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Episode 142 - 30 Pieces of Silver 3: Zechariah's Stark Warning to the Church

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This episode continues Part 3 of Scott Stanley's study on the 30 pieces of silver, exploring Matthew 27 and Zechariah 11 and how those passages point to deeper truths about salvation, the cross, and spiritual deception. Scott explains Zechariah 11's themes—the flock of slaughter, the "possessors" who acquire and slay the flock, and the three shepherds representing Babylon's feeders. He contrasts those who merely believe in God with those who truly know Him, emphasizing dying to self and receiving the Holy Spirit. The episode also examines the two staves (beauty and bands) as symbols of the cross's love and the revelation of iniquity, the meaning of the 30 pieces of silver, and the warning that God will stop feeding those who persist in hiding from the truth.

Concluding remarks look ahead to the next episode that will explain why Matthew cites Jeremiah for a prophecy found in Zechariah.

Modified Transcript:

This transcript has been edited. Scriptures are transcribed directly with notations. Refer to the KJV for verbatim wording.

This is Scott Stanley with DTG Ministries, exploring the deep things of God, continuing part three of our podcast concerning the 30 pieces of silver spoken of in Matthew 27 and Zechariah 11. I wanted to explain Zechariah chapter 11 to show how this leads to Jeremiah, because in Matthew we're told that this prophecy was fulfilled as to what was spoken by Jeremiah... and obviously, it's in Zechariah chapter 11.

So why say Jeremiah? Well, that will be hopefully in the next podcast. In this podcast, the challenge is to talk about these things without going too far off track, because every verse brings up subjects that we can get into to further our understanding concerning righteousness and evil.

You know, all of my Christian life, as I have grown in understanding, I've always tried to share what I'm learning. And I try to use the Bible and show the verses: "This is why I believe what I believe." Of course, that has changed over the years. As you grow in knowledge, the light of the just, see, will come in brighter and brighter. So that's what's been happening with me, and the people in this church.

So as we grow in understanding and we try to share things with other people, we see continually a resistance to what the truth is. At times it doesn't matter if you show them in the Bible or not. They don't really want to know the truth. They want their denomination. They want to be where they are, and they want to believe they are saved, that they know God. It took me a long time to realize believing in God is not knowing God. People believe in God, but they don't know him. But they will say they know him because they say they believe in him.

Well, this chapter in Zechariah 11 brings that out. It brings out the flock of slaughter, which are the people who have received the gospel and gone on to receive the explanation of salvation and receive the Holy Spirit... being able to die to self to overcome the problems that you have in life with other people and with just things going on in your life. God is trying to give us all the gift of death to self.

There are people who don't want that. They don't want to budge from where they are. So in this chapter, Zechariah 11, we see the flock of slaughter, but we see the people who don't want to budge and the people who are feeding them. The bottom line is Babylon. But if you take the time to analyze each verse, you see some pretty clear

messages from God of how he feels about those who restrain the truth- they don't want the truth.

I left off looking at Zechariah 11:4, the flock of slaughter, and I think we did a pretty good job covering that. If you want to understand more about that, go to the podcast from last week, part 2 of this study. But Zechariah 11:5, speaking of the flock of slaughter *whose possessors slay them...* Now, until you become a true believer of Jesus Christ, who he is and why he died, you're not the flock of slaughter. You have to understand the truth about the Savior and receive the Holy Spirit to be counted in that number.

But the King James puts in verse 5, "*Whose possessors slay them.*" The word "possessor" is to acquire. The people who acquired them slay them. What do you mean by "acquired them"? Well, I just look at my own Christian life. How did I come to be a Baptist? How did I come to be part of all of the different denominational groups I was a part of? How did I come to be in that? See, it's like they acquired me. I became a part of their church, a part of their group for whatever reason. But they acquire you. Those who acquire them slay them.

See, we don't know any better. We put ourselves with these groups of people, with certain people who really don't know anything, but we believe they know more than we do. The longer you stay there, the more you realize they really don't know anything at all. But the people who acquired them slayed them. And when they do, they hold themselves not guilty.

Zec 11:5 They that sell them (their lies) say, Blessed be Jehovah; for I am rich: and their own feeders pity them not.

