

# Zechariah

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] to the ninth chapter in Zechariah's prophecy. You turn to Zechariah's prophecy, the ninth chapter, the third and fourth verses.

Zechariah chapter nine, verses three and four. And Tyrus did build herself a stronghold and heaped up silver as the dust and fine gold as the mire of the streets.

Behold, the Lord will cast her out and he will smite her power in the sea and she shall be devoured with fire.

Now, there are certain aspects of the history of Tyrus which make us tremble.

One of the aspects that has affected my mind considerably over a long period is the obvious relevance between the situation of Tyrus and the situation which belongs to us as a nation.

[ 1 : 2 6 ] Now, Tyrus was situated just north of Israel and is off the coast of Lebanon and Tyrus actually was a city of two halves.

The old city was on the mainland and the new city was erected on an island just off the mainland and the island was so fortified as to have a double wall 150 foot high and 25 feet between the two walls which was filled with earth and the purpose of those that built that wall that stronghold on the Isle of Tyre was to make it impregnable make it a city of which no army was sufficient to victoriously assail.

And how often have men applied themselves to a position that they can to be impregnable only to witness that before God no situation is impregnable.

That it's an easy thing for the most high to demolish any stronghold in which the trust of men is wrongly place.

And history records that Nebuchadnezzar first that great emperor of Assyria came down the coast and destroyed the old city of Tyre and God went on through his servants proclaiming prophesying the destruction of the new city and the destruction of the new city waited and it waited for two hundred years so that the prophecies seemed to be in jeopardy as to their fulfilment.

[ 4 : 3 8 ] When at length God raised up Alexander the Great who came down that Greek power who came down the coast and took possession of the mainland but as a challenge to him off the coast was the stronghold of the island of Tyre and after many months of siege at length a mole approach was made to the stronghold of Tyre by Alexander the Great and his army and they tunneled from the mainland under the strip of sea and eventually broke out within the wall of the great considered impregnable stronghold of Tyre and the city was overthrown ten thousand of its inhabitants were slain with the sword and thirty three thousand were taken into captivity and the island this impregnable stronghold was so desolated that instead of being the centre of commerce for the world as it was in its day it became as God predicted

God prophesied a place for the drying of fishermen's nets upon the rocks thereof and my friends thus the many prophecies that went before upon Tyrus found their fulfilment through the instrumentality of Alexander the Great who was God's instrument in the fulfilment of those many prophecies that prophesied the destruction of Tyrus when Tyrus appeared to be a strong prosperous commercial and trade centre of the world world now I think of the reason why God records certain things in his word we may say yes they're of spiritual signification they have their relevance they warn us against putting our trust in uncertain riches and looking to any alternative for security but

God himself but my friends in a consideration of the purpose of God historically recording the events which preceded and precipitated the overthrow of Tyrus we must say what part of the world carries any connection or bears any relevance to Tyrus and I have come to this conclusion that the most relevant part of the world economically commercially to Tyrus has been our own land our own country which has been a centre of trade universally it's been shall I say the hub of commerce in the world in its day its influence over the globe was so great that nations trembled to incur the displeasure of the

United Kingdom but my friends were we proud of our position did our fathers consider that our state was an impregnable state that our power was so great that none could overthrow us none could unseat us and as a consequence of our pride because remember Tyrus was known as the queen of the seas and we in our day carried a similar designation in the minds and hearts of men universally but have we become a proud nation and as the Lord humbles those that are proud so is he humbling us progressively as a nation because we have been proud of our position putting our trust in our riches and in our universal strength and influence rather than in the

God that made us great and the God that gave us such a place among the nations as to command respect from all sides us now it's obvious that we're in the experience of humiliation and some of us have lived long enough to appreciate the difference between our strength and influence in our youth and the position which obtains now in these days of the 80s in the 20th century if you care and it would be a good exercise for some of our young people to read the history of Tyrus

[ 11 : 39 ] Isaiah has something to say in the 23rd chapter Ezekiel has much to say in the 26th 27th and 28th chapters Amos has to say in the 9th and 10th verses of the first chapter and Zechariah is saying something to us in the text that is before us this morning so there are several prophets of the Lord Jeremiah also has something to say but I can't immediately tell you the reference of that which Jeremiah speaks concerning Tyrus its beauty its strength commercially its navy or its seafaring strength and the position that

Tyrus holds in the world as a centre of trade and commerce which made her influence greatly respected and regarded among the nations of the world well now and Tyrus did build herself a stronghold and heaped up silver as dust and fine gold as the mire of the streams what a desirable situation would the natural man see in the position of Tyrus the heaping up silver as the dust plenty sumptuous living everything that heart could desire within the reach of the purse my friends silver as dust and you know although in a universal sense

