



Major Lessons from Minor Prophets Lesson 11 2Q 2013

Visions of Hope (Zechariah)

SABBATH

Key Thoughts states, “Though Israel had been punished for its sins, it was time for its people to live again in relationship with God according to His promises.”

What do you think of this idea? Think about it? Any concerns?

The marriage relationship is often used as a metaphor for the relationship God has with His people. Let’s take the key thought and apply it to husband and wife.

“Though Susie had been punished for her transgressing her husband’s rules, it was time for her to live again in relationship with her husband according to His promise not to beat her anymore.”

Really? Does this idea really work for anyone? How can intelligent people really put forth such beliefs?

Ideas such as this attributed to God are evidence of how deeply the lies about God and His methods have penetrated into the psyche of good Christian people.

Now, remember, the disciples had so much distortion about God in their minds that even after 3.5 years with Jesus they still didn’t comprehend his mission or God’s true character and Peter is arguing with Christ the night before the crucifixion and attacking people with his sword.

Good people who are on God’s side may have distortions about God – but they also have hearts that long to grow in their knowledge and experience with God. They have minds that love the truth and recognize the truth is unfolding and they need to keep moving forward, rather than defending old traditions. This is why the disciples, steeped in misunderstanding, were able to be Christ’s true representatives, but the priests and Pharisees were not .

Would a wife ever genuinely love and trust her husband who beats her for not following his rules? Some have argued yes, that in certain cultures this is very appropriate and women get upset if their husbands stop beating them because they think their husband’s don’t care anymore. Thoughts about this?

In relationships dominated by coercive power, abuse, beatings, the victim, whether child, spouse, or kidnapped person, will often come to long for the approval and attention of the one in power – so they will feel safe. If some women find themselves in a culture in which this ugly distortion of healthy relationships happen, they may also find that they have, as a survival mechanism, come to experience the beatings in positive ways – but is it really healthy and positive?



Can we, love, trust and grow into the fullness of our own individuality in a relationship dominated by threat, coercion and imposed punishments?

This idea that the punishment for sin is inflicted by God a lie – so how can we restate the metaphor of marriage that more accurately represents Israel's condition?

Though Susie, because of her repeated infidelity, has suffered the pain and distress of living alienated from her husband, her husband continued to love her and now it was time for Susie to live again in relationship with him, according to his promised devotion to her.”

Thoughts?

Why did Israel end up in captivity? Was God inflicting punishment?

Read first paragraph, “On the wall of an old...” thoughts?

In the 19th century there was a great spiritual awakening in America, with many people returning to a relationship with God, and taking seriously Jesus' promise to come again. Many Christian groups began longing for and looking toward the return of Christ. Some set dates, only to have disappointment follow disappointment. And several new church groups arose from this passion to see Jesus come again. The SDA church was one of those.

May 21, 2013 celebrated the 150th anniversary of the founding of the SDA church – the church with its mission to prepare for the second advent of Jesus. Do Christians today, still have passionate expectation that Jesus will return soon, or have we either lost hope, or just fallen asleep, fallen into complacency and believe Jesus will come one day, but not in our lifetime?

What do you think of these two questions?

- Do you believe Jesus will come soon?
- Do you believe Jesus can come soon?

Do you hear them the same, or do they imply different things?

“Do you believe Jesus will come soon?” implies that God has a set timetable and Jesus return is preprogrammed, like a time bomb, and when the clock hits a certain point it will go off and He will come regardless.

“Do you believe Jesus can come soon?” implies that God is waiting for certain conditions to occur before Christ returns. While God knows the day and hour of Christ's return, because God knows the future, what determines the time is not some preset clock, but the condition of certain things on earth, which we could influence.



Which idea do you think is more accurate?

What can we do to hasten the day?

SUNDAY

Read first paragraph, “The return...” thoughts?

How do you answer the questions?

“Would they be safe and secure in their land, or would enemies come again to harass them?”

- Would the people likely have had this concern? Most certainly...
- But, who was their primary enemy? In other words, what was the greatest threat to their security and safety in the land? Other nations or their own apostasy?
- Why did they end up being taken captive? Because they refused to follow God’s methods and He set them free to go their own way.
- Is there a lesson in this for us? Do we ever suffer in this world because of doing our own thing and refusing to follow God’s plan, design, methods for our lives?
- And in the aftermath, do we live in fear of suffering similarly again?
- What is the greatest threat to our personal security and peace in this world?