So again, there is so much in this, and I determined that I would not take off explaining some of these things, that maybe when I finish this study, I'll be able to come back and pick up on some of these things and show you where that leads. There is a depth to every single thing we're reading. It's hard not to go that direction and just spend a lot of time on each one of these things.

So notice the people that acquire you sell you their idea of truth. And when they do, they're saying, "Blessed be the Lord." See, "Blessed be Jehovah." They're believers, but they don't know God. Why? Because they're rich in their own understanding, and their own feeders- what they're saying about you, those people who are feeding you, pity you not. See, why is there no pity? Because they think they're doing you a favor. They think what they're telling you is the truth, and they're saving your soul.

There is no pity when they realize nothing's working at home. You can't get along. You're struggling to make it. You get ready to go to church each week, and on your way to church, you're fighting like cats and dogs. And when you finally get there, everybody shuts up so that you can have a pretense of peace in your home. But the Lord says in verse 6,

Zec 11:6 I will no more pity the inhabitants of that land. I will deliver the men, every one into his neighbor's hand, and into the hand of his king: and they will smite the land, and out of their hand I am not going to deliver them.

When you think about the king, seriously, the king of Babylon is yourself. Babylon is confusion about God, and the person ruling that land of Babylon is the king of Babylon, and it's each one of us if we're in confusion about God. We allow other people to govern our land because we put our trust in them. Maybe they're pastors, elders. Maybe they're just Bible students. But we put our trust in them. We trust them as people because we would trust them to fix our car. We would trust them to work on our house. We would trust them to do our taxes. So you trust them to tell you the truth about God.

That is a mistake. And it takes a while to learn that mistake. Some people never learn that mistake. They can see this person would never hurt me. They would never deceive me. But they don't realize that when it comes to God and the things of salvation, they cannot do anything but give you deception because that's all they have themselves. So in verse 7, God says,

Zec 11:7 I will feed the flock of slaughter...

The flock of slaughter reaches a point where God himself says, *"I am going to teach them."* The people who are in that group of the flock of slaughter, God will teach... and

you don't rely on these people who know nothing to teach you. There's only one ox. There's only one person grinding out that corn and that wheat, and it's the Savior, Jesus Christ. But you've got to remember he has a ministry. So when you look at Zechariah 11:7,

Zec 11:7 I will feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock...

See, when you look at verse 5, these people who acquire you, they say, "Oh, I am rich." They think they have a lot of understanding. But you reach a point where you become the poor of the flock, and you realize, "I don't have any understanding, and I'm not even pretending to. I'm trusting God that he would teach me." So in verse 7,

Zec 11:7 I will feed the flock of slaughter, O you poor of the flock. So I took unto me two staves...

A stave is a rod. What is a rod? It is a message of correction. This message of correction has two parts to it: Beauty and Bands. He is talking about the cross. The beauty of the cross and bands represent the picture of the iniquity the cross exposes. Notice he says, "*I fed the flock with these two messages of correction.*" We know that the cross is the message of iniquity. It's a picture of the serpent on the pole, and it shows us humanity's plight- that they're full of iniquity, the guilt and the bondage of iniquity, and how they are to be set free. All of that is in the message of the cross.

But the beauty that's in that message is the love of the Father for his children... the love of God, that he would give you his only begotten Son to portray our situation on the cross. The beauty of the cross: The love of God, that Jesus is the Son of God; he is the Logos of God. He is the concept the Father devised to heal us of our wounds, of our guilt, of our shame, to bring us into light and not darkness.

See, again, two parts to that cross: Beauty and Bands. And this is what God feeds us with. But in verse 8, the three shepherds have to be a picture of Babylon. Babylon is in three parts- Revelation 16: Paganism, Catholicism, and apostate Protestantism.

Zec 11:8 Three feeders will I cut off in one month...

Now, this speaks volumes. What does it mean "to be cut off"? The word "cut off" is Strong's number [3582]. It literally means "to hide." To cut off would be more like saying I will make them hide. What does he mean? I want you to remember Revelation chapter 6, where you have a person who turns out to be of the flock of slaughter... and they go through the four horsemen, the four seals in Revelation chapter 6, until they come to the fifth seal, where they cry out for help. So God begins to help them.

