

Hope has a Name: Zechariah 1:18-21

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[0 : 00] Well, good morning, church. It is good to see you. Thank you for allowing me to get away with my wife for a week and enjoy some time.

! What did I learn on our little vacation is that I'm aging well. So well that my hair is less on top than it once was. And I now get sunburned on my head. And so that's what I learned. And so it's good to know you're aging well. Today, if you're with us, we are in the book of Zechariah. The easiest way to find the book of Zechariah, and if you have a copy of scripture with you, I encourage you to turn there.

So we're going to be in Zechariah chapter 1. Going to be looking at verse 18 in a moment. I'm grateful for Pastor Jay, who has taught the last two sermons.

Two weeks ago, if you want an overview of the book of Zechariah, please go back and listen to that message. Zechariah is one of 12 minor prophets.

[1 : 09] Zechariah is a prophet in Israel. He has returned from the Persian Empire region, and he's been released by King Cyrus, the Persian king.

and he, along with 40, 50,000 other Jews, have returned to Jerusalem to revitalize. Zechariah is really going to be encouraging to rebuild this temple along with Ezra, and so he is in that period of time. Israel has been taken away, and they've been out of their land for 70 years at least. God has informed them due to their rebellion, they would be taken away into captivity, and this is now their return. This is a hopeful book.

In chapter 1, verse 3, it says, therefore say to them, thus declares the Lord of hosts, return to me, says the Lord, and I will return to you. And so this is a hopeful book of Israel. This is your opportunity to now return to the Lord, and my promise to you as the Lord is that I will return to you. Israel was undoubtedly excited to return to their homeland, to return to the land that God had promised them, to return to their homeland. This would have been an encouraging time, but when they return, undoubtedly, they didn't return to an unoccupied territory. It wasn't just waiting for them. Foreign occupiers had been moved in to their homes that they had left, took assumed ownership of their land. There were enemies around, and Israel was undoubtedly excited to return. Worse, though, for Israel is this. There was no wall surrounding Jerusalem when all of Israel returned. Nehemiah was tasked with rebuilding of this project. There was no temple for 70 years. There was no temple.

70 years prior, Nebuchadnezzar made sure of that. Ezra was tasked with the project of rebuilding this temple. And so for approximately 20 years, now that Israel has returned to the land, they have now been rebuilding their own homes, reclaiming their own property, getting their land back in shape, and producing once again. And now the Lord is saying to them again, now is time to rebuild the temple. Can I get some help up there, Brendan, please?

[3 : 56] So, Israel is now, it's been 20 years, they've been in land, they've been rebuilding their own houses and things, and now the attention has now been, okay, now is the time again to rebuild the temple. So along with Ezra and Zechariah encouraging this movement, they are now, that is underway. The first eight chapters of Zechariah contain these visions. And then beginning in chapter 9, we look at this foretold Messiah figure that is going to be coming. And so we see that in the last half of the book. Today, though, we find ourselves in the book of Zechariah, chapter 1, verse 18.

And we are looking at the second vision. Last week, we saw the vision of the horsemen among the myrtle trees. If you were here, I appreciate, I went back and listened to that message that Pastor Jay preached.

I encourage you to go back and look at that vision. Zechariah has all of these eight visions in one night. So if you did not sleep well last night, take comfort. Zechariah may not have as well. We find, let us turn now our attention to God's word. Let's read the passage, the second vision that Zechariah has in that one night. We read this, Zechariah 1, 18 through 21. Here is his vision. 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.

[6 : 00] 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 and cast down the horns of the nations who lifted up the horns against the land of Judah to scatter it. I have an image that I would like to show you at this time. It's perhaps the vision, this is Scott's rendition of what he may have seen. There are four horns. And those horns scattered, Israel, Judah, and Jerusalem were told. And then there are four craftsmen that end up demolishing these horns. And that is kind of his vision. And so what are we to make of this?

What is a horn? By the way, horns are very familiar in Israel. This is an example of a shofar. It's a sheep or ram's horn. And the priest would announce an opportunity for the Israel to gather, and they would blow the shofar. And so you could blow this horn. Well, if I'm not a musician, and I won't bless you with that, but horns, horns are familiar to the nation of Israel.

But horns are, what are they? They are symbols of strength. You and I know that, that that's how it is used biblically. And that even to this day, we, we understand that.