The next question, “Had God forgiven their past unfaithfulness, or would He continue their punishment?”

- Is this a legitimate question? Or does this question arise from some misunderstanding?
- What is the false premise that this question is based upon?
 - That God’s law is imposed, and God is the imposer of punishments.
- What impact does it have on people to believe this lie?
- What about today, do we ever struggle with such lies?
- How do such ideas affect our relationship with God?

The next paragraph tells how Zechariah saw in vision the angel of the Lord move to intercede for Judah. With whom does the angel of the Lord intercede?

TUESDAY

Read Zech 3:1-8:

Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right side to accuse him. 2 The Lord said to Satan, “The Lord rebuke you, Satan! The Lord, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is not this man a burning stick snatched from the fire?”



3 Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood before the angel. 4 The angel said to those who were standing before him, “Take off his filthy clothes.” Then he said to Joshua, “See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you.” 5 Then I said, “Put a clean turban on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him, while the angel of the Lord stood by. 6 The angel of the Lord gave this charge to Joshua: 7 “This is what the Lord Almighty says: ‘If you will walk in my ways and keep my requirements, then you will govern my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you a place among these standing here. 8 “ ‘Listen, O high priest Joshua and your associates seated before you, who are men symbolic of things to come: I am going to bring my servant, the Branch.

Thoughts?

Let’s identify the players, who is who and what means what?

- Who is Joshua the High Priest?
 - Literally he is the first High Priest after captivity.
- Who does Joshua represent in the symbolism?
 - The people – anyone else?
- What is another name for Joshua?
 - Jesus, and Jesus is our High Priest.
- Who is the accuser?
 - Satan, the adversary.
- Who is the angel of the Lord?
 - Jesus.
- What is the fire from which the burning stick is plucked?
 - Deviation from God’s design, i.e. sin
- What does it mean burning stick?
 - Sinful humankind
- What do the filthy clothes represent?
 - Defective human character, our hearts and minds filled with fear, selfishness, guilt, shame, arrogance, pride.
- What does it mean to take away the filthy clothes and put on clean clothes?
 - Removing fear and selfishness from the character and restoring in our hearts self-sacrificial, Christlike love!
- Who is the Branch?
 - Jesus

So what do you gather from this vision story? What does it mean?

Adam deviated from God’s design and humanity was infected with fear and selfishness, operating on Satan’s principles, being burned up by sin, dying in the fires of selfishness. Jesus came and “became sin though He knew no sin that we might become the righteousness of God.” He took our sinful state upon Himself to cure it. Thus the angel of the Lord and the High Priest represent Jesus doing for us



what we could not do for ourselves. Jesus takes away our sinfulness, literally. He “destroyed sin and brought life and immortality to light.” Jesus Christ actually cleansed the species human, by His singular victory! He now holds the cure, the keys to salvation and eternal life.

Satan is a legalist, an imposed law proponent, who claims it is not fair and Jesus can’t do this. Every sin must be punished urges Satan. Satan brings up long lists of misdeeds, arguing every one must be punished, but Jesus says, “the Lord rebuke you.” Just as He did when He resurrected Moses.

So, Satan, not getting anywhere with Jesus and God with his legal arguments, turns to humanity and begins filling the minds of men with all kinds of legal ideas about God’s government.

Then Satan fills our minds with accusations,

- accusing us of falling short, of committing too many sins, of being too defective for God to love and save, of being unworthy.
- Satan accuses us to discourage us and convince us we are beyond hope.
- He fills our minds with lies about God, presenting God as a being who must inflict punishment for sin – but Jesus says, “the Lord rebuke you Satan.” And Jesus says to each of us, “see I have taken away your sin.”

With whom is Christ pleading?

- Is there any hint in this passage that Jesus is pleading to His Father?
- According to this passage, who would need to hear Jesus pleas?
- Who would be troubled by Satan’s allegations?
- Would Satan’s allegations trouble God?
- In other words, would God get confused and uncertain and start doubting Himself after hearing Satan’s allegations?
- Who would?
- We get distraught, upset, doubt when Satan makes his allegations.
- Then who needs to hear Christ’s pleas? We do.

