

Post-Exile Prophets  
**THE REJECTION OF THE MESSIAH**

Thursday, September 4  
Reading: Zechariah 11:10-14

**Zechariah 11:12** *I told them, "If you think it best, give me my pay; but if not, keep it." So they paid me thirty pieces of silver.*

During the Jewish people's exile in Babylon, the prophet Ezekiel wrote that one day God would unite Israel as one nation under one King. He did this by uniting two sticks to represent the people of Israel (Ephraim) and Judah (Ezekiel 37:15-21).

"I will make them one nation in the land...there will be one King over all of them and they will never again be two nations or be divided into two kingdoms...and they all will have one Shepherd." (Ezekiel 37:22, 24).

Over 100 years later, Zechariah reinforced this promise (10:6). But now God would break His covenant "with all the nations." This does not refer to His covenant with Abraham or David. Those covenants were unbreakable. This is talking about God's promise to protect His people from the nations if they obeyed. But since Israel's national leaders had rejected Messiah, God would now revoke this protection. While the leaders did not realize it, "the oppressed of the flock" realized that this was the hand of God doing what He had promised to do (see Deuteronomy 28).

As the walking parable or picture of Messiah, Zechariah now asks to be paid what they think he is worth. Their response is an insult! Thirty pieces of silver was the price of a slave gored by a bull (Exodus 21:32). The leaders of Israel considered him as worthless as a dead slave! Zechariah's response was to "throw it to the potter", a phrase that shows contempt. He throws it away – this "handsome" or glorious price (note the sarcasm). After he has done this, he breaks his second staff Union. The day of a united kingdom under the One true Shepherd would not occur at this time. This dream would wait until Messiah's 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming and the nation finally accepts their Good Shepherd.

These verses are cited in Matthew 27:1-10 to describe the actions of Judas Iscariot in betraying Jesus. The thirty pieces of silver he earned for this betrayal were thrown back into the temple in a fit of remorse (NOT repentance). Then Judas went out and hanged himself. The priests used the discarded money to buy a potter's field for the burial of strangers who died in Jerusalem.

This passage is a warning to us today as well. The religious leaders should have recognized the Messiah when He came. They were the experts in the Scriptures, yet they refused to believe that Jesus was the fulfillment of God's promises and instead valued Him as worthless. Judas had followed Jesus for years! He had seen all the miracles and heard all the teachings. And yet he never truly believed Jesus was the Savior...at least not the Savior he was looking for!

There is danger in knowing what the Bible says, looking like you are a follower of Jesus, but still not giving your heart to Him. Being saved is NOT a mental thing. It is a heart thing! Is your "faith" all in your head, but has not got a hold of your heart?

Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test? (2 Corinthians 13:5)