

## A&P Bible Church | Weekly Study Zechariah 11

The book is one of consolation and hope, beginning with a call to repentance and concluding with prophecies concerning the return and reign of Christ.

Zechariah predicted more about Messiah than any other prophet except Isaiah. Prophecies concerning His first coming include Zech. 3:8; 9:9, 16; 11:11-13; 12:10; 13:1, 6; and prophecies to be fulfilled at His second coming include 6:12; 14:1-21.

Thank you to Yeshua Elohim Bible Church for their online Study Bible - visit [www.yebc.net](http://www.yebc.net) for more!

Throughout the week continue to look through the scriptures, think through the questions, and apply the Word to your life. Email any questions during the week to Brandon & Travis at [ap.brandongarcia@gmail.com](mailto:ap.brandongarcia@gmail.com) & [ap.travisjohnson@gmail.com](mailto:ap.travisjohnson@gmail.com).

**MONDAY****Zechariah 11:1-3 Breakdown | YEBC.net**

*Zechariah 11:1 Open your gates, Lebanon, so that the fire may consume your cedars.*

In 1 Kings 5:5-6, the cedars of Lebanon was used as a figure of speech for the Jewish temple. Zechariah sees the Jewish temple and the surrounding area of Lebanon on fire. Since Zechariah was living while the second Jewish temple was being rebuilt, this cannot be the temple destruction in 586 B.C. by the Babylonians. Zechariah is looking into the future and seeing the temple destruction of 70 A.D. by the Romans.

*2 Howl, fir tree, because the cedar has fallen; the majestic trees have been destroyed.  
Howl, oaks of Bashan, because the impenetrable forest has fallen.*

Bashan today is the Golan Heights. The people living in the Golan Heights were to cry out, because the temple has been destroyed by the Romans.

*3 Listen to the howling of shepherds, because their magnificence has been destroyed.  
Listen to the roaring of young lions, because the thickets of the Jordan have been devastated.*

The shepherds were the Pharisees and Sadducees who were living in Jerusalem during the time of the temple destruction. They were supposed to be watching and feeding the flock. Jesus warned that when Roman soldiers surrounded the city, it was time to leave. The religious leaders ignored the prophecy of Jesus and stayed in Jerusalem. They were slain by the Romans.

The young lions lived in the lush Jordan Valley. However, the Romans burned this forest as well. The young lions no longer had a place to roam and play.

For additional studies this week, listen to Dr. J. Vernon McGee's Zechariah sermons/studies:  
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**TUESDAY****Zechariah 11:4-14 Breakdown | YEBC.net**

*4 The Lord my God says this: "Shepherd the flock set aside for slaughter.*

Why did Zechariah predict that the Romans would burn the temple in Jerusalem in 70 A.D.? Verses 1-3 recorded the effect. Verses 4-14 recorded the cause.

Jehovah commissioned Zechariah to act out the role of a shepherd. He was acting out a role which would later be fulfilled by Jesus the Messiah. Jesus was called the Good Shepherd in John 10:11 and 14.

Zechariah was to feed the flock which was raised to be slaughtered. The Jews who rejected the teachings of the Good Shepherd were to be slaughtered by the Romans in 70 A.D.

*5 Those who buy them slaughter them and are not held guilty; those who sell them say, 'Blessed be the Lord, for I am rich.' Their own shepherds have no compassion for them.*

This flock to be slaughtered was abandoned by man. Those who slaughtered the sheep were the Romans. They had no concern for the sheep.

The rich ones were the Pharisees and Sadducees. They were selling out the flock to become rich. They had no concern for the sheep.

*6 Indeed, I will no longer have compassion on the people of the land," says the Lord, "but instead I will turn every last person over to his neighbor and his king. They will devastate the land, and I will not deliver it from them."*

The flock was also abandoned by God. This flock had rejected their True Shepherd, so God no longer had compassion for the flock.

God would turn the Jews over to their neighbor. The Jews were involved in a civil war between 66-70 A.D. This greatly weakened their forces.

God would turn them over to the king. The king was the Caesar of Rome. During the trial of Jesus, the Jews exclaimed that they had no king except Caesar. Therefore, Jesus was rejected as King and Caesar was accepted as king. Caesar slaughtered his sheep in Jerusalem. Over one million were killed and 100,000 were taken into slavery.