England's power has diminished greatly during our lifetime life yet within that lifetime there has been such a spread of wealth that the common people have reached a standard of living that has never before been known in the history of our nation when we were the richer we hadn't the generation to the same extent as in recent years and the wealth was possessed by the few although we've diminished in wealth yet economically and I suppose politically there has been a change so that the common person in the street has been possessed of possessions which would have made our fathers covetous although their day was a day of more riches in many respects less that the change of distribution has been such that all have in recent years participated to an unprecedented degree

I do feel that in the zeal of distribution we've overstretched and our present difficulties to some great degree stem from the fact that we have spent more than was supportable in real terms and we're having to withdraw into the limits of reality which is the secret of our present difficulties to some extent at least but it seems in tireless that such was the influence of commercial prosperity that those things which were valuable became so common that the sense of value diminished and silver became as the dust of the streets and heaped up silver as the dust and fine gold as the mire of the streets now we can say yes that's a most desirable situation we can have everything that heart can wish our prosperity is such that whatever comes we can find an answer for it in the exercise and employ of our commercial prosperity it seems almost to the natural man like heaven on earth doesn't it my friends we're warned against putting our confidence trust in uncertain riches and

I believe Tyrus stands before us in the individual testimony of truth as an illustration of the futility of putting our trust in material things because it's an easy thing for God to demolish anything which buys against him for the trust and confidence of men I sometimes think that there is a greater potential for good in our present difficulties than there was when shall I say material advantage was so general that the people were being carried away on the wave of prosperity thinking less and less of God and those things which concern the spiritual aspect of living and

[ 20 : 12 ] Tyrus did build herself a strong hold and heaped up silver as the dust and fine gold as the mire of the streets security is something that is very attractive and prosperity and security seem to suggest to the natural understanding an impregnable situation man thinks if only he can get plenty of material things he then secures himself but my friends the scripture is full and the experience of those with a gracious understanding of life is full of testimony that there's no security in anything material you have we learned that lesson are we so attuned to the insufficiency everything short of

God to afford to us security that our minds and hearts are divorced from material things and that we're seeking after security in that which is above that which is established in God himself and those great and precious promises which associate scripturally with the people who look to God and trust in God as their refuge and their strength their hope and their help now I hope that none of us here present are building a stronghold supposing that we have security in a material situation because

I can tell you this that it's an easy thing for God to demolish it you say well why do you talk with such certainty let me illustrate from experience I came out of the forces in 1947 and the line of business that was mine prior to military service afforded no prospect for life so I turned and I believe it was prayerfully and by God's guidance to a different line of employment I went into industry and I was very soon involved in what after the war became a prosperous line of business

I was involved in the telephone industry and the demand for telephones increased after the war to such a degree that their manufacture was difficult to meet the demand and we were all working and increasing and building new factories to accommodate the necessary manufacturing capacity to in hope of coping with the increased demand and there was a great wave of it and I went in to industry at the beginning of that wave of prosperity and I was carried on along on the way applying my mind in certain ways to my commitment through night school and other forms of study and went ahead and was prospered

God granting me prosperity I soon left my former position as the methods developed and found myself in charge of a department of some 130 people and so on and so I went from strength to strength my salary was doubled from my commencing salary within three years and so forth and the future looked rosy well a man in charge of the whole department left the department and he went as a consultant with business consultants in London greatly improved his position and he was directed to Birmingham to advise a firm in modern methods of recording and so forth and eventually when he had completed his term with this firm he suggested that they wanted some new blood introduced and he said

[ 26 : 23 ] I know the man that you need a young man at Coventry and I was sent for and came over to Birmingham for interview and was started in the role in a managerial role in this jewellery firm in Birmingham and my salary was considerable and my position was somewhat promising for the future and I went for the job I worked and I worked on this new prospect and everything looked promising well I was given almost unlimited scope in the employment of staff and so on and soon gathered around me was the situation that held for the future great promise one morning

I woke up and I was aching all over and I thought oh dear don't feel too good this morning but I must get in so I struggled and got into work I sat in the office and tried to do what I could from my desk but I felt terrible and I struggled through the day and they hoped that a night's sleep would improve the situation the next day I got up and I felt even worse and I went into the office and I felt terrible and the managing director came in to see me and he said Crowder whatever is wrong I said well I don't feel too good I said I didn't feel too good yesterday and I said