We live in the Northwest. And so some of you are some avid hunters. And, but they, horns symbolize strength. They could be, in general, a strength. It could be the strength of a nation. It could be a strength of a country. Many of you who are hunters appreciate that. You hunt deer, mule deer, elk, and moose. And the bigger the horn, the bigger the antler, the bigger the prize.

[8 : 07] And so you're, you're waiting for that big one. You want the big one. The larger the horn of the animal, the tougher, the bigger, the stronger, the older, the more ruthlessly dominant they are to defend themselves and the herd that they accompany. So hunters appreciate these symbols of strength and hang them, these horns in your living rooms as trophies of a big hunt. And should your wife have a different decor preference, these trophies sometimes get relegated, to the garage, or worse, the shop. But even this symbol of strength is familiar to us.

And we read in Psalm 18, 1 through 9, a familiar passage to us. It says, I love you, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God and my strength, or my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I call upon the Lord who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies, the horn of my salvation. Now, there's a horn, there are four horns on the, in the temple, the, on the altar that are there, but also we could understand this to understand that he is the strength of my salvation. He was my deliverer. He's the horn of my salvation. We understand that. And, and by the way, that psalm was written when David was kind of taken captive in the, by the Philistines and Gath. He, he, he feigned madness to, and, and he was looking to the Lord and thanking him for delivering him from that. But here the horns can be understood both literally, or I'm sure, sorry, some understand these horns to be literal. Some understand these horns to be figurative. There are two interpretations of these horns. If you are going to take them literally, I will tell you the one I'm going to be teaching from, and then we'll talk about the figurative one. But theologians differ on this.

Some say that the four, they are four world empires, that what did, what would the horns do? They scattered Israel, Judah, and Jerusalem. That's what the horns did. And so these are four, if you're going to take a literal interpretation, these are four literal nations, if you will, that scattered Israel. Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, or Macedonia with Alexander the Great, and Rome. That's one understanding.

A second understanding, and this is the one I'm going to be teaching from, is, is Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, and Medo-Persia. Others say, no, this is just figurative. It doesn't matter if we need to identify these horns as literal nations, but we need to just understand that these are, there is a strength around Israel who is being pressed in on all four sides. And so they take more of a figurative understanding of these horns.

[11 : 23] I don't really care, per se, what interpretation you take. I'm going to be taking the second one. I will tell you why each of these interpretations has a strength and a weakness to them. I'll tell you my strength and what is weak about the way I'm going to be talking about this. The strength of

it is this, the second one, is the language tense is in the past tense here in this passage. These are the horns that did this. It's in the past. The language is in the past. So I'm taking an understanding that this is, for Zechariah, who is in the past in Israel's history, Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, and Persia. So that's why I'm going to be taking that understanding. But here's the weakness. Egypt, I'm including them because they're part of the story, but you could make the argument, was Israel really scattered under Egyptian oppression? That's the challenge. So I'm letting you know the strengths and the weakness.

Regardless of who these nations are or who the horns are, it's not hard to understand the interpretation of it. These horns, these nations scattered the people of Israel by force, rendering Israel and Judah helpless, powerless. They were easy to be taken advantage of. There was severe strength in scattering the nation of Israel. And it says in verse 21, so no one raised his head. We read in verse 21, I said, well, what are these coming to do? And he said that these are the horns that scattered Judah so that no one raised his head. No one raised his head. This is a sign of oppression. When you raise your head and you are captive, that is a sign of opposition and rebellion. If you watch the news and you see someone being taken captive, they are not lifting their heads. They're often head down. Why is that?

It's a being taken captive with strength is demoralizing. You have it. People are dominating over you to raise your head. You don't dare do that. I remember hearing a story of in the Chinese Cultural Revolution, studying that and going to China several times. Under Chairman Mao in 1966 to 1976, for a 10-year period of time, the Cultural Revolution was taking place. What did that Cultural Revolution look like under Chairman Mao? He had the stated goal to preserve Chinese communism by purging the remnants of any capitalists from Chinese society. So tens of millions of people were persecuted. Chairman Mao closed the borders to China. He kicked out all foreigners. All imports and exports ceased, and millions of people were killed. Millions because the borders were closed, imports, exports.