And again, he shows them the way they're looking at the sun is black as sackcloth of hair, the S-O-N. The way you're looking at the moon, the Bible itself is red as blood. The stars, the truths of the heavens, fall to the earth, and he closes the heavens as a scroll. He is in the process of helping. I want to read, starting at Revelation 6:15.

Rev 6:15 And the kings of the earth (we remember who they are: the lion, the bear, and the leopard, Daniel 7) ... The kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the chief captains, the mighty men, every bondman, every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains.

Rev 6:16 And they said to the mountains (to the doctrines and concepts), Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

Rev 6:17 For the great day of his wrath has come, and who shall be able to stand?

The day of God's wrath is when he comes against the iniquity of the person. These people, who choose not to be a part of the flock of slaughter, cry out to be hidden.

Zec 11:8: Three shepherds (the feeders of Babylon) I will cause to hide in one month (The word "month" is moon- in one moon. The moon is a symbol of the scripture); and my soul loathes them, and their soul abhors me.

The way I first saw this "cut off" was in verse 16. Zechariah 11:16.

Zec 11:16 I will raise up a feeder in the land, which will not come to the aid of those who are hiding (hiding from the truth) ...

So let that sink in because that's what people do. When you share the truth of the Godhead or why Christ died or the truth about the Holy Spirit, and they start scrambling

for all of their doctrines, for all of their stones- "Hide me from this." See, you're bringing to them the face of him who sits on that throne. They're bringing to you their concepts. You're giving to them the face of God. You're trying to help them see and know and understand God, and they don't want it. So when you look at, again, Zechariah 11:7,

Zec 11:7 I will feed the flock of slaughter ... (verse 9)

Zec 11:9 I will not feed you...

These people who continually want to hide behind their Baptist theology, their Catholic theology. It's all Catholic. He says, *"I will not feed you."* It's like you reach a point where enough is enough. He says again in verse 8,

Zec 11:8 ... Their soul abhors me. (They don't want to know the truth about God.)

Zec 11:9 So I will not feed you: that that dies, let it die; and that that is to be hidden, let it be hidden; and let the rest eat everyone the flesh of another.

Because that's all they have to eat is flesh. They're not receiving the truth of the Spirit. They're eating the flesh of another person. This sounds an awful lot like Revelation 22:11, for those of you that want to look that up. *"That that dies, let it die."* See, he's reached a point. What point is that? I don't know when it happens. I don't know exactly how far a person has to push to bring God to that point. But don't think he never reaches that point.

Anybody who wants to stand before the church or stand before God claiming to be in sin and not willing to do anything about it- that creates an issue. How far do you think you're going to push God? He eventually will say, *"That that dies, let it die."* In other words, you're not listening. He cannot help you. So in verse 10,

Zec 11:10 I took my rod (of correction), the part of Beauty, and I destroyed it, so that I might break my covenant which I had made with all the people.

The covenant that he makes on that cross is called the Everlasting Covenant. It's the New Covenant. And there is beauty in that covenant. The Savior gave his life to be able to write his law on our hearts- the New Covenant. Again, God has chosen two words, Beauty and Bands, to explain that covenant. So in verse 11,

Zec 11:11 It was broken in that day: so the poor of the flock (those who were poor in spirit) that waited upon God knew that's the word of the LORD.

The people who didn't want to hear it chose not to believe it was the word of the Lord. So you see two things going on here. And now you come to verse 12.

Zec 11:12 And I said unto them, If you think it's good, give me my price; and if not, cease. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver.

Now, just bear with me for a second. We know that this takes place in Matthew 26, where the Pharisees covenant with Judas, giving him thirty pieces of silver to betray Christ. We know that that takes place. Thirty pieces of silver is 3 times 10. The word for silver is also desire. Three times 10 means a complete understanding- God's understanding. Zechariah 11, they don't have an understanding of God, and they don't want it.

