

Zechariah 10:1-10

Life is Good when the Good Shepherd is King

John 10:4-11, 27-30 NIV, “And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. ⁵ Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers...”

⁸ All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly...

¹¹ “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep...

¹⁴ I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own...

²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.”

Whose voice are you listening to?

Whose instructions are you following?

We are living in a day of many deceptive voices calling out instructions and giving us orders, but we need to learn to shut out all other voices and to have ears that listen to, and follow one voice alone.

Don't foolishly say, “I will follow these other voices until, in my great wisdom, I discern that the path they are leading me on is getting too dangerous, then I will stop listening to them.”

Life is good when the Good Shepherd is King. I urge you to make Him your King today.

Zechariah 10:1, "Ask the Lord for rain in the time of the latter rain. The Lord will make flashing clouds [storm clouds]; He will give them showers of rain, grass in the field for everyone."

This is a very simple truth. Do you need rain? Then, “Ask the Lord for rain.

The Lord is the One who is in control of the weather and the climate.

However, the promises and blessings of God will only be experienced by us through our exercise of faith and prayer.

We have to put our faith in the Lord to take care of our needs.

It is important for us in our day of so much misleading emphasis on human caused climate change, to learn from scripture that the giving and withholding of the much-needed rain, upon which the prosperity and survival of the land and its people depend, is entirely in God's control.

Jeremiah 14:22 NIV, “Do any of the worthless idols of the nations bring rain? [false gods— anything we look to in place of God. In our western culture most often trusted professionals or money that we trust in to meet our needs, rather than trusting in God] *Do the skies themselves send down showers? No, it is you, O Lord our God. Therefore our hope is in you, for you are the one who does all this.*”

God has made an agreement with the nation of Israel, “If you trust and follow Me your land will produce abundant food and all your needs will be met.” (Deut. 11:13-15)

This is a principle that has general application to all nations of the world. If the people of the land walk in the ways of the Lord, and honor Him as God, He will take good care of their nation. God uses changes in the weather and climate to either bless or to instruct, warn, correct and even to punish people.

Included in the series of judgments leading up to the second coming of Christ are, an increase of famines (which are caused by lack of rain), pestilences (wide-spread disease) and earthquakes (Matthew 24:7).

These natural disasters are the actions of God intended to turn the hearts of people to Him in repentance, while there is still time to be saved.

I remember walking with a farmer through his property after a severe storm had passed through and had done much damage to his buildings and his crops.

As we walked around assessing the devastation the farmer, who, as far as I know, was not a Christian, asked, "What is God trying to say to me through all of this?"

God had captured this man's attention, and it was an opportunity to talk to Him about what the Lord desires from each of us—that we put our trust in Him, and follow Him.

So, verse one tells us what God's desire is for His people—ask Him and He will take care of us. Verse two however describes the condition of the people of Israel in the last days, so this is describing their condition in modern times.

They will again be in trouble because they have not been calling upon the Lord, but have turned to other sources of guidance.

Zechariah 10:2, "For the idols speak delusion; the diviners [people who tap into demonic powers to forecast what will happen in the future] envision lies, and tell false dreams; they comfort in vain. Therefore the people wend their way [wander] like sheep; they are in trouble because there is no shepherd."

The Hebrew word translated here as "idols" is *teraphim*.

The *teraphim* were a specific kind of idol that were consulted for guidance, and when people inquired of the *teraphim*, demonic powers would communicate messages in response, somewhat like using a Ouija board, or a crystal ball.

Here Zechariah prophesies that there will come a time in the last days, Israel will be wandering astray like lost sheep, because rather than calling upon the Lord to meet their needs, they have been looking to and following guidance that comes from demonic sources.

And we know from Bible prophecy, that the condition of mankind in the last days will be global in nature, so that not only is this describing a problem in Israel in the last days, but this will be a global phenomenon.

Other places in the Bible also tell us that even in the church, instead of looking to God, following deceiving spirits will be a characteristic of the last days.

1 Timothy 4:1, "Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, [meaning they were professing Christians] giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,"

As I break this verse down, I want to bring to your attention that this verse explains what has been happening all over the world ever since the outbreak of COVID-19.

Verse two says, the *teraphim* will speak that which causes delusion.

Definition: Delusion is a persistent, false, psychotic belief; to be psychotic, is a mental state of being deceived, that is marked by a loss of ability to test whether what one is thinking and feeling about the real world is really true. (*Webster's Dictionary, delusion, psychotic*)

Therefore, when you are deluded, you persist in believing a lie, and you lose your ability to think logically; you lose common sense, and even in the face of compelling opposing evidence, you will persist in believing the lie that you have been told. That is delusion.