Millions starved to death. Many people died. And he wanted to rid the nation of intellectuals and scientists. I'm sorry for those of you who are education in the education industry. This would have been a tough time. Universities were closed. Intellectuals were killed and relocated to hard labor camp or into the countryside where they were rendered irrelevant and influence-less. One of the most pernicious ways to rid the people who had initiative and leadership and ideas and willing to express them is I remember hearing of a friend who said, yeah, we were, a town hall meeting was called, and the Chinese officials began to say, hey, how can we make our nation better? Here's what we're planning to do. How do you guys think? And anyone who raised their hand, they went missing. No one raised their head. You began to learn quickly. Don't speak up with ideas. Don't speak up with ideas. No one raises his head. Wendy had a British friend who was working for a U.S. corporation and they were making some massive layoffs and Wendy asked her friend, hey, how's it going? And are you surviving? And did you survive the cuts? And what's the atmosphere there? And he said, well, in his British accent, well, nobody likes to be the tall poppy. British humor. When you're the tall poppy, you're the easiest one to pluck. And so you just keep your head down. And this is Israel's state. What these four horns have done to Israel is severe oppression, demoralizing, demoralizing, domination. That's the point.

So here's, here's, I have three points today. I want to say this. God sovereignly permits the oppression of his people. God sovereignly permits the oppression of his people. Why is this happening to Israel? Why are these four horns having their way with Israel? Well, I want to say God is a covenant-keeping God. That's why. In the book of Deuteronomy, well, before we get to the book of Deuteronomy, why do I say God is a covenant-keeping God? And that is why. Because God made a covenant with Moses that is conditional. He made a covenant with Abraham that is unconditional.

[17:17] I will make you a mighty nation. Abraham could not do anything that would disqualify the unconditional covenant that he had, God had made with Abraham. The covenant that God made with Moses, the Sinai covenant, it was a conditional covenant. There was conditions that there are blessings for obedience, Israel, and there are curses for disobedience. I want to kind of walk through that covenant with you a little bit. And so if you can imagine what happened.

Israel is in Egypt. The ten plagues occur. They cross through the Red Sea. God saves them miraculously. They shortly after they leave Egypt and are saved miraculously, God tells them to make an encampment at the foothills of Mount Sinai. He ushers Moses to come up to him and he

gives them the ten commandments and he tells them the law of Moses. And in that law of Moses that he makes covenant with them. And again, here's that covenant that is both blessings for obedience, curses for disobedience. So then Israel wanders in that wilderness for 40 years on their way to the promised land. In that period of time, they're learning God's ways, learning how to be obedient to the Lord, learning and understanding God's laws. Before they enter the promised land that God had for them, Moses stops them and says, and basically the book of Deuteronomy is the second telling of the law of Moses. That's what the book of Deuteronomy is. It's because Moses stops them and then repeats to them the law that God had given them and he repeats to them the blessings for obedience and the curses for disobedience. I want us to take a look at these blessings and curses just for a second. Deuteronomy chapter 28, one through six. I think these are going to be on the screen for us. And if you faithfully obey the voice of the Lord, your God, being careful to do all his commandments and that I command you this day, the Lord, your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you if you obey. There's the condition. If you obey the voice of the Lord, your God, blessing shall be in the city and blessed, blessed you shall be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground and the fruit of your cattle and the increase of your herds and your young and your flock. Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. Blessed shall be you be when you come in and blessed shall you be when you go out. Prosperity, protection, faithfulness. These are the blessings for the obedience of God's people. However, should Israel sin, should Israel disobey the Lord, there are accompanying curses that are in this law of Moses. Let's look at a few of those curses and let's see if any of these things ring true to what they are experiencing by the horns. Deuteronomy 28 verse 15.

But if you do not obey the voice of the Lord, there it is, there's the condition. But if you do not obey the voice of the Lord, your God, or be careful to do all the commandments and his statutes that I command you today, then you, these curses shall come upon you and overtake you. What are those curses?