I don't believe that when I read this, he's talking about the Pharisees. I think that the price weighed for Christ is being weighed out by those who love him. What is Christ worth to you? Well, he's going to give me a complete understanding of God. He is going to fulfill my desire to have a complete understanding of God. When the Pharisees gave that money to Judas, they had no idea what that meant spiritually. That is what they were willing to pay.

I believe Judas wanted the world to have an understanding of God, thinking that getting Christ arrested would cause him to stand up and declare himself Messiah and the King and so on- that they would get a better understanding of God through that. But when I read this in Zechariah 11, verse 12,

Zec 11:12 I said unto them, If you think good, give me my price; and if not, cease. So they weighed for my price, thirty pieces of silver.

Zec 11:13 And Jehovah said, Cast it to the potter...

This word "potter" is a person who presses into shape. They would work on pottery, and they would mold that clay pot. They are the ones who press it into shape.

Zec 11:12 ... This desire to have a complete understanding of God,

Zec 11:13 ... Give that to those who press you into shape: this is a goodly value that I was valued at of them. (That is a good thing to have a desire for a complete understanding of God.) I took the thirty pieces of silver...

Now we know that it is Judas who fulfills this verse. *I took the 30 pieces of silver*, which is a symbol of having a complete understanding of God, and I cast it to those who mold and shape in the house of the Lord. That would be the teachers. That would be the Pharisees. What did they do with that? Well, we're going to get into that in the next podcast.

They didn't want it. Looking at the symbols, they did not want to have a complete understanding of God. They said, *"This is not lawful for us to put in our treasury."* The treasury is the mind- what they consider their treasure- the truth. They didn't want it. So in Zechariah 11:14,

Zec 11:14 Then I destroyed the other part of the meaning of the cross (the iniquity, the description of your iniquity, and how to overcome it. Why would you do that, Lord?), to break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

Judah in Psalm 78:68 is Zion, the true church. If I look at literal Israel, that was the brotherhood that was broken. The true church versus the children of Israel, the people in Israel. We're going to explore that. We're going to explore that even more coming up, not in this podcast, but coming up in the future.

Zec 11:15 Jehovah said unto me, Take unto thee yet the vessels, instruments, the vessels of a foolish shepherd.

This word "foolish" means you have no wisdom. Wisdom is the cross. They have no understanding of the cross. Now, we know they didn't want any understanding of it. They wanted the Son of God dead. They didn't want an understanding of what was going on. Yet, by Jesus dying on that cross, he's able to give those who have ears to hear thirty pieces of silver- a complete understanding of God, that you'd have a desire to possess that. So,

Zec 11:15 Jehovah said, Take the instruments, the vessels of a foolish shepherd.

Zec 11:16 For I'm going to raise up a feeder in the land. He is not going to visit or come to the aid of the people who are hiding. He is not going to help them. Neither shall he seek the young or heal that which is broken. He isn't going to feed that that stands still. He's going to eat the flesh of the fat, and tear the hooves in pieces. (When I think of hooves, I think of servants; hoof, a calf, a servant animal.)

Zec 11:17 Woe to the idle feeder that neglects the flock! The sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye (his arm is his strength; his right eye is his understanding); his arm will be withered, and his right eye utterly darkened (the people who neglect the flock).

He is speaking of people, the shepherds of the people who are hiding from the truth. There is a lesson in this, and it has to do with turning and seeking information, trying to find help from people who are not the flock of slaughter; people who do not understand the Son of God, and they don't understand his death... but somehow you still think they might have some information for you. Well, this is where he leaves them. Their arm, their strength, is withered. Their right eye is utterly darkened. They are not helping the people who are hiding from the truth.

Walk into any church, any universal church, and you'll see people hiding from the truth. And the people who are in there feeding them are not helping them at all. They have nothing to help them with but literalism and death. There is no help in that.

So I feel like I've done pretty good staying to this message and not getting led off in so many different directions. But we're going to be looking at the next podcast: Why would Matthew say these things are spoken of by Jeremiah, and he never mentioned Zechariah? We'll be getting into that next time.

Most gracious Heavenly Father, we know we have no wisdom except you give it to us. We pray for your leading. And Father, I just pray this study be a blessing. In Jesus' name. Amen.