

All right. If you get out your Bibles, we're going to be in Zechariah chapter 12. This week as we continue our journey through the Bible. And as you guys are making your way to Zechariah 12, it is the first Sunday of the month and we most months observe Communion on the first Sunday. So we will do that at the conclusion of our service. Also, as you're making your way there, let me catch you up to speed with the historical context of this book. As many of you may know, if you've been here in 536 BC, after 70 years of captivity in Babylon, 42,000 Jews are just a small remnant of the million or so deported in 586 BC were allowed to return to Jerusalem at the decree of Cyrus the Great. You would think that everybody would come back when he issued this decree, but just a very few did. Those very few were excited about a building, the temple. The temple had been destroyed, so they had the mission to rebuild the holy place where God resided in Israel. And so, as we mentioned, the first year they returned, they began rebuilding the temple. But the work stalled as soon as it got started because of opposition, and it stalled for 16 full years. So when God's grace had run its course, he stirred up two prophets to urge them to get back to work on rebuilding the temple. And as we mentioned, these two prophets back to back in our books, we call minor prophets. The first ones, Haggai, he's very brief. He's very practical. You might even say pragmatic. He says, hey, stop building your paneled houses and get back to the proper priority, which is building the Lord's house. And then he also the Lord sends Zechariah, because while we can all appreciate the direct approach, sometimes we need someone to soft pedal it just a little bit. And so Zechariah is very long winded. He's very mystical, but he's also very encouraging. And so what he does is he says, look, this thing's way bigger than you can do, but it will be accomplished not by your might and not by your power, but by my spirit, says the Lord. And that's the key verse to the whole book. Chapter four, verse 6. His approach in his long winded version of the Lord's encouragement is to begin with visions. Chapters one through six, eight visions. And the Lord does that because, as we've mentioned, they didn't have enough resources. They didn't have a supply chain. They were opposed on every side, weren't skilled. So the thing was way bigger than them. And what God does is he, through these visions, opens up a peak, you might say, behind the curtain for them so they can see the supernatural power of God that will accomplish this thing. And then in chapter 7 and eight, we have this question from the people of Bethel recorded. Zechariah answers the question with a question, and then he turns it on its head, their question, and says, look, this thing's really not so much about the here and now, the here and now. Being faithful in what God has called you to do is actually about something way bigger than you know. So it is important that you're faithful in your time and place in history. But for them, if they would be faithful, then they were going to pave the way for the Messiah to come. And that would happen in 500 years. If they do the work of rebuilding the temple right now. In fact, Jesus would walk in the temple that they were building on those very stones. They were laying. And then finally, because it's about Messiah and about a thing that's way bigger than them, the final chapters, chapters nine through 14, are about the Messiah. The Prince is predicted. And as we mentioned, Zechariah talks more about the second coming of Christ than any other minor prophet, and yet he doesn't do that chronologically as far as it pertains to Christ's first and second coming, because he talks about both of them. He starts with the Second Coming. In chapter 10, he jumps back to the first coming in chapter 11, and then he's going to jump back to the Second coming today in chapter 12. Of course, you guys know in the original there were no chapter breaks. In the original. We would study all three of these chapters at once. You guys would be hanging on my every word for hours. But since none of that is the case, then you have to understand back and forth we go. And the eastern mind learns more in a lazy Susan type of environment, where you spend the sucker and pick out here or there, where we usually in the Western mind learn chronologically. So even though that's the way we normally learn, we have to set that aside and follow Zechariah's lead. So all that said, then the Jews had ignored the Old Testament prophecies that were fulfilled at Jesus first coming. We talked about some of this last week, so they were looking for that conquering King predicted in chapter 10 of Zechariah at Jesus second coming. So they missed the good Shepherd that would lay his life down for the people. The Jesus at his first coming emphasized in