[20 : 56] Drop down to verse 36. And the Lord will bring you and your king whom you set over you to a nation that will neither, I'm sorry, that neither you nor your fathers have known. And there shall be, then there you shall serve other gods of wood and stone. And you shall be a whore, a proverb, a byword among all the peoples where the Lord will lead you away. So he says, there's going to be a king of a nation that you're going to serve.

that you're for you and your fathers have never known. Deuteronomy 28 for 41. You shall father sons and daughters, but they shall not be yours for they shall go into captivity. Your offspring, you will not be able to rear. They are going to be taken away from you into captivity. Verses Deuteronomy 28, 48 through 50. Therefore, you shall serve your enemies whom the Lord will send against you in hunger and thirst and nakedness, lacking everything. And he will put the yoke of iron on your neck until he has destroyed you. The Lord will bring a nation against you from far away from the end of the earth, swooping down like an eagle, a nation whose language you do not understand, a hard-faced nation who shall not respect the old or show mercy to the young. My first point said was, God sovereignly permits the oppression of his people. And I said, why is this happening to Israel? Because God made a covenant with them. It was a conditional covenant and said, if you don't obey me, if you disobey me, you do not honor me, these are going to be your consequences.

They've known them since Mount Sinai. They were repeated to them by Moses. They understood these things. They just did not obey them and they forgot them. And so the conditions of the curses away with Israel. And so the Lord raises up these horns to take, to scatter Israel, Judah, and Jerusalem, because he's keeping his word. He's a covenant keeping God.

So God sovereignly permits and orchestrates the oppression of his people. So whatever the suffering, the loss, the oppression you may feel to this day, God is sovereignly permitting the oppression of his people for his purposes and for our ultimate good. What is it that the Lord was trying to accomplish in Israel with these accompanying curses is to show them, don't walk this way. [24 : 02] Repent, turn to me, and guess what? All of these blessings will now be yours again. He is openly trying to woo you, maybe back to himself, to draw you nearer to himself, to reveal an area of disobedience in your life, to remind you of his presence, to shake each of us from being so self-oriented that is our tendency, or to save you from the worst destruction.

And we may never see this side of heaven, the full reality of his purposes in our life presently, if we face, are facing currently, some form of suffering oppression. So notice that suffering oppression, oppression, opposition do not signal God's absence, but his faithful, purposeful governance in our lives. And so too it is with Israel.

Okay, my second point. First point was God sovereignly permits the oppression of his people.

Secondly, the oppression of God's people does not go overlooked.

Look with me in verse 20. After these horns have scattered Judah and Israel and Jerusalem, then he says, and the Lord showed me four craftsmen. And I said, this is Zechariah, what are these coming to do? What are these craftsmen coming to do? And he said, there are horns, there are the horns that scattered Judah so that no one raised his head. And these craftsmen have come to terrify them. That is the horns. So the craftsmen in this vision have come to terrify the horns who have scattered and punished Israel out of their native land. And so what my point is the opposition of God's people does not go overlooked, God notices them. And the issue is that these horns have perhaps gone too far. The opposition was too severe, even for what the Lord had appointed. And so he raises up craftsmen to punish those people who are punishing his own.

Historically, what has occurred? I shared with you, I took a view that this is Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, and Medo-Persia, the four horns. Let me try to historically do a quick overview.

[26 : 40] From Zechariah's standpoint, looking into the past, what does Zechariah understand? I have dates and times here and biblical passages, but I'm going to try to do this without looking here. So I may lack some details, but if you want biblical references to what I'm saying, please see me.

In 722 BC, Assyria comes from the north and takes the northern 10 tribes of Israel into captivity. Assyria was a ruthless nation, and so they scattered Israel and assumed them, taking them captive into their nation. Assyria was so horrible that if you're a Jewish person, you hated Assyria. Put yourself in Jonah's shoes. The Lord tells Jonah, Jonah, I want you to go to Nineveh and preach to them.

He says, no way, I'm getting on a boat the opposite direction, you know, the big fish and that whole thing. But what was Jonah's concern? In the book of Jonah, around chapter 4, somewhere around verse 10, he says something like this, God, I knew I was afraid that they may repent. If I proclaimed you to them, I was afraid they would repent. What is Jonah saying? My national identity as a Jewish person blinds me from God's purposes for the nations. Do you think that happens in America at all? Our national identity may blind us to God's heart for the nations. But Jonah hates the Assyrians. Nineveh is the capital of Syria, one of the big cities of Assyria. And so Jonah, it's known to just hate Assyria.

