

The Minor Profits

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[0 : 00] Okay guys, if you will open your scriptures please to Zechariah, we are in chapter 3. And I know it's difficult as it is sometimes because we get into material that is kind of, that is just loaded and it's very difficult to pass over.

But, and I have to remind myself, so what? We're not on any time schedule. We don't have to cover any certain amount of material in any particular length of time. And yet, we started this study in the Minor Prophets quite some time ago.

I don't remember exactly when it was, but we would like to move along and we are going to try and take chapter 3. But we ought to be able to do that because it's only got nine verses in it.

And yet, some of the verses are very well loaded. Chapter 3 of Zechariah, this is another of the visions that Zechariah is being given by God.

I want to remind you, excuse me, the difference between a vision and a dream of course is in the vision, the one who is having it is wide awake.

[1 : 05] And he sees this vision as a panoramic thing, like you would be looking at a giant movie screen. Whereas a dream of course, somebody is asleep. So this is another vision that he is having.

And it involves Joshua the high priest, not to be confused with Joshua who was the successor to Moses. This is an entirely different Joshua.

And it is several hundred years later than the Joshua who followed Moses. This Joshua is referred to as the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him.

Well, the first question that comes to mind is, what is Satan doing there in the presence of the Lord? And the only conclusion to which I can come is that he has access to the presence of the Lord in heaven.

I know that's an inconceivable concept for us to entertain. Simply because we have two extremities present. We have the one who is absolute purity and holiness.

[2 : 22] And the one who is the complete opposite, Satan, in his presence. How can that be? And all I can suggest is that this is done by the permissive will of God, whereby he allows Satan to be there in his presence.

And I would remind you that in the book of Job, Satan obviously had access to God, carried on conversation with him, and suggested that if Job had his goodies taken away from him that God had given him, he would turn on you and curse you to your face.

And that began the great experiment in the life of Job, and you all know what took place and how it turned out. So it is recorded in the book of Job, which, by the way, is one of the older books of the Old Testament.

In fact, some go so far as to say that Job was likely a contemporary of Abraham. That can't be established. But the point that I want to make is that even there, Satan had some kind of access to the deity.

And to reinforce that a little bit, keep your place in Zechariah, and come back with me, if you would, to Revelation chapter 12.

[3 : 49] Revelation chapter 12. Revelation 12. And this is a rather fascinating passage. This is about as messianic as you can get.

Revelation 12 says, A great sign appeared in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun.

Now, if you can imagine this, this is a highly descriptive kind of picture, and you have to use your imagination to try and put a handle on what John is saying he is describing.

It is a woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet. And on her head, a crown of 12 stars.

Well, what in the world is this all about? And another sign appeared in heaven. And behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems.

[5 : 04] Now, we cannot stop here to explore this, but I can assure you every single one of these has tremendous significance. We will get to it later on in Zechariah, because it ties in with what we're seeing here in chapter 12 of Revelation.

And we read in verse 4, And his tail, that is the tail of this great dragon, swept away a third of the stars of heaven.

And we indicated before in times past that when the Bible uses the term stars like this in Old and New Testament, it is referring to major dignitaries, major players.

And we even translate this in our culture today, when we talk about a particular play or a movie.

What's one of the first questions that's always asked? Who's starring in it? Who is the star? That means the principal player, the individual or individuals upon whom all the focus is placed.

[6 : 16] And that is the biblical expression of it as well. It means a principal in one, an important one. And these stars here, I believe, are simply angelic beings, and they represent the third of the angelic crew that God had originally created that were recruited by Lucifer when he fell, and they followed him.

If my understanding of this is correct, and I can't guarantee that it is, but it seems that these fallen angels have become what we would call demonic spirits.

God did not create them fallen, and he did not create demons, but he did create angels with volition, as he created human beings with volition, and gave them the ability to exercise negative or positive response to him.

And Lucifer, who is referred to as the star of the morning, the sun of the morning, rebelled against his creator, much the same way Adam and Eve did, and as a result, they exercised their volition in a negative way, and put themselves in an entirely different sphere than what God created in them.

Because God did not create them fallen, he did not create them evil, but he did create them with a will, with a volitional capacity. And by the way, this is extended to all of us.

[7 : 54] We all have this thing called a will. And it is in accordance with that will, and how we exercise it, that provides the basis for our accountability before God.

Because we do have a capacity to make choices, and we will be held accountable for the choices we make. Well, let's get on with this now. This tale swept away a third of the stars of heaven, and threw them to the earth, and the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth, he might devour her child.

And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, and her child was caught up to God and to his throne.

And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she might be nourished for 1,260 days.

And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels. Michael remains one of the chief angels.