chapter 11. And consequently, as we looked at the end of chapter 11, the Jews, having been blinded in part for this season of the church Age, this time of the Gentiles, they'll actually eventually embrace a worthless shepherd, the Antichrist, because they failed to embrace the good Shepherd. What some would call cascading failure that is, cascading failure. One failure in a system that's very complex, which leads to total system failure. So it's a small neglect that leads to catastrophic outcomes. And I like the poem that I have here for you, or the old proverb that illustrates this for want of a nail, for want of a nail. The shoe was lost, for want of a shoe, the horse was lost for want of a horse. The rider was lost for want of a rider. The battle was lost for want of a battle. The kingdom was lost. All for the want of a nail. And cascading failure is a real spiritual danger. Not just for the Jews, but for you and I. Another illustration biblically is the Apostle Peter. What he has maybe as well known for as anything else, is denying Jesus three times on the day or the night of Jesus crucifixion. But do that. That was the result of cascading failure. The failure or the denial actually began way back in Matthew chapter 16, when Jesus at Caesarea Philippi began to speak about his necessary on the cross, and Peter rebuked him, he forbid him. He said, not so, Lord, that not so that not embracing an aspect of Christ that Christ presented of himself led to eventually a denial. So two then when I think about that, I think about the Second coming, the second coming is the end of the gospel. It's very complex. There's a bunch of moving parts. A lot of people have different ideas on the Second Coming, because the Bible, again, does not lay it out in a linear fashion. It causes a lot of people to overemphasize. It causes a bunch of other people to ignore it completely and just chuck it out the window and say, it's all going to pan out. That's difficult, because without the Second Coming, you don't have the completion of the gospel. Jesus said, if I go away, I'm going to prepare a place for you. And if I prepare a place for you, I'm going to come back and get you. I'm going to consummate all things through my return. And so, ignoring, misunderstanding or over emphasizing the second coming, any one of those things can lead to large collapse. And I wanted to say that because today is a day where mostly this chapter emphasizes the second coming. So hopefully we can, by the Spirit of God, embrace some of what's talked about here this morning. Chapter 12, verse 1. The burden of the word of the Lord against Israel. And thus says the Lord, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the man within him. So the burden in my Bible, it's a burden. It's also translated oracle. It's also translated prophecy. This prophecy or burden is against Israel, but it is the word of the Lord. And then the Lord goes out of his way to describe who the Lord is, who's giving them this prophecy, this is the Lord who created the heavens and the earth, and who breathes the spirit of man. The Ruach, into man, to give him life. So if you go back to Genesis chapter 1, verse 1, in the beginning, God, created the heavens and the earth, and he created man in his own image. And he breathed the breath of life into man. That God, Elohim, that the Bible presents is Jehovah of the Israelites. So he's confirming who he is, the God who speaks the heavens and earth into existence and breathes man into existence. This is the same God, the Lord Jehovah, who speaking to them to confirm the Word of God in their lives. And now what's that word? Well, the prophecy is behold, verse 2, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples. When they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples, all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces. The nations of the earth are gathered against it, so this predicts the Jerusalem problem. It predicts a time when every nation on earth will be against Jerusalem, and they'll be surrounded by enemies. We see and live in a time when these prophecies are beginning to come true. Israel has been opposed since the day it miraculously became a nation in 1948, and when we think about this Jerusalem specifically is hotly contested because of the Temple Mount and the dome of the Rock, and the Jews desire to rebuild the temple. But Jerusalem is emblematic of all of Israel. Just this week I was reading in the post, here's the headline Americans now sympathize more with Palestinians than Israelis. Poll finds. The article goes on to say there's been a sharp drop in sympathy for Israelis since the Hamas October 7th, 2023, attack. And this reflects a worldwide sentiment, which is marked by widespread disapproval of Israel's military actions.