I feel even worse this morning he said well you can't carry on looking like that he said I must get you to the doctor as quickly as possible so I said well I said if I'm going to consult a physician I said I'd rather consult my own physician I said and he's at Coventry he said I'll arrange for one of the work chauffeurs to drive you to Coventry he said you're not fit to drive yourself he said we'll take care of your car and we'll drive you over to Coventry so they drove me home the doctor came and the first doctor he hadn't any idea what was wrong he said I'll come again later he came back with a partner in the firm they gave me a thorough examination and he said well he said we're neither of us certain what's wrong with you but we'll send you to the isolation hospital and so shortly afterwards an ambulance came and by that time

I was in great misery pain all over my being and I was taken off to hospital and never shall I forget that journey because I thought in my heart it was the last journey that I was ever to take but well I recall a certain point of the road that I knew very familiarly in Coventry when the Lord came to me in that ambulance as I journeyed and gave me promise for the future and the promise for the future was this I shall not die but live and declare the works of the Lord and I could see that my future lay not in industry but my future lay in the proclamation of the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ I went into hospital the

Lord came again and spoke to me seekest thou great things for thyself seek them not and I realised that I had been in the sin of Tyrus centring my interests in material prosperity and this was not the right exercise for a man of God that I must look another way to the Lord as my source of material needs finding their fulfilment and supply glandular fever was the disease that was eventually settled upon as the cause of my trouble I said I was the perfect example of glandular fever and a

[ 31 : 55 ] Polish doctor or Polish consultant prescribed the cure and I responded to the treatment and eventually began to strengthen and return to my employment but what I'm saying is that's where I learnt the lesson and I've never forgotten it never forgotten it I don't say that in the subsequent years which now is thirty and more years I've always been free from the contagion of material orientation covetousness is built into us by nature beware of covetousness says the

Lord himself for a man's life consisteth not in the things which he possesses what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul my friends surround yourself with all the riches of the universe and it's an easy thing with God to destroy it in a moment that's the lesson that's the lesson we need a stronghold that is beyond the limits of anything that this world can give to us because it's an easy thing with God to strip us of everything in which we find false security Tyrus did build herself a stronghold are you building yourself a stronghold

I don't want to build myself a stronghold I want a stronghold that God has built a stronghold that God has built God will never destroy my friend but any alternative that man in the puny exercise and falsity of his own judgment creates the jealousy of God will burn and the power of God will inevitably destroy Tyrus did build herself a stronghold and it seems that God suffered her to prosper you know God does sometimes he allows us to prosper in a way we go on from strength to strength and we become shall I say more impressed with our prosperity that we soon judge there's nothing wrong with what we're doing because it's all prospering it's like

Jonah taking his escape to Tarshish he found a boat waiting for him and everything seems to go on successfully doesn't it until God comes to judgment God met Jonah in the middle of the sea with a mighty storm and my friends what happens to Tyrus eventually and her impregnability as she supposed it to be well God raises up Alexander the Great and gives him the wisdom to undermine the strength and security of that double wall 150 foot high with 25 feet of solid earth between the two walls and he comes up underneath and he turns as it were the whole balance that the security of

Tyrus is destroyed God has ways and means unthought of unaccounted for of overturning and overthrowing the false security of mankind well in conclusion let me ask you this question where is your trust this morning on what are you relying where is the center of your interest are you a spiritually minded person or are you a carnally minded person are your thoughts on things above or are your thoughts and affections on things on the earth my friends face the question are you trusting in false security like times or are you truly trusting in

[ 38 : 05 ] God the impregnable promise giving and promise performing almighty one amen to close the service by singing hymn 1010 father what air earthly bliss thy sovereign will denies accepted at thy throne of grace let this petition rise release beyond ■ on asha in all will the day of the earth will ensure that he may keep the rolling prophet thy household chaired will break out of his and accept them speak their ashamed not yea ■ ■

Let heaven die, love of grace, let his redemption rise.

Let his redemption rise. Give me the power of the thankful heart of every world free.

Let heaven die, love of grace, let his redemption rise.

Let heaven die, love of grace, let his redemption rise.

[ 40 : 55 ] Let heaven die, love of grace, let his redemption rise.

Let heaven die, love of grace, let his redemption rise.

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Let heaven die, love of grace, let his redemption rise.

Let heaven die, love of grace, let his redemption rise. Lord, do sanctify our hearts through the truth, and help us to live more unto thee, that it may be our coveted desire to walk with thee.

[ 42 : 15 ] With us, however, thou shalt lead and guide. Forgive our sins and our shortcomings. May the grace of the Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, the sweet and abiding communion of God the Holy Ghost, be with you all.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.

[ 44 : 10 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.