

9:1-11:17 -

## Triumphant Intervention of the Lord: His Shepherd Rejected

*divisions and titles taken from Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi (Intervarsity Press) by Joyce G. Baldwin (1972)*

### A.K.A. The First Oracle: The Advent and Rejection of the Messiah

*a.k.a. titles from Concordia Self-Study Bible (1986)*

## 9:1-10:12 - The Advent of the Messianic King (CSSB)

1. What are some of the sins noted or hinted at that were committed by Israel's enemies? (9:1-8)

2. When does the New Testament refer to 9:9?

3. What will the Messiah's ruling be like? (9:10-12)

4. How are God's people described when He has saved them? (9:14-17)

**\*\*What in these descriptions of God's-people-transformed resonates with you?\*\*\***

**\*\*What in these descriptions seem difficult for you to believe could be true about you?\*\*\***

5. What are the contrasts between God and idols? (10:1-2)

6. Who is charged by God with leading the people astray? (10:2-3)

7. How is the Messiah (The Anointed One, the Promised One) described? (10:4-5)

8. Which of these descriptions seem fresh to you because we don't use them as often?

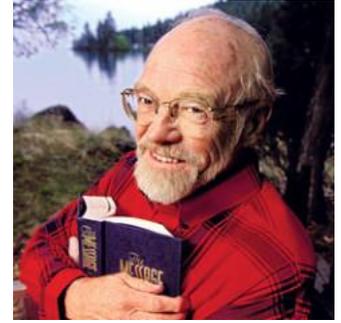
9. What are some of the things that God will do for His people through the Messiah?  
(10:6-12)

**\*\*Who do you know that could really be given hope  
if they realized this description of God's actions in Jesus was for them?\*\*\***

**\*\*This is a beautiful passage of seeing God's Mission Hope: to draw all people to Himself.  
Yet, we know that He promises to work through His people to accomplish His mission.  
What is going on through you and others at Bethel  
to "whistle for them and gather them in"?\*\*\***

## **Breaking the Beautiful Covenant:**

*Zechariah 11:4-17 from Eugene Peterson's The Message  
(paraphrase of the Bible)*



*4-5 GOD commanded me, "Shepherd the sheep that are soon to be slaughtered. The people who buy them will butcher them for quick and easy money. What's worse, they'll get away with it. The people who sell them will say, 'Lucky me! God's on my side; I've got it made!' They have shepherds who couldn't care less about them."*

*6 GOD's Decree: "I'm washing my hands of the people of this land. From now on they're all on their own. It's dog-eat-dog, survival of the fittest, and the devil take the hindmost. Don't look for help from me."*

*7-8 So I took over from the crass, money-grubbing owners, and shepherded the sheep marked for slaughter. I got myself two shepherd staffs. I named one Lovely and the other Harmony. Then I went to work shepherding the sheep. Within a month I got rid of the corrupt shepherds. I got tired of putting up with them—and they couldn't stand me.*

*9 And then I got tired of the sheep and said, "I've had it with you—no more shepherding from me. If you die, you die; if you're attacked, you're attacked. Whoever survives can eat what's left."*

*10-11 Then I took the staff named Lovely and broke it across my knee, breaking the beautiful covenant I had made with all the peoples. In one stroke, both staff and covenant were broken. The money-hungry owners saw me do it and knew GOD was behind it.*

*12 Then I addressed them: "Pay me what you think I'm worth." They paid me an insulting sum, counting out thirty silver coins.*

*13 GOD told me, "Throw it in the poor box." This stingy wage was all they thought of me and my work! So I took the thirty silver coins and threw them into the poor box in GOD's Temple.*

*<sup>14</sup> Then I broke the other staff, Harmony, across my knee, breaking the concord between Judah and Israel.*

*<sup>15-16</sup> GOD then said, “Dress up like a stupid shepherd. I’m going to install just such a shepherd in this land—a shepherd indifferent to victims, who ignores the lost, abandons the injured, and disdains decent citizens. He’ll only be in it for what he can get out of it, using and abusing any and all.*

*<sup>17</sup> “Doom to you, useless shepherd,  
walking off and leaving the sheep!  
A curse on your arm!  
A curse on your right eye!  
Your arm will hang limp and useless.  
Your right eye will go stone blind.”*

**\*\*What references find fulfillment in the Passion of Christ?\*\*\***

**\*\*Who are today’s foolish shepherds?\*\*\***

**How does Jesus bring relief from this prophecy...?**

**“I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep” (John 10:14-15).**

## Zechariah 11

**11:1-11** The rich symbolism in this scene recalls the visions in the first section of the book, though here the form is more like a parable. Given the failure of the shepherds to lead the people in the right paths, God appointed the prophet as an imaginary shepherd. When the people failed to follow him, the Lord canceled His relationship with them and turned them over to worthless leaders.

**11:1-3** Some commentators think this poem—an imaginary portrayal of the humbling of the stately forest of Lebanon—belongs with the preceding chapter, as a continuation of judgment on Israel's enemies, but it more likely introduces the judgment and humbling of Israel's leaders in chapter 11. Open your gates, Lebanon may be a symbolic reference to the temple and its gates (timbers from Lebanon were used in the building of the temple), which suggests that the leadership in view is that of the religious authorities. Thus, the emphasis on the temple in earlier chapters continues.

**11:4-6** The temple precinct was full of sheep intended for slaughter, which was their proper purpose in the sacrificial system. But they had become objects for personal gain, and with their own shepherds having no compassion for them, God withdrew and turned neighboring kingdoms loose on the chosen people and their land. As is often true, sin can overturn God's stated purposes and intended blessings (Gen 3:14-24).

**11:7-9** The shepherd named one of his staffs Favor (or Grace) and the other Union (or Unity), the former symbolizing the covenant (v. 10) and the latter representing reunited Israel (v. 14). But the failure of the shepherds to be good leaders resulted in letting the people self-destruct. The phrase three shepherds probably does not refer to anyone in particular.

**11:12-13** The 30 pieces of silver may be an allusion to the value of a slave (Ex 21:32). Throwing the magnificent price (probably sarcastic) to the potter in the temple was an act of desecration. Matthew used some of this wording in reference to Judas (Mt 27:9-10), though stating that it was Jeremiah's prophecy that was fulfilled (Jer 32:6-9).

**11:14** The hoped-for reunification of Israel and Judah was canceled.

**11:15-16** If the people were not going to follow a good shepherd, they might as well follow a bad one, so God responded in satire and appointed the prophet as a foolish shepherd.