*7 So I began to shepherd the flock destined for slaughter, the most afflicted of all the flock. Then I took two staffs, calling one "Pleasantness" and the other "Binders," and I tended the flock.*

Zechariah continued in his role as shepherd. Zechariah took the poorest of the flock. He made two staffs to protect the poor of the flock from the Romans. The first staff was called "Pleasantness" or "Graciousness." Zechariah would use this staff as a weapon to protect the poor flock from the beasts of the field. The Book of Daniel reported the Gentile nations as beasts. Babylon was the lion. Persia was the bear. Greece was the leopard. Rome was a terrible beast which could not be identified.

The second staff was called "Binders." It was used gently to keep the flock together as one. The shepherd would nudge a sheep with this staff to encourage it to return back to the flock. Jesus the Shepherd would protect the messianic Jews from the temple destruction of 70 A.D.

*8 Next I eradicated the three shepherds in one month, for I ran out of patience with them and, indeed, they detested me as well.*

The shepherds were the religious leaders who were supposed to be feeding the sheep. These three shepherds were most likely the Pharisees, Scribes, and Sadducees. Jesus ran out of patience with these three religious groups. They loathed the True Shepherd as well. These three groups led the nation in rejecting the True Shepherd.

*9 I then said, "I will not shepherd you. What is to die, let it die, and what is to be eradicated, let it be eradicated. As for those who survive, let them eat each other's flesh!"*

After the three shepherds accused the True Shepherd of being demon possessed, the True Shepherd refused to feed the flock for slaughter. Instead, He spoke to them in parables that they could not understand. He fed only the believing Remnant within Israel.

*10 Then I took my staff "Pleasantness" and cut it in two to annul my covenant that I had made with all the people.*

The breaking of the Shepherd's staff meant that the True Shepherd would no longer protect the sheep for slaughter against the beasts. The beasts were the Gentile nations of the world who wanted to devour the sheep. Rome, the beast, devoured Israel, the sheep. Jesus predicted this event in Luke 19:41-44 and 21:24.

When the Jewish shepherds accused the True Shepherd of being demon possessed, the True Shepherd refused to feed the flock for slaughter in four different ways.

First, before Matthew 12, miracles were performed to prove to the entire flock that Jesus was the Messiah. After Matthew 12, miracles were used to train the disciples for their Acts ministries.

Second, before Matthew 12, Jesus performed miracles for the benefit of the entire flock. After Matthew 12, Jesus performed miracles only for individual messianic believers.

Third, before Matthew 12, He and the disciples proclaimed that Jesus was the Messiah. After Matthew 12, Jesus told His disciples not to proclaim that He was the Messiah.

Fourth, after Matthew 12, Jesus taught the entire flock lessons that they could understand. After Matthew 12, he taught the entire flock in parables that they could not understand, yet He explained the true meaning of these parables to His elected sheep. This was a fulfillment of Zechariah 11:9-10.

*11 So it was annulled that very day, and then the most afflicted of the flock who kept faith with me knew that that was the word of the Lord.*

The afflicted of the flock were the messianic believers during the days of Jesus. When the Romans surrounded the city of Jerusalem, the messianic believers remembered the prophecy of Jesus in Luke 21. When soldiers surrounded Jerusalem, it was to be destroyed. The messianic believers were told in the prophecy by Jesus to leave the city. When the Romans ran out of supplies and retreated temporarily from the siege, the messianic Jews went to the town of Pella and waited out the siege.

*12 Then I said to them, "If it seems good to you, pay me my wages, but if not, forget it." So they weighed out my payment—thirty pieces of silver.*

Zechariah asked the leaders of Israel to evaluate his monetary worth. They gave him 30 pieces of silver, which was the value of a dead slave. The Jewish leaders insulted Zechariah, just as the future religious leaders insulted Jesus. Jesus was the Messiah of Israel, but the three shepherds placed His value at the price of a dead slave gored by an ox.

*13 The Lord then said to me, "Throw to the potter that exorbitant sum at which they valued me!" So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them to the potter at the temple of the Lord.*

Zechariah is using prophetic sarcasm. The "exorbitant sum" means that the nation of Israel only valued their Messiah as worth thirty pieces of silver, which was the Mosaic Law price of a dead slave gored by an ox. This would be like having God as your waiter. He serves you a gourmet meal with extraordinary service, but he is only left a penny tip! Zechariah took the three pieces of silver and threw it out into the potter's field. This is exactly what Judas would do 400 years later.