[28 : 42] They are a ruthless people, and so they take the 10 northern tribes away. Horn number one, Assyria. What then happens to the two southern tribes of Israel, Judah and Benjamin, that are left with Jerusalem, they're left in the land. The northern 10 tribes have been taken. They're very vulnerable. And what happens is Assyria asks for Egypt's help. Babylon is gaining in power. And so Assyria says, they're amassing an army. They're coming our way. Egypt, please help us. The problem with Israel is you're located situationally that every foreign army tramps through your land. They have the privilege of owning a given land that is a nice traveling way by this Mediterranean Sea. So Egypt then, under Pharaoh Necho, he comes up north. Josiah, the king of Judah, the situated there in Jerusalem, he is saying, there is a foreign army on their way through our land. Let's go, let us set ourselves in battle array and do battle with them. He goes to Megiddo and the Jezreel Valley, and he sets himself and he takes the high ground. Egypt comes. They're on their way to Assyria. Assyria is asking for help. And so what does

Egypt do? Josiah, he puts himself in battle array, puts himself in Megiddo. Egypt on their way north, they engage in battle. Josiah dies in that battle. This good, godly, reforming king for Judah, he has done wonderful things, and he though then dies in on in that battle.

What happens, and I'm saying Egypt is horn number two, what happens to Judah? Because their king has died, they are, and their, and their army is defeated, they become a vassal state, and Pharaoh Necho appoints a worthless king over the kingdom of Judah, Jehoiakim, as their vassal king.

And what does Judah now have to do? They have to pay a heavy tribute to Egypt for their protection. So then Judah is now weakened, severely, really no army, and now they're having to rely on a foreign army for protection, Egypt. Necho, remember, Israel was not his final stopping point. He pushes north to get to Assyria because they are the ones who have asked him for some

help, because Babylon is coming. By the time he gets there, that little skirmish in Judah did not help the timeline if you're Egypt, because when he gets there, Babylon has already taken Haran and defeated the Assyrian army and pushes further and takes Carchemish, the battle of Carchemish. And he takes, Nebuchadnezzar takes Carchemish as well, and the Egyptian army arrives too late. They are also, though, then subsequently defeated, and so now Egypt returns to, the Egyptian army then returns to Egypt.

About 19 years later, Babylon, of course, is ruling the north now. Assyria is gone. Judah is in a vulnerable position. They've lost their army. They're only protected by a weakened state of Egypt because they just got defeated at Carchemish as well. Judah is very vulnerable. 19 years later, Nebuchadnezzar comes south, defeats Jerusalem, takes them captive. Babylon is horn number three, takes them into the Babylonian empire. Away goes Judah. Now the southern kingdom is taken. The southern kingdom, now taken to Babylon, and fourth horn being Persia, then defeats Babylon as well. And so all of Israel is now scattered up in this formerly Assyrian, Babylonian, now Persian empire area, and now they have permission to come down. But God raises up some craftsmen to defeat those horn nations that defeated them badly.

[33 : 20] That's the image that he sees. You say, that's great history, Scott. Thank you for that summary. But what's the point? The oppression of God's people does not go overlooked.

God saw the mistreatment, even though it was a part of the consequence of their disobedience, that God raised up horns and then being pushed into foreign lands. Even though that's a consequence, God still, though, who punishes people. He does not overlook this transgression. The oppression of God's people does not go overlooked. I remember, we all remember when Saul is watching Stephen get stoned.

And subsequent, Saul is on his way to Damascus, and the Lord stops him and says, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? He's persecuting his people.

The oppression of God's people does not go overlooked. The psalmist, we can take heart. In Psalm 56, David is writing, and he says, you have kept count of my tossings and put my tears in your bottle.

Are they not in your book? What is David's cry? David's cry is, Lord, Lord, I am assured that you have kept count of my tossings.

[35 : 12] I am not doing well. I am, I am in anguish. And you put tears in your bottle. And you've kept them in your book.

We can have full assurance that the oppression of God's people does not go overlooked. Last, we can see this.

God's third point, last point, God appoints certain judgment on his people's enemies. God appoints certain judgment on his people's enemies.

Notice in verse 21, we read again, Zechariah 1, 18, or sorry, 21, we read this. And I said, what are these coming to do? These craftsmen, what are they coming to do?

