rebellion, both kingdoms fall. And the southern kingdom, they are taken into exile. In fact, the kingdom of Judah is taken 800 miles east to live in exile for the next 70 years. 70 years. Jeremiah the prophet actually prophesies.

He starts prophesying about 40 years before this occurs. And he predicts this is going to happen. You will be in exile for 70 years. And just jot down, you can look at later, Jeremiah 25, 11, and then Jeremiah 29, 10.

[17:18] You can look those up later. But those are two prophecies from the prophet Jeremiah that, guess what? You guys are going to be in exile for 70 years because you stopped listening to your God. God's call to live in moral purity wasn't taken seriously.

And here's the result for the southern kingdom, for God's ancient people. Psalm 137 says it this way. By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down and wept when we remembered Zion.

When we remembered our hometown and now we're not living there, we're sent into exile, we're weeping. Because we're feeling the discipline of the Lord on our lives. And I would say if you've ever experienced the discipline of the Lord, consequences of your own sin.

Like don't forget that, friends. That's a severe mercy and it's meant to draw us back to repentance. Never meant to crush, never punitive.

It's there to urge us to holiness. And for Judah, they wept for 70 years. But as the psalmist writes in Psalm 30, but joy comes in the morning.

[18:32] And their morning came in the form of a deliverer from the least likely place. Listen to where it came from. 2 Chronicles 36, 20.

He, Nebuchadnezzar, took into exile in Babylon those who had escaped from the sword.

And they became servants to him and his sons, catch this, until the establishment of the kingdom of Persia. Persia's in the news a lot these days.

Deliverance comes from Persia. So now you have another date that I'm going to give you. 539 B.C. The Babylonians are destroyed by the Persian Empire.

You see God's hand in history here. And recall, 200 years prior to this event, to this deliverer coming, God actually predicted, prophesied, this deliverer would come up.

[19:38] Hey, Judah, you've been in exile for 70 years. I trust that you've learned your lesson. I'm going to bring a deliverer out of Persia. And God promises a guy to come out and be the deliverer.

200 years before this occurs, Isaiah 44, 28. Isaiah writes, Who says of Cyrus, he is my shepherd and he shall fulfill all my purpose.

Saying of Jerusalem, she shall be built and the temple, your foundation, shall be laid. So God raises up a deliverer, a guy by the name of Cyrus. Cyrus, he is this Persian king.

And he's the one that allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem, probably just a year later, 538 B.C. You can read about his edict to send them back.

It's in Ezra, chapter 1, verses 1 through 4. And I love that we have a prediction of this deliverer from the prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 44, 200 years before he's even born.

[20:46] It's like, if you ever struggle with the sovereignty of God, study Cyrus. I think about Cyrus on occasion when I'm struggling.

Is God really in control? Is he really in charge? And you're struggling and you're wrestling. Think about Cyrus, right? This prophecy made about his life even before he's born.

Friends, his name, it's not just there's going to be a Persian king. No, his name is going to be Cyrus. His parents, they didn't even, before they even named their child.

Can you imagine, like, what should we call him? I don't know. Let's call him Fred. No, I don't think Fred's good. What about, what about Billy? Billy has a nice ring.

And then they're like, hmm, it's just, I think we're supposed to name him Cyrus. It's just the sovereignty of God here. It's just astounding.

[21:47] Well, he's the one that says, hey, Jews, you've had enough. You've been in exile.

I pray that you've learned your lesson. Go back, rebuild your temple. We decimated everything, or we didn't, but, you know, the Babylonians. And what we have, then, is the book of Ezra.

We're almost through with the history, I promise. And in Ezra, you get the story of the return. Comes in a few different ways, but scholars believe there was roughly 40,000 to 50,000 Israelites that were in exile that returned.

So just imagine the number of people, this remnant, returning back to Jerusalem as a result now of Persian rule, this guy named Cyrus. And so they're returning to the land, right?

538, they're returning. Friends, this is the setting of Zechariah. Woo! Woo! We made it. That's where we find ourselves in the story.

[22 : 55] Ezra 5, 1 says, Now the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, the son of Edo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel who was over them.