*14 Then I cut the second staff "Binders" in two in order to annul the covenant of brotherhood between Judah and Israel.*

The binders was a second shepherd staff which kept the flock together. The shepherd would use this staff to nudge his sheep to stay together in the flock. Zechariah broke this staff, meaning that the True Shepherd would no longer keep the flock together. Israel entered a civil war from 66-70 A.D. This civil war weakened Israel so much that Rome was able to defeat them in 70 A.D. and burn their temple to the ground. This act scattered the sheep into all of the Gentile nations.

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**WEDNESDAY****Zechariah 11:15-17 Breakdown | YEBC.net**

*15 Again the Lord said to me, "Take up once more the equipment of a foolish shepherd.*

Zechariah will now act out the role of a foolish shepherd. The equipment of the foolish shepherd was the same as that of the Good Shepherd. The staff of grace and the staff of unity were the two instruments of the two shepherds. However, the foolish shepherd will not use his staffs in the same way as that of the Good Shepherd.

*16 Indeed, I am about to raise up a shepherd in the land who will not take heed to the sheep headed to slaughter, will not seek the scattered, and will not heal the injured. Moreover, he will not nourish the one that is healthy but instead will eat the meat of the fat sheep and tear off their hooves.*

The foolish shepherd is not the Antichrist, but Simon Bar Cochba. He led the Second Jewish Revolt against Rome in a.d. 132-135. He won many early battles, so Rabbi Akiba and the Sanhedrin declared him to the people as the Messiah. Notice that the Sanhedrin rejected the True Shepherd, but they did accept a false shepherd.

The purpose of the first staff was to protect the flock, but Simon Bar Cochba did not protect them. All of the Jews of this revolt were killed.

The purpose of the second staff was to keep the flock together, but he was not able to accomplish this task. The results of the Bar Cochba revolt was a further devastation of the Land, and the Jewish people were scattered all over the Roman Empire.

*17 Woe to the worthless shepherd who abandons the flock! May a sword fall on his arm and his right eye! May his arm wither completely away, and his right eye become completely blind!"*

Two judgments were to fall upon Simon Bar Cochba. First, he failed to use his arm to protect the Jews, so his arm was under judgment. Second, his eye should have been used to watch over the flock so that it would not scatter. He failed to do so, so his eyes were under judgment as well. The Jewish leaders caused the people to reject the True Shepherd, but follow the foolish shepherd. This caused the Jews to be scattered all over the world. Jesus, the True Shepherd, will re-gather the flock into one unit at the end of the Great Tribulation. He will lead them into the grazing grounds of the Millennial Kingdom.

## THURSDAY

### Zechariah 11 (The good shepherds)

(11:1-3) Some interpreters understand this to figuratively refer to the destruction of the second Temple in AD 70, because it was built the wood that came from **Lebanon**. Even the rabbinical interpreters of the Talmud held this view.[44]

However, this seems like a fairly straightforward description of specific lands: Lebanon, Bashan, and the Jordan. Zechariah personifies the destruction of these trees in a coming judgment (“**Wail, O cypress...**”).

### The rejection of the Good Shepherd

Why did judgment come on the land of Israel? (vv.1-3) The rest of this chapter explains that it was because the people rejected their messianic Shepherd.

(11:4-5) Zechariah is told to act out the role of the Shepherd. Even before he does anything, God tells him that the Israelites will not listen (“**doomed to slaughter**”). Consequently, they are either enslaved or slaughtered.

(11:6) God will allow individual kings to overpower the Israelites. This was true through the intertestamental period and into the Roman era.

(11:7) We wonder what it looked like for Zechariah to act out this divine drama.

“**Favor**” represents God’s protection of the people (v.11; cf. Ezek. 37:15-28).

“**Union**” represents the northern and southern nations (v.14)

(11:8) Barker states that there are at least 40 interpretations of this verse (!!).[45] Here is his tentative view:



**“...in one month...”** This could refer to a literal month, a short period of time, or a generally long period of time.

**“I annihilated the three shepherds...”** These could be the:

(1) Three leaders of the zealots who fought in the Jewish War of AD 66 (Eleazar, John, and Simon).

(2) Three Seleucid kings (Seleucus IV, Heliodorus, and Demetrius Soter).

(3) Three high priests (Jason, Menelaus, and Alcimus).

(4) Three general functions of leaders: priest, prophet, and king.

Regardless of our view, the point is clear that the Shepherd will do away with bad leaders (**“for my soul was impatient with them”**).