Here is a quote from a book called *Amazing Grace*. What do you think about the idea put forth?

Satan knows that those who ask God for pardon and grace will obtain it; therefore **he presents their sins before them to discourage them**. Against those who are trying to obey God, he is constantly seeking occasion for complaint. Even their best and most acceptable service he seeks to make appear corrupt. **By countless devices, the most subtle and the most cruel, he endeavors to secure their condemnation.** {AG 316.2}

From who is Satan seeking to secure the our condemnation?

If you have an imposed law construct, then you falsely believe it is God.



If you have a natural law construct, then you realize we are sick, God has the remedy, He will provide it to absolutely everyone who will accept it, and it works to heal 100% of those who take it. Do doctor condemn to death patients they can heal?

If a patient comes to the ER with infection from years of IV drug use – and the doctor has antibiotics, will the doctor, hold “court” ask for witness, hear the accusation of those who want to see the patient die, examine a list of misdeeds, and then make a legal judgment and pronounce the death sentence upon the patient, and then, execute the patient?

Will the doctor examine the patient, hear the history, the facts of what has happened, from the patient and family and medical records, if the patient has been there before? Will the doctor make a judgment, diagnosis? And judging that the patient has a terminal infection, that if not cured will kill the patient, what does the doctor do, if the doctor has antibiotics that will cure them? Give them the remedy.

So, who must Satan get to condemn the sinner so that the sinner won't get the remedy? The sinner must condemn themselves, the sinner must be tricked by Satan into believing they are beyond healing, they are not worth saving, they are too far gone to matter, thus they won't take the remedy.

Here are some Bible texts, notice what the Bible says regarding God's condemnation of sinners:

John 3:16,17:

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ **For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.**”

“**neither do I condemn you.**” Jesus said to the woman caught in adultery (JN 8:11)

Romans 8:31-39:

³¹ What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ **Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.** ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ As it is written:

“For your sake we face death all day long;
we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

So, if God is not condemning us, whom is Satan seeking to get to condemn us? Ourselves!



Then to whom is Christ pleading? Christ is pleading with you and me to trust Him and reject the lies about the Father.

Do we ever struggle because we have mistakenly thought Jesus needs to plead to His Father?

Have we ever struggled with guilt and memories of past failings, thinking we have messed up so bad we are beyond hope? Who is behind such ideas? If those thoughts enter the mind, what is the proper response? “The Lord rebuke you Satan!”

The second paragraph states, “While Joshua is interceding before God for the people, Satan is bringing accusations against them based on their sinfulness.”

Thoughts about this? Any concerns? Where does the text say Joshua is interceding before God for the people?

Do you see how much is read into the text that isn’t there, and all based on an imposed law construct.

Who does Joshua represent? Jesus – and what is Jesus doing? He is taking our sinfulness, our iniquity upon Himself, and removing the iniquity and developing perfect character! He is cleansing the Spirit Temple. Jesus is recreating humanity back to God’s original ideal. And Satan is there the entire time accusing and attempting to derail the process.

Read third paragraph, “The Lord rejects...” thoughts? What are your thoughts about this? Where in this passage is there anything about the full measure of divine punishment? Where do such ideas arise? What impact do such ideas have upon people?

WEDNESDAY

Read Zechariah 4:1-6:

Then the angel who talked with me returned and wakened me, as a man is wakened from his sleep. ² He asked me, “What do you see?”

I answered, “I see a solid gold lampstand with a bowl at the top and seven lights on it, with seven channels to the lights. ³ Also there are two olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left.”

⁴ I asked the angel who talked with me, “What are these, my lord?”

⁵ He answered, “Do you not know what these are?”

“No, my lord,” I replied.

⁶ So he said to me, “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: ‘Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,’ says the LORD Almighty.

Thoughts?

What is the vision about?



From what is the lampstand constructed? Solid gold, what does the lampstand with seven bowls represent?

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet a light unto my path.” PS 119:105

The Word of God – and what is that?

- The Bible?
- The Living Word, Jesus – Logos, “The Word was made flesh...”

What do the seven lights represent?