So, yes, Zechariah has a buddy, right? Yeah, Scott and Jay. We got buddies? Zechariah, Haggai. Zechariah. They're ministering at the same time in the same place.

They are contemporaries. Let's now zero in on this specific date of Zechariah. Back to our text.

Zechariah 1, 1.

It says, In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Edo, saying, So, the specific date, it says, the second year of Darius.

Oh, man, Jay, another guy. Darius. Who's Darius? Darius replaces Cyrus, okay, as the Persian king. And I just want to make a side note.

[23 : 55] It's sad. It's such a commentary on Israel's sin when now their history is not marked by the king of Jerusalem, the king of Israel, or the king of Judah.

It's marked by the king of Persia. But Darius replaces Cyrus. And he comes to power.

And we know this. Just because we have extra-biblical Babylonian records from this time that clearly state this. He began ruling in 522 B.C.

So, Darius is now the king there in Persia. And he begins ruling in 522 B.C. And it says in the second year of Darius, he's been ruling for two years.

So, what's the date? 520. I know. For you mathy people out there. Yeah, Cyrus. So, the year is 520.

[24 : 54] And I think it's significant because we have a couple dates we're dealing with here. The edict to return, right? 538. It's now 520.

How long has Israel been back in the promised land? About 18 years. 17, 18 years. That's significant. Why?

Well, they were sent back to Jerusalem to do what? To rebuild the temple. Guess what they've been doing? Not rebuilding the temple.

And in fact, Haggai, his primary ministry was like, rebuild the temple. Rebuild the temple. And it says in Haggai chapter 1 verse 4, it says, Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses?

While this house, the Lord's house, lies in ruins. Friends, they've been back there 18 years. And they were sent back to go and rebuild God's house, the temple.

[26 : 04] And what have they been doing? It says they've been paneling their own houses. Now, I think some commentators are like, well, paneled houses, they're just like shacks. There's others like, panel?

I mean, when you got wainscoting, I mean, they got, they've been spending some time, 18 years, 17 years, fixing up their own homes, neglecting the Lord.

And I think this is helpful for us in understanding why Zacharias says in the opening verse, verses, verse 3, Return to me. The Lord's saying, return to me. Return to me.

Start rebuilding the temple. And I will return to you. Don't be like your fathers. Who the former prophets cried out, thus says the Lord of hosts, return from your evil ways and from your evil deeds. But they did not hear or pay attention to me, declares the Lord. Are we any different, friends, from God's ancient people? Forgetting that God wants our whole hearts?

[27 : 08] God doesn't want us to gather and this be token worship? He doesn't want the fabric of our lives during the week to be token?

It's so strange to me when I'm driving, folks, and I was out last night, and I drove a number of people that were claiming, hey, I go to this church, and I go to that church in Spokane.

You know? And it's like, oh, Christians. And then it's like, yeah. And I'm like, where am I taking you? Oh, it's mom prom. I'm like, I don't, mom prom? Like, oh, yeah. It's where we're going to dance, and we're going to, like, drink like crazy.

And it's like, you just said you go to this church and that church. And nobody said Fourth Memorial. Don't worry. Okay? Ain't no mom proming happened here this morning.

Okay? But it's like, wait a second. There's like a disconnect. And it's like, and they knew they were talking to a pastor because it came out in the conversation, and yet it's just like, yeah.

[28 : 08] Yeah. We just live a very bifurcated life. Right? Worship happens for one hour on Sunday morning. And by the way, you can go to mom prom, and it can be great, and it can honor the Lord.

Okay? So if any of you were there, these individuals are planning other things. All right. God wants our whole heart. He wants our whole heart. And I think that's sort of why I struggle a little bit with the ad campaign, Jesus Gets Us, because you see the commercials, and I think there's truth there. Yes, Jesus gets us, and he meets us in our dirt and grime, and yes, yes, yes, yes. But he doesn't leave us there, because Jesus actually wants to transform us. And that's the heart of Zachariah telling, like God's ancient people, return to the Lord.

Return to the Lord. And what I love about our God, though, is he's patient. He's long-suffering. And actually, we will see that in the messages that Zachariah brings.

We even actually learn it just because of his name. And so something else that we know about Zachariah, let me give you a few insights into this man.