While at the same time rallying around the Palestinians in Gaza, who elected a terror organization to govern them and support and participated in the attempted eradication of Israelis. And yet, when you think about this, you watch the news, you see that the Palestinian people or the nations around Israel, as they oppose Israel since they've been put back in the land, they are chopped into pieces. All their enemies. And by the way, I say this, this is not a political statement. This is a biblical statement. You don't have to like it. You don't have to agree with how it's going down. But you'd best side with the Bible and understand that God prophesied this. That would happen 500 years before Christ's first coming. And I love to turn on the television and be able to see the Bible being birthed. The prophecies right out in front of us. Even if I don't understand it all, or I can feel pain or hurt for people who are marginalized. So there is a Jerusalem problem now and it will get worse. Verse four goes on to say, this in that day, says the Lord, I will strike every rider that's in the day that Jerusalem is eventually surrounded and invaded. I will strike every horse with confusion and its rider with madness, and I will open my eyes on the house of Judah, and I will strike every horse of the peoples with blindness, and the governors of Judah shall say in their heart the inhabitants of Jerusalem are my strength in the Lord God of hosts. Or excuse me, the Lord of hosts, their God. That's the Lord of heavenly armies. And in that day I will make the governors of Judah like a fire pan in the woodpile. And like a fiery torch in the sheaves. They shall devour all the surrounding peoples on the right hand and on the left. But Jerusalem shall be inhabited again. Jerusalem. So God is going to strike down every horse and every rider with blindness and confusion. Have I mentioned that Zechariah loves horses? He loves the Second Coming, and man, he loves horses. Almost every other chapter horses. There are people that make a case for in the first chapter, it's the horses that are speaking, not the angels. Horses. I mean horses everywhere reminds me of the story of this guy who got his car stuck in a ditch and he was out on a rural country road, and as he sat there wondering what he would do, along came a farmer with a horse named dusty. He said, I'll pull you out. So he hooked dusty and his rope up to the car, and then as the driver watched, the farmer yelled out, pull! Zoomer! And nothing! And then he watched again as the the farmer yelled, pull radar! Nothing! Then the third time, he cried out, pull dancer! Nothing! Then a fourth time he said, pull! Dusty leaned into his harness, pulled that car right out of the ditch. The driver looked at the farmer and said, why in the world would you call your horse by all those other names? He said, oh, old Dusty's blind if he thought he was pulling by himself, he wouldn't do one thing. We probably all got a little dusty in us anyway. In that day, the Bible predicts a day where the Lord will. He will protect Jerusalem supernaturally. In that day, the leaders of old will actually gain a deep conviction that God is their strength. When it's God alone who protects them, then they will be secure as they are, since they've been put back into the land, confirmed in the city Jerusalem. And this scenario talked about here in Zechariah is described in Ezekiel chapter 38 and 39. We don't have time this morning to rehash it all. You can go watch or listen to the teaching on our archives there. The Parkland Chapel app. Suffice it to say that what's described in Ezekiel 38 and 39 as we see the birth pangs towards this deal, is all the nations of the earth will surround Jerusalem, and then they will invade and God will supernaturally defend his people ecologically. Apparently, he'll cause blindness and a stupor. There'll be beaten back, protected by the Lord and the people of Israel start to awake to the fact that God truly is their defender, not even their substantial military might. And so, as I say that then as we talked about the Antichrist last week and his seven year peace treaty with Israel, just let me make you aware of something. The proposed peace treaty that's being hammered out as we speak in the Middle East. I wouldn't put much stock in that deal because until the Antichrist comes, there'll be no lasting peace. And I'll tell you what else I wouldn't do. I wouldn't bet against Israel if I was a betting man, because God put them back in the land and he's going to supernaturally protect them there until Jesus comes back. That's according to Scripture. So verse 7, the Lord will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall not become greater than that of Judah in that day the Lord will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The one who is feeble among them. In that day shall be