Verse 10 says these are the seven “eyes” of the Lord – what does this mean?

Some Bible commentators suggest this represents God’s “all knowing presence”. What do you think?

What did Jesus say we are to be for Him? We are a light unto the world. We are to represent Him!

We are to let our High Priest, Jesus, work in our hearts, trimming the wick of our lives, so we shine brightly for Him. Could the seven lights, also called the seven eyes, represent those who are Christ’s followers, those who are connected to the solid gold lampstand and Christ shines out through them?

What is the eye symbolic of? Knowledge, intelligence, awareness. So, I would like to suggest the seven lights represent the people of God, who are “enlightened” and have spiritual insight and intelligence. These are not the believers trapped in darkness and misrepresent God, but those who have been filled with the Holy Spirit and have the light of truth shining through them.

The Hebrew Lexicon says the word translated eye is:

עַיִן, עֵינָה [‘ayin /ah·yin/] 1612a, 1613; GK 6412 and 6524; 887 occurrences; AV translates as “eye” 495 times, “sight” 216 times, “seem” 19 times, “colour” 12 times, “fountain” 11 times, “well” 11 times, “face” 10 times, “pleased + 3190” 10 times, “presence” eight times, before” eight times... “conceit” four times, “think” four times, and translated miscellaneous 66 times. **1** eye. **1a** eye. **1a1** of physical eye. **1a2** as showing mental qualities. **1a3** of mental and spiritual faculties (fig.). **2** spring, fountain.¹

So, what does this symbolism mean? That we are to go forward renewed by the Holy Spirit to reveal the light of truth about God, intelligently, dispelling the darkness of lies about God.

The lesson states in the last paragraph, “By the Spirit, God provides the power for us to do His work now as He did then. Therefore, the work is accomplished not by human might of force but by the Lord working through those who are open to be used by Him.”

¹ Strong, J. (2001). *Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.



Thoughts? This is certainly true – the work is accomplished by the Holy Spirit, not by our own human effort.

Do you have any concerns about this however?

Does the Scripture actually restrict the limitation of achieving God's purposes by might and power to human might and power? Notice how the lesson attempts to insert the idea this is only stating that human might and power cannot achieve God's purposes, leaving open the idea that God can achieve what He wants by exercising His might and power. Can He?

What is it that God wants? He wants us to completely love and trust Him. Can He achieve that by using might and power?

If might and power achieves God's goals, then why didn't He use might and power on Lucifer in heaven? If might and power exercised by God could bring an end to the conflict then why did Jesus have to die?

Might and power cannot achieve God's goal to destroy the lies about Him, reveal the truth of His character of love and win us back to love and trust. This is the work of the Spirit, which is called the Spirit of truth and love! It is by presenting the truth in love and leaving others free that God wins!

Read Zechariah 6:12,13:

Tell him this is what the Lord Almighty says: 'Here is the man whose name is the Branch, and he will branch out from his place and build the temple of the Lord. ¹³ It is he who will build the temple of the Lord, and he will be clothed with majesty and will sit and rule on his throne. And he will be a priest on his throne. And there will be harmony between the two.'

Thoughts?

Who is the Branch? Jesus and what does it mean He will branch out from His place? Where is his place?

In heaven – does it say He will leave His place? Is there a difference between branching out and leaving? What is the difference?

A branch stays connected to its source – did Jesus leave heaven, or did He branch out from heaven? When Jesus came to earth and became incarnate, what did He do? He connected His divinity with our humanity! His divinity branched out from heaven – yet He retained His connection to heaven.

Jesus is the connecting link, the conduit, the branch, through which God's love flows back into the species human.

What does it mean He will build His temple? Don't some teach the actual temple already exists in heaven? If so, then why does Jesus need to branch out from heaven to build His temple?



As I was studying this week I came across this article in an old journal, Signs of the Times, written Dec 12, 1895. Consider how some Christians used to think about God, what do you think of this?