[29 : 22] I think sometimes we think of prophets, we think of like old guys with beards, right? It's just, it's in our head. Zachariah wasn't an old guy. In fact, it says in Zachariah 2, verse 4, that he is called a young man.

He's a young man. A lot of scholars believe he was either a teenager, early 20s, but he was called to minister to his own people. And I love this, that God delights to use people, regardless of age, when their hearts are totally his.

Elihu was this young guy. He was the wise young guy in Job's life. Timothy is the young pastor in the New Testament. In fact, he's not always that confident, which is why Paul had to say, hey, stir up the gift.

Fan into flame the gift that you have. The thing we also learn about Zachariah is actually that he is murdered for his words, which is sort of striking because his message is predominantly very positive.

We learn of his death, not in the Old Testament, but actually through Jesus, who says in Matthew 23, 33, he says, You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell?

[30 : 36] Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, some you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from town to town, so that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zachariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar.

So this was a man whose heart belonged to the Lord and was faithful to carry out his ministry, and actually he lost his life as a result. And what's striking is his messages, folks, as we will study, they're actually, they're not, like we studied Amos, you remember that?

And Amos said some things where you're like, yeah, you could get killed for that, right? Remember when he says to the Samaritan, these wealthy women, he said, you cows of Bashan, you remember that one?

That'll, yeah, like a bunch of angry Samaritan soccer moms, they were coming after Amos, like just, Zachariah's not like that.

His messages are hope-filled, they're forward-looking. And I think his messages reflect his name. Because Zachariah, the son of Berechiah, son of Edo, Zachariah, it means Yahweh remembers.

[32 : 04] Yahweh remembers you. It's interesting because his father and grandfather, Berechiah, his name means Yahweh blesses. And then Edo, his name translates timely.

You put them together and you have the Lord remembers and blesses in his time. Man, what a great message for these people that had been living in exile for 70 years. And God delivers them. But God blesses in his own time. And yet there is a future. We've already got to see some of it with Christ's first advent. But man, the king's returning and it's going to be oh so good.

It's a very hopeful message. Hope has a name. And his name is Jesus. The hope of a Messiah king for them.

Friends, that's the same hope that we have today. It's our blessed hope. It says in Titus 2.13, right? We're waiting for the appearing of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

[33 : 09] We look ahead just like they did in Zachariah's day. Where do people find hope today? Well, Israel tried to find it in an earthly king.

We do it in all sorts of distractions and all sorts of sins. And yet God says, hey, find your hope in me. I want to be your king. In fact, I will be your king forever if you've trusted in Jesus in this life. And it's interesting to me that as we think about Zachariah prophesying about the coming kingdom and then the coming king, he never actually names the king.

And so we're left with having to figure out who is he talking about. And let me just say with full assurance, he's talking about Jesus. Because there's nobody else that fits the prophecies that he lays out, anybody else in history past, than Jesus.

And so let me just give us a picture of the type of king Jesus is and will be. And this is like your sneak peek.

[34 : 17] Because it's going to take us a little bit to get to chapter 9. And so I'm going to give us just three images of this king that Zachariah is talking about. And all of these, it's only Jesus that fits them.

And so the first image is this, that Zachariah predicts Jesus to be a humble king. A humble king. 500 years before his first advent, we hear this from Zachariah 9.9.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion. Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, your king is coming to you, righteous and having salvation as he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the fowl of a donkey.

You guys have heard that before. Maybe you didn't know it was from Zachariah. I'm predicting that there's a humble king coming. We have great seats because we're looking back on this.

Those in Zachariah's day, they were looking forward. They didn't know. It's coming on a donkey.

And then we have the luxury that we actually have the gospel of Matthew in Matthew 21 that actually tells us how this was fulfilled in 32 A.D.

[35 : 24] We know that this day is describing a day we're going to celebrate in three weeks called Palm Sunday. The day that Jesus entered Jerusalem at the start of Passion Week.

And he didn't enter Jerusalem with pomp and circumstance. The king of kings! I mean, we imagine at least some of us, we were watching the live action of Aladdin recently.

