

will be cut off. And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.” (Romans 11:20-23)

What you need to do

Read what Zechariah wrote in the introduction of his book, which is the theme of the whole book, and is also the theme of all the major prophets of the Old Testament:

“The LORD hath been sore displeased with your fathers. Therefore say unto them, Thus says the LORD of hosts; Turn unto me, says the LORD of hosts, and I will turn unto you, says the LORD of hosts. Be not as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets have cried, saying, Thus says the LORD of hosts; Turn now from your evil ways, and from your evil doings: but they did not hear, nor hearken unto Me, says the LORD. (Zechariah 1:2-4)

Pray: O God of Israel, I agree with your holy word. I confess that You were sore displeased with my fathers.

Lord, You said return unto Me, and I will return unto you. Lord I return unto You right now. Lord, I do not

return to the



traditions of my fathers. You said that You were sore displeased with them. I want to please You. I return directly to You and Your Bible. That is what You said to do. Lord, You promised in Your word that if I return to You, You will return unto me. Now, Lord, You have to return unto me. Return unto me. Show me if Jesus is truly the Messiah sent to Israel. Show me if Jesus is the God of Israel become a man like me. Speak to my spirit in Your word. I give myself to You.

‘Lord Jesus, I come to You as one of the poor of the flock. Thank You that You will by no means cast me out. Thank You that You, being the Creator of the universe, became a poor man like me. Thank you for all the suffering You went through on my behalf. Thank You that you died for my sins. According to Your New Covenant, forgive me of all my sins, and by no means remember them anymore. Lord Jesus, I love You. I give myself to You. Amen.

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(see my other booklet “The Worst Depression & the Greatest Revival” on Zech. 5-6)



Beauty, BONDS AND 30 PIECES OF SILVER



Albert Einstein, the great physicist, regularly read both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. In an interview he said, “As a child I received instruction both in the Bible and in the Talmud. I am a Jew, but I am enthralled by the luminous figure of the Nazarene.” When the interviewer then asked, “You accept the historical existence of Jesus?” Einstein responded, Unquestionably! No one can read the Gospels without feeling the actual presence of Jesus. His personality pulsates in every word. No myth is filled with such life.”

From his knowledge of the physical laws of nature, Einstein strongly believed in God as the Creator of the universe, but he did not acknowledge that God interferes in history or answers prayer. He thought that if God interferes in history, how could He have allowed all the atrocities

that have befallen the Jews beginning with the destruction of the temple in 70 AD? If Jesus was the Messiah, where are the great blessings to the Jewish people that should follow His coming?

To answer this question let us look at what the prophet Zechariah wrote in approximately 450 B.C.

This passage seems to be the most negative prophecy concerning Israel in the whole Bible. It speaks of terrible things in this life, as do other prophecies, but also foretells something much worse: the seeming loss of 2 spiritual birthrights.

The basic message of the prophecy is: God would send a Shepherd to spiritually feed Israel at a time when Israel’s leaders were religious hypocrites (v.5; Isaiah 9:16). This leadership rejects the Shepherd sent to them by God(v.8), but “the truly poor of the flock” received and believed in

Him (v. 7 & 11).

The result of rejecting this Shepherd is far worse than anything that previously happened to Israel. They would be slaughtered (v.4,6,7,9) and God would not deliver or pity them. This is similar to what is mentioned in other passages such as Leviticus 26. Much worse than that, God would not spiritually feed them (v.9), and they would perish, which is much worse than physical death. But far, far worse than even these are the broken covenant (v.10) and the broken brotherhood (v.14), the top spiritual birth-rights which God has given Israel.

There is another thing that you can see in this passage: This Shepherd is not like any previous prophet who

spoke for God. **This Shepherd, whom God sends to feed Israel, is none other than God Himself.** In v.4 God sends the Shepherd to feed the flock, but in v.7, God Himself feeds the flock. This shepherd speaks things that only God has the authority to say (v.8-9).

The Details – The Old Testament Explained by the New

The closer you look at the details of this prophesy, the more marvelous it is. **What are the staffs Beauty & Bonds? Who are “the truly poor of the flock?” Who are the three shepherds of Israel whom the Shepherd causes to perish? What does it**

mean to break the staffs Beauty & Bonds? What are the 30 pieces of silver thrown into the temple? And what are the broken covenant and

Zechariah 11:4-14:

4 Thus says the LORD my God; Feed the flock of the slaughter; 5 whose possessors slay them, and hold themselves not guilty: and they that sell them say, Blessed be the LORD; for I am rich: and their own shepherds pity them not.