like David, and the house of David shall be like God, like the angel of the Lord before them. And shall that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations who come against Jerusalem. So I love this, because as the Lord saves Israel, specifically Jerusalem, the capital city, he mentions that it will save the tents of Judah. First, the tents of Judah, as I have here for you, refer to outlying areas. Country. This is the rule, people. This is the. God's going to save them first and he's going to do it so that the inhabitants of Jerusalem will not have greater glory than that of Judah. Isn't it the case that cities usually get all the glory and people are just flying over our territory? God says, no, I see you. I'm going to make sure that you don't get overlooked. When I reestablish this nation. I like that because when you read your Bible, you always have to fall back when you don't understand something. On what the character of God is, because the character of God never changes. He always acts in accordance to his character. So what's true for Israel is that when God reestablishes them, he's going to elevate the overlooked so that they don't feel marginalized, or so that the inhabitants of the city don't feel haughty. But what is going to be true and what has been true throughout the ages with the Lord is true right in our day. First Corinthians chapter 12. In your Bible, first Corinthians 12 will usually be titled something like spiritual gifts, unity with diversity or unity in diversity. And so it's a chapter talking about how we all are a necessary part in the body of Christ and the gifts that God gives us need to be enacted so that we can be strong. So verse 20, but now Paul says, indeed, there are many members, yet one body and the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you, nor again the head to the feet. I have no need of, you, no much rather those members of the body, which seem to be weaker, are necessary, and those members of the body which we think to be less honorable on those we bestow great honor and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty. The Bible says that in the body, a human body, we cover up our most important parts, even though we might consider them dishonorable. If exposed, they actually are more honorable in the sense that they are necessary for life and reproduction. But our presentable party says without those others have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, that there should be no schism, that is no division in the body, that the members should have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it. Or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. And so in the body of Christ, whether I'm an eye or an armpit. I'm necessary. And I'm valued. It doesn't matter what other people think. It matters what God thinks. And if I don't step into who God to be in the body of Christ, then the whole body suffers. And when I do, even if I don't feel like I'm doing my part to the best that I could, or I feel inadequate, I've become who God made me even in my weakness, then the whole body is strengthened. And even if I'm overlooked in this life, then the Bible says in the kingdom first will be last. And the last will be first. And so that's going to happen in Judah and Israel as well. In that day that the Lord defends the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And when he does, he's going to take Bible and the feeble will be like David. And David was bad motor scooter. And yet more so the angel of the Lord. Now imagine this. This is Pre-incarnate renderings of Jesus Christ, where he shows up to intervene in Israel's history when no one else can save them. And so in that day, the feeble shall be like David again. That's how God works when he's going to do a major work, then he does it against all odds. I'm reminded of the story of Gideon. Many of you know this story from the Book of Judges. I just want to read a few verses there, because in verse 11 of chapter 6, the angel of the Lord, speaking of him, came and sat under the terebinth tree, which was in Ophrah that belonged, while his son Gideon threshed wheat in the winepress, in order to hide it from the Midianites. You know that they didn't thresh wheat in a winepress. You did that up on top of a hill, so that the chaff would blow away. He was threshing wheat in a winepress, because he didn't want the Midianites to wait till the harvest had been done. The threshing had been done, and then they would roll in and take everything. After it was finished, he was scared, and the angel of the Lord came to him said, the Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor. And then verse 14, the Lord turned to him and said, go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have I not sent you? So Gideon's reaction, oh, my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed, my clan is the weakest in Manasseh,

and I am the least in my father's house. That's what we often say when the Lord calls us to do something, he doesn't call us to do something we think we can do, or it wouldn't be faith. So when he calls us to do something, it usually scares the bejesus out of us. And if we respond like Gideon, the Lord says the same thing to us. He says to Gideon, surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites as one man. And so if the Lord be for us, who can be against us? And so what he did in Gideon is emblematic of what he'll do in that last day with just a few. The feeblest in this tiny nation fighting like the mightiest warriors. And again, if I had the time to recount to you stories since 1948, their day of independence, 1967, the Six Day War, 1973, the Yom Kippur War, 2005, the war with Lebanon. Even in the past couple of years, all the miraculous events have taken place for this feeble little nation. It's off heavily favored opponents and powers. We could show the miraculous nature of this prophecy coming true, but I don't have time, okay? Because you guys won't give me 3 or 4 hours. But I'm not. I'm better. Verse ten. And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplication. And then they will look on me, whom they pierced. Now in the day that the Lord actually begins to reestablish Israel, he will pour out his spirit. The