**(11:9)** The Shepherd withdrew and gave them over to their fate. In the Jewish War of AD 66, the people were under siege for so long that they resorted to cannibalism (Josephus *Jewish Wars* 6.193-213) and eventually 1.1 million died.

**(11:10-11)** The Shepherd removed his protection from the people. This is symbolized by breaking the staffs (v.7). The Romans overwhelmed the nation in AD 70, destroying the city and the Temple.

**(11:12)** By giving the Shepherd his pay, they were terminating their relationship.[46] **“Thirty shekels”** was the price of a slave (Ex. 21:32).

**(Zech. 11:12-13) How does this passage predict Jesus’ betrayal?**

(11:13) Yahweh tells Zechariah to give this to the “**potter**,” and he describes this as the nation’s value of Him—not Zechariah (“...**which I was valued by them...**”). Here, we learn that this Shepherd is God himself, and he will be sold by the people for the price of a slave. This is fulfilled in the NT by the betrayal of Jesus (Mt. 26:14-15; 27:3-10).

(11:14) It’s interesting to note that the nation was destroyed first (v.11), and they were scattered second.

### **The foolish shepherd**

(11:15) This shepherd is “**foolish**” in the sense of being immoral (cf. Prov. 1:7).[47]

(11:16) If we remove the word “**not**” from the sentence, this shepherd sounds pretty good! But he is the opposite of the Good Shepherd, taking everything he can from the sheep (people).

(11:17) Who is this “**worthless shepherd**”? Barker believes that this could be partially fulfilled in Bar Kokba—the failed messianic leader in AD 132-135, but it is ultimately fulfilled in the Antichrist.[48] The maiming of his arm and eye implies that he will be unable to do any more harm in battle.

Resource:

<https://www.evidenceunseen.com/bible-difficulties-2/ot-difficulties/zephaniah-haggai-zechariah-malachi/introduction-to-zechariah/>

## FRIDAY

### **The Rejection of the Good Shepherd and Its Consequences for Israel (Chap. 11)**

This dark chapter conveys the cause for the delay in Israel's realizing the blessings of chapter 10.

#### a. The coming of wrath introduced (11:1-3)

11:1-3.

This lamentation portrays the impending devastation that will result from the people rejecting the Messiah as the True and Good Shepherd (vv. 4-14). The language obviously involves personification, but the references to the cedars of Lebanon ... oaks of Bashan, and lush thicket of the Jordan suggest devastation of the entire land of Israel from the north to the south, including of course its inhabitants. All three areas — Lebanon, Bashan, and the Jordan — were heavily forested. Shepherds would wail because their pastures would be devastated. Even lions who lived in the thick woods around the Jordan River would roar because of the destruction of their living areas.

The general description of the devastation is to be taken literally. However, some writers have viewed the trees as representing the glory of Jerusalem, particularly the temple which was constructed, in part, of lumber. While this is doubtful, the general period of the destruction, whether literal or figurative, probably includes the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70.

#### b. The cause of devastation indicated (11:4-14)

In this difficult but messianically significant passage, Zechariah was directed by God to portray Israel's true Shepherd-Messiah. Then (vv. 15-17) Zechariah was required to portray the wicked shepherd, pointing to the end-time Antichrist. The passage (vv. 4-14) is probably not intended to be a strict dramatic portrayal, for this would require the unlikely cooperation of other actors in the narrative. The passage focuses attention on Israel's spiritual condition at the time of Christ's ministry and the consequences of her rejection of Christ, the True Shepherd.

11:4.

God told Zechariah, Pasture the flock marked for slaughter. To "pasture" includes not only feeding but also directing and defending. The "flock" was the nation Israel which God had designated for slaughter by the Romans.

11:5.

There is debate whether the buyers of the flock and those who sell them were Jewish leaders or foreign oppressors. However, their own shepherds are Jewish leaders who would fail in their responsibilities to care for their people (cf. 10:3).

11:6.

The climactic phase of Israel's apparently pitiable condition was God's withholding of pity: I will no longer have pity on the people of the land. This divine withdrawal seemed to result from the people's rejection of their true Shepherd-Messiah, stated in verses 8-13. The king to whom God would hand over Israel was apparently the Roman emperor (cf. John 19:15, "We have no king but Caesar"). God would not deliver them from the Roman armies.

11:7.