6 For I will no more pity the inhabitants of the land, says the LORD: but, lo, I will deliver the men every one into his neighbor's hand, and into the hand of his king: and they shall smite the land, and out of their hand I will not deliver them.

7 **So I fed the flock of slaughter, the truly poor of the flock. And I took unto Me two staffs; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bonds; and I fed the flock.**

bond-slave to redeem mankind. He was a bond-slave even in death. Then **in resurrection, He became free of bonds, even the ultimate bondage, death!** (Acts 2:24; Romans 6:9-10; 1 Corinthians 15:54-56; Revelation 1:18) The breaking of the staff Bonds was Jesus' resurrection!

The Broken Brotherhood

When He resurrected, Jesus became the life-giving Spirit (1 Corinthians 15:45). When we receive the life-giving Spirit into our spirit, we are born again with the life of God (1 Peter 1:3; John 3:3-8). This makes us Jesus' brothers and brothers of each other (Hebrews 2:11-13). When Jesus was on earth, He called His followers His “friends.” But immediately after His resurrection, He called them His brothers (John 20:17)! So by breaking the staff Bonds, God actually created the brotherhood of believers in Jesus, of which the unbelieving Jews are not a part. In this way, God broke the brotherhood between Judah and Israel. Today, under the New Covenant, the true Israel of God is those who are circumcised in spirit and in

heart (Romans 2:29; Philippians 3:3; Colossians 2:11; Romans 9:6; Galatians 6:16). **By Jesus' resurrection, God has created a new brotherhood, and the only way to join this brotherhood is to believe into Jesus.** Those Jews who did not believe in Jesus did not become brothers with the new Israel of God.

The breaking of the brotherhood between Judah and Israel is pictured in the New Testament in Romans 11:17-25. Israel is likened to God's cultivated olive tree, and the Gentile nations to wild olive trees. The unbelieving Jewish branches were broken off of God's olive tree, Israel, and the believing Gentile branches were grafted into it.

Christians cannot boast against the Jews, but fear and learn from God's dealing with them: “They were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be high-minded, but fear: for if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will He spare you. Behold then the kindness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but on you, the kindness of God, if you continue in His kindness: otherwise you also

we have full assurance that what He has promised, He will do.

The New Covenant, which is not like the Old Covenant, was promised to Israel alone (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Isaiah 42:6). Jesus said that He was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Except for one extraordinary case (Matthew 15:22-28), Jesus refused to help Gentiles unless asked to do so by Jews.

By Jesus' death, God righteously EXPANDED the New Covenant to include all the nations. It was thus in this sense that God "broke" His New Covenant: what He had promised Israel He now also made available to all nations. How marvelous!

This is illustrated by the parable of the vineyard told by Jesus in Matthew 20:1-16. A householder, early in the morning, contracted workmen to work in his vineyard. Then he hired more workers later in the day and even some just before the day was done. At the end of the day he paid all the workmen the same amount that he had contracted the first workmen for. The first workers were understandably indignant, but the house-

holder had done no wrong. He had fulfilled his contract with them, and graciously expanded the same payment to the other workers. (Matthew 8:11-12; 21:41-43; Romans 10:12; 11:11-12, 15, 25)

30 Pieces of Silver

After Jesus was delivered to death, Judas received his cheap wages for betraying Jesus, that is, for his role in breaking the staff Beauty. God exclaims sarcastically, "Oh see how My people appreciate Me, valuing Me at 30 pieces of silver!" This is the price a man would have to pay a slave's master if he accidentally killed the other man's slave (Exodus 21:32). How the three shepherds despised Him! They not only hired Judas to betray Jesus, but they even paid Judas minimum wage to do so.

The New Testament tells us that Judas threw the money on the floor in the temple and the chief priests used the money to buy the Potter's (Matthew 27:3-10; Mark 14:10-11; Luke 22:5).

Breaking the Staff Bonds

During His whole life, Jesus was a



the broken brotherhood?

All these are plain in the New Testament Gospels. They fit like a divine glove, yet they fit in such a way, that it would have been impossible for anyone to have fabricated the four Gospels to fit this prophecy.

The Staff Beauty

God Himself took two staffs. Staffs are wood, which symbolizes humanity. (Song of Songs 2:3; Isaiah 11:1; 53:1). **God's taking the two staffs means that God Himself became a man** (John 1:1, 14). God had created mankind after His own image and likeness with this in mind. (Genesis 1:26)

God named the one staff Beauty, indicating His delight with it. King David used the same Hebrew word for beauty in Psalm 27:4: **"One thing have I desired of the LORD,**

that will I seek after... to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in His temple."