blindness, the veils, will be the scales, you might say, lifted from their eyes, and they will see the one they've pierced. In a sense, the Jews caused Jesus death. You could say Jesus. Actually, it's an interesting study. If you ever want to ponder it. Jesus bled from three. Excuse me? From seven places. From the crown of thorns on his forehead, nails in each hand, nails in each foot, his back shredded, and his side pierced. Of course, the Romans actually executed Jesus. He was charged with sedition by Pilate, but that was all trumped up and instigated by the Jews. And so then, in a sense, you could say the Jews crucified Jesus. The Bible uses that sense. In a sense, you could say rightly so, that you and I crucified Jesus. Isaiah 53 says in verse 5, But he was wounded for our transgressions, and that word wounded is pierced. He was pierced for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him. So in that sense you could say, you and I caused Jesus death. We did indeed. But in another sense it supersedes those first two senses. Jesus allowed himself to be pierced, for he said, no man takes my life, but I lay it down freely. When Pilate had Jesus in front of him, Pilate said, do you not know that I have your life in my hands? And Jesus said, you have no power except I give it to you. So Jesus laid his life down for his sheep as the pierced one. And in that day. Yes. Verse ten says, they will mourn for him as one mourns for his only son. And though grieve for him as one grieves for a firstborn, and that day there shall be great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning at Haddad rim on in the plain of Megiddo, or Armageddon, and the land shall mourn every family by itself. The family of the house of David, that is the King by itself. And their wives by themselves. The family of the house of Nathan, that is, the prophet by itself. And their wives by themselves. The family of the house of Levi, that is, the priests by itself and their wives by themselves. The family of Shimei, who was an enemy of David by itself, and their wives by themselves. All the families that remain, every family by itself and their wives by themselves. And so in that day, though more as one mourns for his only son, as Jesus is the only begotten son of the father, they rejected him at his first coming. But as we talked about last week, when the Antichrist comes and deceives the Jews through what will probably be fake resurrection, then destroys the Jews when they will not worship him as their God, their eyes will finally be opened. As I mentioned, just like Saul on the road to Damascus was struck down, and when he got to the home of Ananias, something like scales fell off his eyes and he was able to see truly the resurrected Christ in that day. They will mourn like the morning in the plain of Megiddo. And this is a direct reference to Kings 2329. And I think it's second Chronicles 35. Like verse 20 ish. And that is their beloved King Josiah, who was one of the greatest kings in Judah. Got himself into a tussle with Pharaoh Necho, even though Nico said, leave me alone, you shouldn't fight with me. And they plucked an arrow. One of the Egyptian soldiers, and let it fly, and it struck Josiah and killed him when he shouldn't even been in the battle. He had disguised so he wouldn't be recognized. And the whole country mourned this beloved king. And so that reference is made, because in the day that the Lord reestablished Reestablishes Israel at the end of the tribulation period,

everyone's going to mourn. They're going to see him for who he is the kings, the prophets, the priests, the people, enemies alike will mourn the fact that they missed their Savior, that they actually put him to death. That his first coming. Now, as we get ready to take Communion, then I just want to make a few points as a prayer. Actually, when I think about today's study, Communion is for us to look back at what Jesus had done cross when he was pierced. John tells us that from that wound came blood and water. We've mentioned before those are the birthing fluids he was birthing new life, a new covenant as Zechariah mentions. We look forward to what Jesus will do, which is to come back and set all things right. And we've mentioned this Romans says the the world itself is groaning for some redemption from this deal. If you feel heavy this morning, if it's hard, if it's dark, it's weighty until Jesus comes back practically that will never go away. The first coming will take care of some of that spiritually. And as we live out the kingdom, we can take the edge off a little bit of that here and there in our little communities, practically. But ultimately, Jesus must come back to just give us a collective exhale. Yet as we observe Communion, we look at what Jesus has done and what he will do. The Bible tells us to examine ourselves, to look at what he's doing right now, to look inward. And so I have a few prayers just from the things I was gleaning from this particular section. I'm going to pray through as we get ready to observe Communion. So, Heavenly Father, I pray remove from myself and these here the cascading failure in our lives. Take us back to see and recognize where we diverge from the past, something that we didn't acknowledge or accept about you, or have ignored, which has led us to this spot. Holy spirit, open my eyes so that I can see Jesus as the Bible reveals him, not as I maybe desire him to be in Jesus. Grant me the humility to value the dishonorable parts in my life and in the body of Christ. As to promote unity in Jesus name. We pray. Amen.