In the prayer of Christ for his disciples, he said concerning them: "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one [in spiritual union]; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." {ST, December 12, 1895 par. 1}

The glory of Christ is his character, and his character is an expression of the law of God. He fulfilled the law in its every specification, and gave to the world in **his life a perfect pattern of what it is possible for humanity to attain unto by cooperation with divinity.** In his humanity Christ was dependent upon the Father, even as humanity is now dependent upon God for divine power in attaining unto perfection of character. **God's law is an exponent of his character,** an expression of his holiness; **but, viewed by him who has fallen through sin, it is a voice of condemnation, a ministration of death.** [Why? How do you understand the law, imposed or natural? If the law of respiration is violated, and you are under water, will the law be a ministration of death? Why? Can the law change to meet you underwater? No, if you are to live, you must be brought back into harmony with the law. But if you conceive the law as imposed, then why does death ensue? Because God is described as killing.] It is not in the province of law to pardon the transgressor; for "by the law is the knowledge of sin." "By the law shall no flesh be justified." No ray of hope shines forth from the law to the sinner, and its transgressor can find no answer from the law to his anxious inquiry, "What shall I do to be saved?" "How shall I be just with God?" {ST, December 12, 1895 par. 2}

But through Christ a way of escape has been provided. Our Redeemer came in the flesh to condemn sin in the flesh, to lay hold of the repenting soul with an unyielding grasp, and at the same time to grasp the throne of God, becoming the connecting link between humanity and divinity, between earth and heaven. He is the only refuge for the guilty soul. **In searching to know God, man is directed to Christ, who lived out the law of God, and manifested to the world the attributes of the Father. In the Son of God the inexpressible goodness of God is revealed;** for in him mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace kiss each other. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." **Christ in the flesh, condemning sin in the flesh, was a perfect revelation of God to the world.** Christ declared: "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." {ST, December 12, 1895 par. 3}

In answer to the request of Philip, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us," Jesus said: "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? **he that hath seen me hath seen the Father;** and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." **The Lord Jesus is the embodiment of the glory of the Godhead.** The light of the knowledge of the glory of God is seen in the face of Jesus Christ. **God has revealed himself to men; he stooped to take upon him our nature, and in his Son we see the glory of the divine attributes. *Those who see not***



in Christ the divine character are in the shadow of Satan's misrepresentation of divinity.

"The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature." {ST, December 12, 1895 par. 4}

In Christ Jesus is a revelation of the glory of the Godhead. All that the human agent can know of God to the saving of the soul, is the measure of the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, to which he can attain; for Christ is he who represents the Father. The most wonderful truth to be grasped by men is the truth, "Immanuel, God with us." Christ is the wisdom of God. He is the great "I AM" to the world. As we contemplate the glory of the divine character as revealed in Christ, we are led to exclaim, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" This wisdom is displayed in the love that reaches out for the recovery of lost and ruined man. {ST, December 12, 1895 par. 5}

The work of God in the creation of man needed no undoing. There was nothing imperfect, nothing incomplete. He spake and it was done. The very dust of the ground from which man was formed was pure, and the breath of life which God breathed into his nostrils was holy. He was placed in Eden, the garden of God, and its atmosphere was undefiled, and from the beams of the sun in the heavens which blessed and cheered the earth, to the fountains and streams that watered the garden, all was holy, **all was clothed with spotless purity and unexcelled loveliness, and was in harmony with the character of the Father and the Son, by whom the worlds were made, and in whom was life, and the life is the light of men.** [All was in harmony with the character of God, meaning? All operated upon the design template of love, the principle of giving, as God designed it] {ST, December 12, 1895 par. 6}

But in the transgression of man both the Father and the Son were dishonored. Man committed sin, and sin is the transgression of the law, which is holy, just, and good. [which means what?] **Through sin the temple of God which he had builded for his own indwelling and glory, was reduced to ruin, was fallen and in decay.** [what temple? Then what temple needed cleansing?] Satan beguiled the holy pair to their own destruction, and **introduced an element of character that was antagonistic to God and to their fellow-creatures.** [what element? Selfishness, antagonistic to love, the principle of survival of the fittest kill or be killed. How was it introduced? Lies believed break the circle of love and trust....] **Before the entrance of sin, the hearts of God's children had been filled with love toward their Creator, and they were in harmony with his will; but upon yielding to the tempter a warring element began to work in the human agent.** Even the earth itself shows the curse of transgression, and signs of enmity appear. Darkness covers the earth like the pall of death, and will continue to shroud the glory of God until death is swallowed up in victory. {ST, December 12, 1895 par. 7}