And Zechariah indicates that this condition will prevail in Israel in the last days when God is rejected, and instead other, *more trusted* sources are sought for guidance.

Demonic powers will take advantage of that situation and will cause the people to be deluded—to be locked in on a lie so that they cannot be easily persuaded otherwise.

We are dealing with a spiritually induced mental condition.

Zechariah 10:2, "...the diviners envision lies, and tell false dreams; they comfort in vain."

Diviners are people who tap into demonic powers to forecast what will happen in the future, to give advice and direction for ensuring success in the future.

In old days, diviners were often called fortune tellers, and they were very mystical. We think of gypsy women gazing into a crystal ball.

However, in recent years, with the New Age movement going mainstream, diviners are often white-collar professionals who either dabble in the occult on the side, or they are hard-core mediums.

Many professional leadership development coaches and strategists are mediums who draw on spirit guides for the advice they give.

The CEOs of some of the world's top organizations, including many governments, are being influenced by these consultants. (*Randall Baer, "Inside the New Age nightmare"*)

What is the source of the unbelievable deception that has taken hold of the world this last year?

The Bible indicates that it is coming from influential people who are consulting with people who are connected to the demonic realm.

Zechariah 10:2, "For the [teraphim] speak delusion; the diviners [people who tap into demonic powers] envision lies, and tell false dreams [they lead people astray from the truth, bringing them into bondage to the lie]; they comfort in vain..."

Hasn't there been more than enough vain comfort coming from these people?

Remember how it started:

"Just two weeks till we flatten the curve."

And, "The masks will only be temporary till we come out with the vaccine."

"Don't worry, the vaccine will not be mandatory."

Once the majority are vaccinated, we can all go back to normal.

Don't worry, there will be no vaccine passports.

They comfort in vain.

And these are the same voices who are assuring us that these vaccines are safe.

The antichrist has not yet been revealed, but there are many indications that everything is being put into place for his global system of control.

2 Thessalonians 2:9–12, "The coming of the lawless one [the antichrist] is according to the working of Satan [demonic activity will prepare the way for his coming], with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰and with all unrighteous deception [the word "all" means there is more than one deceptive event—there is a collusion of deception all working together toward a common goal] among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. ¹¹And for this reason God will send them strong delusion [Remember, when you are deluded, you lose your ability to think logically; you lose common sense, and even in the face of compelling opposing evidence, you will persist in believing the lie that you have been told.]

"...God will send them strong delusion that they should believe the lie, ¹²that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

Life is good when we are following the Good Shepherd. But when we are following other voices, life will become very difficult.

Zechariah 10:2b, "...Therefore [because of all these false and deceptive messages] the people wend their way [wander] like sheep; they are in trouble because there is no shepherd."

The next verse tells us that there were shepherds—there were leaders in Israel, but the implication is that the leaders were the ones following the lies and deceptions of the teraphim and mediums, so the effect was that the people were as bad off as if they had no shepherd.

Why are sheep without a shepherd in trouble?

Due to their ‘flocking’ mentality, sheep without a shepherd to guide them are likely to go astray on most occasions. Sheep follow one another blindly. They have an instinct to flock together so as to feel safe. This means that if the one they are following gets lost, the rest of the flock is lost too.

Without a shepherd, if the sheep at the front of the flock tumbles down a cliff, it’s quite likely that the rest will do so too. (<https://farmingbase.com/can-sheep-live-without-a-shepherd/>)

Zechariah 10:3, "My anger is kindled against the shepherds, and I will punish the goatherds [ungodly leaders]. For the Lord of hosts will visit His flock, the house of Judah, and will make them as His royal horse in the battle."

The shepherds were the leaders of Israel—political leaders, religious leaders and family household leaders, who were supposed to guide and protect Israel by leading the people in the ways of the Lord.

This prophesy states that the Messiah (the Lord of hosts) will come to His flock (Israel) and will punish those spiritual leaders who have failed to care for the people of Israel.

Then when the Messiah comes, He will lead the people of Israel and He will transform them from being like a flock of sheep to being like a majestic battle horse fit and equipped for the Lord of the armies of heaven to ride upon in battle to execute His judgments upon the nations. The role of Jesus in His second coming will be quite different from His role as the gentle shepherd the first time He came.

The Messiah will lead the Jewish people, as a royal horse in battle, to accomplish great exploits for the glory of the King.