And he said, these are the horns that have scattered Judah so that no one raises his head. And these craftsmen have come to terrify them, the horns, to cast down the horns of the nations who lifted up their horns against the land of Judah to scatter it.

[36 : 21] The four craftsmen or the four smiths are raised up by God's to dismantle, to tear down the horns, to terrify the horns, to defeat them in battle, to defeat them on Israel's behalf who are subsequently scattered.

Why? God appoints certain judgments on his people's enemies. When I think about the Lord, so let's try to conclude with the New Testament of how does this apply to us?

What are God's enemies and what are his people, the church's enemies to this day that we could see this principle being played out as true? I can think of five enemies of the Lord and five enemies that we have.

The world, the flesh, the devil, sin, and death. And what's amazing is as we read the New Testament how the Lord has defeated each and every one of those.

At the cross, Satan and sin have been defeated. In the resurrection, death is conquered. In the ascension and reign, Christ rules over all rulers and authorities.

[37 : 37] By his spirit, Christ's victory is applied to all believers. And at his return, victory will be consummated and it will be completed. Another way of saying it is this, victory has already been accomplished because of Christ's work on the cross.

Victory is being currently applied in our progressive sanctification as we yield to the spirit and victory will ultimately be completed when he returns. Evil has an expiration date. It will not always be. Those who rise up against God's people and the Lord himself will ultimately be defeated.

We read the Bible and these things are true. I want to just conclude with one verse. It's Galatians 6.14 and conclude with a story.

Paul speaking, I'm going to take one enemy that we've talked about, the world, and let's speak about the one, one enemy, although I could talk about all five. Let's speak of the one.

[38 : 48] But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ by which the world has been crucified to me and I the world. What is it for Paul that he longs to boast in among all other things?

It is the cross of Jesus Christ and I look forward to this next weekend where we get to focus our attention on Resurrection Sunday where we get to talk about the work of Christ of his sinless life, his death for sin, his resurrection, overcoming sin and death.

But because of Christ's work on the cross, Paul says, it is my boast now to speak of and proclaim to make it his boast the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And he says, the cross of Jesus Christ is because why? By which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world. I was at an event yesterday and I became reacquainted with someone who I had known many years ago.

He's now 88 years old and I think about the world being crucified to him. It's almost as if the world has no influence in his life.

[40 : 11] He's an older man now. He's walked with the Lord many years and just listen to what matters to him. He owns the buildings and he had all the tenants of the building.

He threw them a big Christmas party and what landlord throws your tenants for Christmas parties? Not many that I know but this man does. And so he threw this big Christmas party and he, because he said, I wrote down his sentence because I didn't want to get it wrong.

He said, Scott, I cannot bear the thought of someone going to hell purely because I never had the courage to proclaim the gospel.

Why do you want to have a Christmas party? Because I want to make sure that as far it is from me that I'm going to be able to proclaim the gospel that someone might come to Christ.

That it's going to be the Lord's doing if they do. He knows that but he did not want to just throw a Christmas party. He wanted to have an opportunity to proclaim the gospel of Christ. And he had tears in his eyes and he said, I just, I want to take every opportunity.

[41 : 26] Then he handed me a business card size gospel presentation that he had and he says, I hand this out to everybody. Here's a man, 88 years old.

He doesn't care what people think of him. He doesn't care what the world may think. He's crazy and loony. He doesn't care. He wants to take the opportunity to proclaim Jesus Christ.

And as a result, what Paul said, by which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world. It's been rendered, the world has rendered inert in his life.

The big principle that we find in this is that those who abuse God's people, those who abuse God's own are destined for defeat.

Evil has an expiration date. Let's pray. Father, we want to say thank you Lord, for your kindness and goodness.

[42 : 31] Lord, I thank you that evil does have an expiration date. These nations, these horns were raised up for your purposes.

These craftsmen were raised up to put down the horns to punish those who punished your people. Lord, I thank you that because of the cross of Christ, you defeated and you rendered all of your enemies powerless.

Lord, I thank you that we can boast in the gospel of your son. I thank you that we have the privilege to present you to others that they may know you and be saved.

Lord, I pray that whatever oppression that we may feel today, whatever hardship that we may have, we remember that you are sovereign even over that.

Lord, we take heart knowing you and may we draw close to you this week and it's in your beautiful son's name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.