In the creation of God before the entrance of sin, every part of nature was in perfection; God had nothing to take down as unnecessary to his plan. He needed to set into operation no power by which to dispossess; he needed to inaugurate no opposing force. **But through the calamity of sin, the work of disintegration was begun, and the beautiful**



temple of God's building was defiled and laid in ruins. [the work of disintegration, what is that? What is being said? That sin violates the parameters upon which life is built and natural results in decay, ruin and death, unless God intervenes to heal and restore. What temple is being ruined? What temple did Christ come to build? What temple is being cleansed? How?] **God no longer was a dweller in the heart of man.** To oppose and bring to naught the work of the enemy, the promise was given, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." {ST, December 12, 1895 par. 8}

In the councils of heaven, hope was furnished for the fallen race. Jesus Christ offered his life as a ransom for the lost, as the price by which he might purchase the right to re-create the sinner, and form again the image of God in the soul. [What is ransom? The price necessary to set one free from captivity or bondage. What holds us in bondage? The lies about God we believe and our carnal nature. What then is the price for our freedom? The truth about God which restores to trust and a new nature, both of which Christ achieved.] **Fallen man was to be renewed in the divine likeness.** He was to be uplifted, to be pardoned and redeemed, not by the law, but by Jesus Christ, our Righteousness. Angels fly through the midst of heaven, proclaiming the glad tidings that a ransom has been found, and that the treasures that have been hidden from ages and generations in Christ, are to be displayed before a wondering universe. {ST, December 12, 1895 par. 9}

In Christ is found a resource that has never before been called out. Clothing his divinity with humanity, with the wealth of the treasures of heaven at his command, **he was to come to our world to counteract the ruin that Satan has wrought.** [not to pay a legal penalty, but to counteract the ruin, to rebuild humanity, to restore mankind into God's original ideal] What a scene was that when angels, cherubim, and a seraphim rejoiced as they hastened through the heavenly courts, proclaiming that a ransom had been found, and that God could be just, and yet be the justifier of him who believes in the ransom that had been provided! The law could be magnified and made honorable, **and yet fallen man could be restored to more than his former dignity and glory, and exalted as an overcomer of the Satanic hosts.** Every one who should believe in Jesus, **should be recreated to walk in newness of life, and from the ruins that Satan had wrought through sin, should arise in purity and holiness the fallen temple of the Lord.** Man was to be reconstructed, to be formed after the image of Jesus Christ, the Wisdom of God. "Unto whom coming, a living stone, rejected indeed of men, but with God elect, precious, ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." {ST, December 12, 1895 par. 10}

Thoughts? Isn't this an amazing article? What has happened to our church? We have been hijacked by an imposed law construct, with a distorted god who is like a Roman emperor who must inflict punishment, who must receive legal payment... The truth is we are defective because of sin and Christ came to counteract the damage sin has caused and to rebuild us into His image!

MONDAY

Read Zech 2:10,11:



“Shout and be glad, O Daughter of Zion. For I am coming, and I will live among you,” declares the Lord. 11 “Many nations will be joined with the Lord in that day and will become my people. I will live among you and you will know that the Lord Almighty has sent me to you.

Thoughts?

What is promised?

- Jesus is coming to live on earth with us
- From what Jesus accomplishes all people of the world, the entire human race, will be blessed, and people from all nations will partake the remedy and be reconciled to God.
- What is the significance of saying “you will know that the Lord Almighty has sent me to you.”?

THURSDAY

First sentence of second paragraph states, “God’s answer through Zechariah is twofold: first it is necessary that God’s people remember the past so that they don’t repeat it.”

This is sound advise – remember the past so we don’t repeat it. Do we? Have we remembered the past, or are we repeating it?

Are we vulnerable to repeating mistakes made by humans in the past? Can you name any?

- Misunderstanding God’s character
- Misconstruing God’s law as imposed
- Believing rituals are important in their own right
- Placing behavior over character (i.e. don’t heal on Sabbath, MT 5, it is more than avoiding the behavior of adultery, but having a new heart)
- Disfellowshipping someone for divorce
- Others?

FRIDAY

Read and discuss questions 1 and 2