

Minor Prophets
Zechariah
Lesson 5

Text: Zechariah 5:1-11

I. The Flying Scroll

A. Cleansing of the Land, Vs. 5:1-11

i. A Flying Roll, vs.1-4

a) a roll, or scroll was simply that

- it was a parchment, a piece of vellum, or other material that the people would write on.
- The history of writing goes as such: the earliest writings (antiquities) were on anything they could write on, wood, stone, clay even metal tablets,
- this would be replaced by tablets: this was usually a clay tablet that the scribe would write with a stylus, and it made the process of communication transportable, (or more easily transported). But you can imagine the problem with such a system.
- Scrolls were introduced about 2500 B.C. By Egypt when they developed a system for making a paper like substance with woven “Papyrus” plants, then beating them into sheets. And they could write on them, roll them up, and preserve them for easier transport.
- The CODEX is the first book like container we have. It was strips of material, (wood, bamboo, metal, etc.) woven together into sheets, and held together. It would look a lot like a sushi rolling mat.
- About the 5th century A.D. We start to see the rise of books, as we know them. Made of parchment, or Vellum/ Animal skin.
 - An interesting note about this, is there is a famous picture of Paul writing his letters in Prison and it shows him sitting at a desk with books piled up around him writing. But almost everything in that picture is wrong. It was painted by artist in the Renaissance period.

b) Anyway, the scroll was simply that, a scroll. A method of conveying a message from one to another.

- 20 cubits by 10 cubits, this would be roughly 30 by 15 feet.

ii. The Writing on the Scroll,

a) On the one side the 8th commandment:

- **Exodus 20:15** “Thou shall not steal”

b) On the other, the 3rd commandment

- **Exodus 20:7** “Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.”

c) The Scroll represents the law of God,

- and the pronouncement of judgment on all would break it.
- **Galatians 3:10-12** “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. **11** But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is evident*: for, The just shall live by faith. **12** And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.”
- Keep in mind the Law never saved anyone, it was only a schoolmaster to point

us to the one who could save us:

- If we continue reading in **Galatians 2:16,21** and **3:21** we see that it is the law that helped us see that we need salvation.
- **Romans 3:20** “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”

d) Why the 3rd and 8th commandments tho?

- First, it is possible that this was a direct message to the people of Israel,
 - as we will find out in the book of Malachi, there was a culture that stole from God and profaned his name, that message would come nearly a century latter.
 - We can gather that the message did not take, and through the course of events, the people started to sink deeper and deeper into sin.
 - If we do not oppose sin, we will allow it.
 - So, this could have been a warning to the nation.
- Also, the 3rd commandment is the central commandment to the first of the commandments, that deal with man's relationship to God:
 - No other gods, no idols, do not take the Lord's name in vain, remember the sabbath and keep it holy.
- The 8th is central to the commandments dealing with man's relationship to other men:
 - honor your father and mother, thou shall not kill, thou shall not commit adultery, thou shall not steal, thou shall not bear false witness, thou shall not covet,
 - so the idea here is that represented in this scroll is the entire word of God.
 - But can the entire word of God be wrapped up into two simple commandments?
 - **Matthew 22:36-40** “Master, which *is* the great commandment in the law?³⁷ Jesus said unto him, **Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.**³⁸ **This is the first and great commandment.**³⁹ **And the second *is* like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.**⁴⁰ **On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”**
 - So Jesus said, if we can but do these two, then everything else would fall in place.
 - The word of God is like a chain that suspends us over a great hole. How many links does it take to break for us to fall? And does it matter which link it is?
 - **James 2:10** tells that if we are guilty in one, we are a breaker of them all.

iii. God's promise to Clean,

a) the promise here is to visit the individual house.

- We all have to answer for self, not our neighbor.
 - To be cut away means just that, to be killed or to be cast out. Expelled from the covenanted community.
- It also tells us that the judgment would come like a thief or a plague,
 - without warning,
 - **II Peter 3:10** “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night;...”
 - **I Thessalonians 5:2** “For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.”

b) God will execute judgment:

- **Jude 14&15** “And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, ¹⁵To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard *speeches* which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. ”
- this is the message that not only Israel needed to hear, but also us today, and to tell everyone, judgment is coming, are you ready:
 - I asked a man yesterday, just as a conversation starter “what would you do with peace?” before I left him, he heard where he could find true peace. (We will let the Lord work on that for now)
 - but people need to know, Judgment is coming.

B. The Woman in the Ephah, vs.5-1

- Ephah-** “Eee Fa” a unit of measure about 1/10th of an homer, or one bushel, about 35 liters or 9.25 gallons (Two 5 gallon buckets)
 - this is the 7th vision.
 - In my study bible it simply states that this vision is to show that sin must be completely removed from the land. Which seems like an imposable task for man, but with God it is easy. So the people should not let wickedness keep them from their duty to God.
 - So the basket would be used to carry the woman.
- The Woman in the Basket,**
 - the woman here represents wickedness,
 - (men wear black and women wear white at weddings joke)
 - often in Israels history wickedness has been equated to the famine quality:
 - their sin of Idolatry was call harlotry, or the sin of Jezebel.
 - This is not to say that all of the women of the bible were evil, in fact we have many more examples of men that are wicked than women.
 - But the Hebrew word for wickedness is written in the faminen form.
 - The picture here is this wickedness is being carried out of Israel, but she tries to get out:
 - at this time a “talent” of lead, a lid was placed on the basket.
 - A talent of lead was about 75lbs.
 - I found no reason for lead other than the weight of it.

iii. The Women Carrying the Basket,

- this is interesting,
 - though the bible never attributes angels with any gender, it does refer to them as masculine.
 - But here we have two “women” with wings.
 - So are all angels masculine? Are these angels?
 - I do know they are the servants of God, buy the truest meaning for angel is messenger, and these women do not bring a message,
 - but we also see other angels in the bible who do not bring a message, they simply are serving God.
 - On the point of angels, I think it benefits us to not limit God, and as the teachers use to say, where there is little revelation, let there be little Speculation.
 - Where they Carried it,

- when Zechariah saw the vision he asked, where are they taking her?
 - To the land of Shinar:
 - Shinar was a word used in the Hebrew to refer to Babylon.
 - The area is uncertain, but the idea here is they are taking her to Babylon.
- c) Babylon was symbolic of not only sin, but a world system.
- Before the captivity the Nation of Israel struggled with Idolatry.
 - After, they became a nation controlled by the pursuit of money.
 - They had learned this in the Nation of Babylon during their captivity there.
 - As I said we will see in the next book how they would pervert the things of God trying to save for themselves. They were willing to make money at any cost.
 - Throughout the bible Babylon is a symbol of enmity with God,
 - we see this in the **17th and 18th chapter of Revelation** when the bride (heavenly city) is contrasted with the harlot (Babylon)
 - chapter **18 of Revelation** focuses on the wealth and commercial success of Babylon.
 - And this is the lesson some of the Jewish people left Babylon with.
- d) She has been taken there to allow to remain until the end when God will deal with her.
- Notice in **Revelation 18** how Babylon is referred to as she.
 - So the vision looks toward the 70th week of the weeks of Daniel, the last days when Babylon will come to power again before God's final judgment on her.