If you ask anyone who has read the

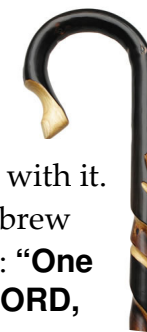
four Gospels what his most striking impression is, most will tell you it is the beauty of the man Jesus. Those may not be his exact words, but that will be the meaning. Einstein said he was "enthralled by the luminous figure of the Nazarene." **The most beautiful thing in the universe is God expressed in man.** Jesus was the very God become a human being in every way except sin. Jesus' life and words declared

8 And I caused the three shepherds to perish in one month; and My soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred Me.

9 And I said, I will not feed you: that which dies, let it die; and that which is to perish, let it perish; and let the rest eat every one the flesh of another.

10 And I took My staff Beauty and cut it asunder, that I might break My covenant, which I then made with all the peoples.

11 And it was broken in that day: and so the poor of the flock that waited upon Me knew that it was the word of the LORD.



God to man (John 1:18). This Beauty was the Divine Attributes expressed in Jesus' human virtues (1 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 1:2-3). With this Beauty, God shepherded Israel as a Man for three and one half years!

What is the one thing that you desire of God? Think about it. Could any desire excel that of David, "to behold the beauty of the Lord" and to hear Him? Is this worth for you to seek after? Read the four Gospels and you will behold the beauty of the Lord, the perfect expression of God's character and word in a Human Being. Whatever touches you, and whatever you disagree with inquire of the Lord. The Living God will answer you.

The Staff Bonds

God named the other staff Bonds. Jesus had no outward beauty. He was born in a stable to poor parents. He grew up as a root out of dry ground. He took the form of a slave (Philippians 2:7-8). He received the punishment for the sins of the whole world (Isaiah 53:2-10). He came not to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45).

His beauty was hidden by His bonds. What a wonder of wonders! Not only did the Creator of the universe become a man, but look at what kind of man He became. Not a king, nor a celebrity, nor a rich man, nor even a well-off man. **But a servant to all! A bond slave!**

12 And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my wages; and if not, forbear. **So they weighed for my wages 30 pieces of silver.** 13 And the LORD said unto me, "Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them." And I took the 30 pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the LORD.

14 **Then I cut asunder My other staff Bonds** that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

Can anyone come up with a better summary of Jesus' earthly ministry to Israel than the two words, Beauty and Bonds?

The Truly Poor of the Flock

The Jewish leaders and self-satisfied religious people rejected Jesus, but the "poor of the flock" received Him.

The poor in spirit: the poor, the ill, the invalids, the despised tax collectors and sinners and even prostitutes, as well as seemingly righteous persons repented at His preaching. **Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens** (Matthew 5:1).



The Three Perished Shepherds

The Messiah would cause the three Jewish shepherds to perish in one month (v.8). In the New Testament gospels, we see that the Jewish people were led by three groups leaders: the elders, the chief priests and the scribes. These leaders led the persecution and rejection of Jesus (Matthew 16:21; Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22; & as foretold in the Old Testament Psalm 118:22-23). The Hebrew word for "perish" here and in verse 9 is worse than death and is to go to hell.

It was by these ancient Jewish leaders' treatment of Jesus that they caused themselves to perish. Despite witnessing Jesus' miracles, words and life, which was in agreement with the Old Testament, they hired false witnesses against Jesus and even bribed the Roman soldiers to lie about Jesus' resurrection. (Matthew 28:11-15) It took one month rather than one day, because God, not willing that any should perish, is not quick to judge. It is the same today.

Breaking the Staff Beauty

God's taking up the two staffs was

one act, His incarnation, but He broke the staffs in two separate acts with something occurring in between. What does it mean to break the staff Beauty? **It is the death of the God-man, Jesus.** The beautiful expression of God in this Man was ended.

It was actually God, not any man, who broke His beloved staff that He named Beauty. God says that He Himself did it. He used evil men, but ultimately it was God Himself who killed Jesus to pay the price for the sins of all mankind (Isaiah 53:10).



The Broken Covenant

God says that He broke His staff Beauty in order that He might break His covenant and then make it with **all** the peoples (v. 10). This is a big problem. How could God break His covenant? **The Bible assures us that when God makes a covenant, even He cannot change it.** (New Testament - Galatians 3:15,17; Romans 11:29; Hebrews 6:16-19) **God said that if Israel did not keep their side of the covenant, He would punish them severely, but He would never break His covenant with them** (Leviticus 26:44-45). Because God can never break His covenant,