And Aladdin comes in and he's got like elephants and he's got dancers. And I don't know if there's peacocks. I mean, it's like a whole zoo of like, you know, feathers and banners.

And here's Jesus. None of that. Just a donkey. A humble donkey. I mean, think about this picture.

Jesus, it's like he could have showed up.

It's the equivalent of him like grabbing a lime bike at the donut parade. And you're just like, there's nothing important there.

[36 : 26] And that's what you have. Zachariah predicts this humble king. He's lowly. He's humble. Why? Because he came actually to liberate not from a godless government in power.

He came to liberate from the tyranny of sin. And Zachariah predicts, this is who your king's going to be. And we actually have like the privilege of looking back and saying, that occurred.

The second picture that Zachariah gives of this coming king is he predicts Jesus to be this suffering king. He's a humble king, but he's also a suffering king. Again, 500 years before these events, Zachariah writes this in Zachariah 11, 12, and 13.

He says, Then I said to them, If it seems good to you, give me my wages. But if not, keep them.

And they weighed out as my wages 30 pieces of silver.

Then the Lord said to me, Throw it to the potter, the lordly price at which I was priced by them. So I took the 30 pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the Lord to the potter.

[37 : 37] In Matthew 27, and you just jot this down and you can read it this week, But in Matthew 27, verses 3 to 10, we actually see that prophecy fulfilled.

When Judas takes 30 pieces of silver from the religious leaders to betray Jesus, It was predicted 500 years before it occurred. And in Matthew 27, it actually records that Judas doesn't repent, but he's certainly remorseful.

And what does he do? It says he actually throws the silver back to the religious leaders in the temple, and then he goes out and hangs himself. The leaders, they're like, This is blood money.

We can't take it. So what do they do? They use it to buy a field, and who do they buy the field from?

The potter, which was part of the prophecy. Throw it to the potter, Zechariah says in Zechariah 11, 13.

And where did the religious leaders buy the field from? From the potter. Man. When you start seeing this stuff in God's Word, you should get a little bit of that tingle on the back of your neck, like,

This is real.

[38 : 50] This just doesn't happen. And what is so wonderful is, yeah, Jesus, he was crucified, but he rose three days later.

And then he testified for 40 days before he ascended back into heaven. Hey, bodily resurrection. It's me. And he's now, right?

He ascends to heaven. And the beautiful thing is he's returning. Just as he came the first advent, the second advent, it's guaranteed. And I know that we, like, do life and we come and we gather every week in, week out, week in, week out, week in, week out.

But there's going to be a day when we're not doing this anymore because Christ has returned. And we will be in his presence. And it'll be like, oh, I didn't see this coming. Don't say that. See it coming. Because God's word says that it's so. And Zachariah, he gives us these images. And the final one that he gives us is, hey, he's predicting that Jesus returns as a glorious, forever, eternal king of kings.

[39 : 59] He's coming back. And I think this is my favorite prophecy of Zachariah. And I didn't know if I was going to get the sermon. Probably Scott's going to get it. So I'm just hijacking. I'm going to share with you this morning.

Ha! And this doesn't point to the first advent. This points to the second advent. Listen, Zachariah 14, verse 3. Then the Lord will go out and fight against those nations as when he fights again, as when he fights on a day of battle.

Now, this is describing events that you can read about in Revelation 16. And actually, Revelation 16, verse 16, is the only place in the Bible we have this name Armageddon.

Okay? That's where it comes from, Revelation 16, 16. Well, this is describing the battle of Armageddon. You can also read about it in Revelation 19, although it's not named there. But that's what Zachariah, the Lord will go out and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle.

The battle of Armageddon. Armageddon. Har Megiddo. The hill of Megiddo, which stands where? Above the Jezreel Valley, where the battle will be fought. Where is this?

[41 : 07] It's 60 miles north of Jerusalem. This is the end time battle where the nations rage against Israel, against Israel's God, and where they utterly fail.

Because guess who returns? He returns a little bit further south, but I don't know how he gets up, but he'll figure out a way. But it says in verse 4, Zechariah 14, 4, On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives.

That's just east of Jerusalem. That lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a wide valley, so that one half of the mount shall move to the northward and the other southward.