As commanded, Zechariah portrayed the work of a shepherd tending the flock marked for slaughter (cf. v. 4), especially the oppressed of the flock. This perhaps refers to the believing remnant at Messiah's First Advent. Like any good shepherd, Zechariah took two staffs to use in directing and protecting the flock. The staffs were given the symbolic names of Favor (or beauty, grace, pleasantness) and Union (lit., bands or "ties"). They depicted God's gracious benefits toward His people (cf. 9:14-17) and the internal union of Israel and Judah as a nation (cf. Hosea 1:11).

11:8-9.

The identity of the three shepherds disowned by the True Shepherd is not indicated (accounting for the more than 40 interpretations of v. 8!). Most likely, the shepherds refer to three kinds of Jewish leaders — prophets (custodians of the Law), priests, and kings (or civil magistrates) — all of them inadequate. Closely linked to the disowning of the three shepherds is the flock's disowning of their True Shepherd whom they detested, a word (used only here in the OT) that means to loathe to the point of nausea. The Messiah (portrayed by Zechariah) repudiated His role as Shepherd (I will not be your Shepherd), and He relegated the flock to their doom, involving foreign oppression (Let the dying die and the perishing perish) and internal civil strife (Let those who are left eat one another's flesh). An alternate interpretation sees this last clause as speaking of the cannibalism that occurred in the Roman siege of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

11:10-11.

The revoked covenant (symbolized by breaking the staff called Favor) had been made with all the nations, apparently to secure God's providential protection of Israel. The divine disfavor on Israel because of her rejection of the True Shepherd resulted in spiritual

blindness (Rom. 11:25) and national destruction and dispersion. Only the believing remnant (the afflicted of the flock) who recognized Jesus as the true Messiah understood His true origin in God.

11:12-13.

Israel's appraisal of the True Shepherd's worth was 30 pieces of silver, the compensation price for a slave gored by an ox (Ex. 21:32). Baldwin thinks 30 pieces of silver for a slave indicates the "high value set on human life" in the Mosaic Law (Zechariah, p. 184). Whether or not this is correct, the choice of the slave price was probably intended as an insult to the Shepherd, worse than a direct refusal to pay Him any wage. Throwing this handsome price (an obvious use of irony) to the potter shows its trifling worth (the potter was one of the lowest of the laboring class). This prophecy was fulfilled in Judas' betrayal of Christ (Matt. 26:14-16; 27:3-10; for a survey of problems relating to Matthew's citation of this passage, cf. Hobart E. Freeman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1968, pp. 340-2).

11:14.

Zechariah then broke the second staff called Union to picture the dissolving of the national solidarity of Judah and Israel. Discord within the nation was one of the factors that led to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and a new wave of worldwide dispersion.

c. The consequences of rejecting the True Shepherd (11:15-17)

After rejecting the True Shepherd, the flock of Israel will accept a foolish and worthless shepherd. This is a prophecy of the end-time Antichrist who will do the very opposite of Christ the True Shepherd (cf. John 5:43).

11:15-16.

Zechariah was called on to portray a second prophetic role, this time a foolish shepherd. The Hebrew word rendered "foolish" (eveel) suggests a person who is a coarse, hardened fool. This shepherd will have no concern for the flock and its needs; he will be interested only in his own gluttony. Instead of defending the flock, the foolish shepherd will destroy it (cf. Rev. 13:7).

11:17.

Thus the foolish shepherd is also a worthless shepherd who rightfully deserves the condemnation pronounced (Woe). The arm indicates his strength and the eye his

intelligence. The foolish plottings of the worthless shepherd will be annulled when the True Shepherd returns (cf. 12:10; Rev. 19:19-20).

#### B. The rejected King enthroned (chaps. 12-14)

Chapters 12-14 are one “oracle” (KJV, “burden”; cf. 9:1) concerning God’s people Israel. The events predicted deal with one future time period (except for 13:7) and center in the city of Jerusalem. Thus the prophecies of these chapters rank among the most significant in the Old Testament.

##### 1. The Redemption of Israel (Chaps. 12-13)

Two conditions are necessary for the establishment of Israel’s future messianic kingdom: (a) the overthrow of the Gentile world powers that oppose the establishment of this kingdom and (b) the regeneration of individual Jews who will constitute the nation when God fulfills the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants. Both of these conditions will be accomplished by the Lord, as seen in chapters 12-13. He will deliver Israel physically from her enemies (12:1-9) and He will deliver her spiritually (12:10-13:9). Zechariah 11:1 - 12:1