Zechariah 10:4–5, "From him [from the house of Judah – vs. 3] comes the cornerstone [referring to Jesus, the precious cornerstone and sure foundation who was born of the tribe of Judah, Is. 28:16],

"...from him [Judah] the tent peg [symbolically referring to Christ who, like a tent peg that anchors, and holds a tent securely in place, Jesus will bring security and stability to Israel],

"...from him [Judah] the battle bow [a symbol of war, again a metaphor of the Messiah at His second coming, He is coming to make war against the enemies of Israel],

"...from him every ruler together [or the absolute ruler, or altogether supreme ruler shall come from Judah (David Baron, p.356)].

Zechariah 10:5, "They [the people of Israel under the leadership of Jesus their Messiah] shall be like mighty men, who tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle. They shall fight because the Lord is with them, and the riders on horses [the most formidable forces of the enemy’s armies] shall be put to shame."

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Zechariah 10:6, "I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph [meaning the people of Israel]. I will bring them back [to their own land of Israel after being scattered around the world for 2,000 years], because I have mercy on them [meaning that Israel will not be deserving of this, but God will be merciful]. They shall be as though I had not cast them aside; for I am the Lord their God, and I will hear them."

Already this prophecy of verse 6 has largely been fulfilled in that the Lord has, since 1948, been bringing millions of Jews back to their homeland of Israel from all over the world.

This is a pretty strong argument against those who believe that because they crucified their Messiah, God is done with Israel.

The Lord promises to forgive and forget Israel's sin, and the nation will enjoy being in right relationship with their God, as though they had never been cast away from the land.

But the Lord said, *"I will save the house of Joseph, I will bring them back, because I have mercy on them. They shall be as though I had not cast them aside..."*

Zechariah 10:7, "Those of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as if with wine. Yes, their children shall see it and be glad; Their heart shall rejoice in the Lord."

This verse simply states that this future restoration of the nation of Israel, under the leadership of King Jesus, will be an incredibly joyful time for all the people, young and old.

Zechariah 10:8, "I will whistle for them and gather them, for I will redeem them; and they shall increase as they once increased."

When the sheep have scattered across a field, and the shepherd wants to gather them together to move them to another pasture, the shepherd will whistle for his sheep and they will come running to him from all directions. (*David Baron, p. 363*)

When the Lord returns, to become Israel's Good Shepherd, like a shepherd, He will gather together all the people of Israel from all over the world.

Though many have begun returning to Israel, the vast majority of Jews still live outside of Israel, and will continue to live in other countries, away from Israel, until Jesus their Messiah returns.

Verse 9, is just a tiny nutshell summary to the people in Zechariah's day, of what would be the future relationship of Israel to their land.

Zechariah 10:9, God speaking, *"I will sow them among the peoples* [farmers sowed their seed in fields by scattering it—the people of Israel would be scattered by God among all the other people of the world. But like seed that is sown, the people of Israel would greatly increase and multiply all over the world.],

"... and they shall remember Me in far countries [implying they had forgotten their God. But the Lord will turn the hearts of the Jewish people back to their God while they are still scattered around the world];

"... they shall live [meaning they shall come alive spiritually—this spiritual awakening has not yet happened to the Jews who have already returned, but will happen near the end of the Tribulation], ***together with their children, and they shall return."***

As the prophet Ezekiel saw the restoration of the people of Israel in his vision of the valley of dry bones, ***Ezekiel 37:14***, *"I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land..."*

Zechariah 10:10, "I will also bring them back from the land of Egypt, and gather them from Assyria. I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon, until no more room is found for them."

Those who were alive in Moses' day, were led out of the land of Egypt. But all who died in the land of Egypt their bodies were still there.

Those Jews who had gone into captivity in Assyria, were scattered among the nations and never returned to Israel, but died there.

Verse ten seems to be describing the resurrection of the Old Testament saints, which will happen after the Tribulation, and they will be brought from all over the world into the land of Israel.

But notice that Israel is referred to as the land of Gilead and Lebanon. This describes land that is outside of the present-day borders of Israel. Gilead is east of the Jordan river, in the country of Jordan. Lebanon, is the country north of modern-day Israel.

The size of the land mass that the Lord has promised to give the nation of Israel in the Millennium Kingdom (Genesis 15:18) will be much larger than the land Israel possesses today. Israel in the Millennium will possibly be bigger than the country of France today. (*Baron, p. 369*)

And yet the number of Jews that the Lord will bring back to the land will fill the land to its capacity—*until no more room is found for them.*

Isaiah 49:18-20 NLT, “Look around you and see, for all your children will come back to you. As surely as I live,” says the LORD, “they will be like jewels or bridal ornaments for you to display.¹⁹ “Even the most desolate parts of your abandoned land [land they don’t now occupy] will soon be crowded with your people. Your enemies who enslaved you will be far away.²⁰ The generations born in exile will return and say, ‘We need more room! It’s crowded here!’”

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