This is quite a scene. Jesus returns, and where does he return? The Mount of Olives. Recall Jesus ascended from where? He ascended from the Mount of Olives. You can read about that in Acts chapter 1.

He's returning to the same place. It's Acts 1 verse 11. But this time, he's not coming as a suffering lamb, servant.

[42 : 13] He's coming as a lion. He's coming as the king of kings to vanquish evil forever and set up his kingdom on planet Earth. We call that the millennial kingdom.

His entrance this time, it's not on a donkey. It's on a white charger. Revelation 19, 11 says that his eyes are like a flame of fire. He's there with the armies of heaven.

And his arrival to planet Earth, it will split the Mount of Olives. And it says here it creates this valley that actually runs through Jerusalem. It says the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley so that one half of the mount shall move northward and the other southward.

Like the return of our king, the king of kings, it's so concussive in nature. Guess what? As a result, fresh water will flow in this valley from the temple mount of Jerusalem connecting the two seas that Jerusalem sits between, the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea.

And it's so cool because Ezekiel prophesied in Ezekiel 47, 8. Guess what happens to the Dead Sea? It's not dead anymore. It says, guess what?

[43 : 29] When the waters flow into the sea, the waters will become fresh. Think about that. If you know anything about like archaeology, they haven't discovered it yet, but I think they will at some

point.

Sodom and Gomorrah, it's somewhere around the Dead Sea region. That is the lowest place on planet Earth. It's like 1,400 feet below sea level. And that sea is dead as dead can be. It's like 10 times more like salty than the ocean. Nothing happens in the Dead Sea. You try to swim. You float. Right? It's just, and there's a day, Ezekiel says, where it will become fresh. And I love that this place once of judgment, now because the king returns is a place of blessing. It's so cool. And listen to what Zechariah says in chapter 14, verses 8 and 9. He says, on that day, living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea. That's the Dead Sea. And half of them to the western sea, the Mediterranean Sea. [44 : 35] It shall continue in summer as in winter, and the Lord will be king over all the earth. On that day, the Lord will be one, and his name will be one. Man.

Man. I want to see that. I cannot wait. And that's the beginning now of this millennial reign of Christ for a thousand years that then ushers in the eternal state.

It just gets better and better. And I love the fact that our king returns. And he sets up his kingdom.

And I would just say, I would leave us with this question, friends.

If this is what Zechariah prophesied, he predicted. And by the way, he intertwines these advents of Christ. And everything with the first came true, which tells us, how do you predict future behavior? Look at the past. Everything with the second one is going to happen as well. And if that's the case, are we ready for our king to return? Return to me.

[45 : 33] Return to me. Where do we need to return to the Lord, friends? For some of you that don't know the Lord, you need to go to him for the first time. And you need to ask the Lord, would you forgive me of this life of sin?

Would you forgive me? And Jesus, would you be my savior? And he'd say, yes. Yes, undoubtedly, I would love, I would delight, because I delight to rescue sinners. But some of us here need to return to the Lord, because we've just sort of been 18 years in our land, and we're just, our hearts are still sort of divided.

And so we are trying, like we are pleading to shepherds, like, use this season leading up to Resurrection Sunday to remove things from your life. Sinful things always, but if there's distractions, do that, so that you can actually pursue the Lord with greater vigor and fellowship with his people. Are we ready for our king to return? Zachariah says, return to me, says the Lord of hosts, in order that we would look forward to those days. Amen? Father, we are so thankful that we have the word. This lamp unto our feet, light unto our path. Lord, it's remarkable that there are prophecies that are given, and we see these fulfillments, over 300 that were fulfilled in your first advent, and we have so many more related to your second advent.

[46 : 55] And so, Lord, we thank you for Zachariah, for his ministry, for being a young guy but faithful to the call. And, Lord, I pray that his words and your words, you spoke through him, would inspire us, would exhort us, would transform us.

We look forward to the day when you return, Jesus. And we want to be a busy people until that day, using our days to serve and to bless, to be others-oriented, to find ways to serve and to give our lives away, and to be bold, to be courageous about naming you.

Because the king's going to return, and we want to be ready. We love you, Jesus. Thank you for this time together today. In Jesus' name, and all those people said, amen.