[9 : 18] He is apparently the archangel for Israel. It is Michael who is assigned the responsibility for the care and the welfare of the nation of Israel.

He is their primary angel, and that will come into play later when we see further on in Zechariah and also in Daniel. And Michael and the dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven.

And the great dragon was thrown down. The serpent of old, who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world, he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

Now the point that I want to make is quite simple, is that he had to have been in heaven in order to be thrown down to the earth. And he was. And the vision that John is giving here and has recorded is that recognition that there was a time when Satan had access to the presence of God and he is removed.

He's kicked out, as it were. This appears to be the end of his access to God. And what this is telling us is that this is continuing to this day and he will not be cast out of heaven until this time is fulfilled that John is describing here.

[10 : 59] And of course the woman, the woman is the nation of Israel. Now I know our Roman Catholic friends like to make the woman to be Mary. But it isn't Mary.

And the context makes it very clear that this is talking about the nation of Israel and the twelve stars in verse one have reference, of course, to the twelve tribes of Israel.

And this also goes back to Joseph's dream. All the way back in Genesis when Joseph had this dream about the stars, about the sun and the moon and they were making obeisance to him.

This is all tied together. And this who is to give birth is none other than Israel. And what and who Israel is to give birth to is Yeshua, Hamashiach, Jesus the Messiah.

and he is the child that Satan is seeking to devour. And some are of the opinion and I can't disagree with this that this attempt goes all the way back to the very birth of Christ when Mary was required to move when she was great with child even almost at the point of delivery that that was Satan's early attempt to get rid of Christ even back then because he knew that this promised one was going to be the Messiah and he even instigated evil Herod to try and eliminate him by killing all of the babies boys that were two years of age and under all of this is connected together.

[12 : 30] And that this woman is going to be fled into the wilderness this too in my estimation is going to be fulfilled in the last days when the remnant of Israel will be holed up in Petra.

This is the wilderness where the woman will flee to she will be or Israel will be providentially protected by that time. So let's come back now if we may to Zechariah and keep in mind that this conversation that is taking place obviously has to do with Satan even today even today having this access to heaven.

And by the way one of the one of the activities that is assigned to Satan is he is referred to as the accuser of the brethren.

And we saw that in Revelation 12. He is the accuser of the brethren and that means that there has to be he has to have access to God to make that accusation and we certainly know that Satan has access to us because he is referred to as a roaring lion who walks about the earth seeking whom he may devour.

1 Peter 5.8 and that he is he sometimes presents himself as an angel of light. He is the consummate deceiver.

[13 : 54] He is a destroyer. He is a liar. He is a murderer. All of these things negatively can be assigned to Satan. So let us continue on. The Lord said to Satan The Lord rebuke you Satan Now that's an interesting expression.

What? What? Who's talking here anyway? The Lord said to Satan The Lord rebuke you. What is that all about?

Is this some kind of double talk? Is he talking to himself or to whom is he speaking? Well he is speaking this is the father speaking to the son.

And this involves two of the beings of the triune Godhead. Keep your place here in Zechariah if you would and come back to Psalm 110 and it sheds a little bit of light on this and there are other passages as well but we just don't don't want to take the time I'd really like to get through this chapter but then again I remind myself so what we're not on on this timetable.

So Psalm 110 we've got a similar kind of expression in verse 1 The Lord says to my Lord sit at my right hand.

[15 : 17] Now you see the word Lord we pointed this out before you see the word Lord you see how it's spelled all capital letters you see the second word Lord how it begins with a capital letter but it's followed by small case letters in the Hebrew which doesn't come across in the English so they they try to explain it in the English by spelling it differently which is a little bit of a help but in the Hebrew the first word for Lord is Yahweh or Jehovah and the second word that is rendered Lord is Adonai it is another name for deity but it is another expression and most Bible teachers are of the opinion that this represents two members of the triune Godhead the Father and the Son and here it is the Father the Father is and this by the way is very Messianic that's speaking of the Messiah and what we have here is God the Father is speaking to His Son

Jesus and He is inviting Him to sit at His right hand that is the Father is extending the invitation to the Son to sit at the Father's right hand and that by the way is significant we won't take time to go into it but He's not invited to sit at His left hand but to sit at His right hand and the right hand is the position of prominence it is the position of honor and the position of authority to sit at His right hand this is the Father saying to the Son sit here at my right hand until I make your enemies that is the enemies of Jesus a footstool for thy feet this means that the time is coming when the enemies of Jesus Christ will be in complete and entire subjection to Him they will be as it were at His feet this is when

Israel a la Deuteronomy this is when Israel will be made the head and not the tail and Moses tells the children of Israel if you obey the Lord your God He will establish your supremacy and throughout all of the world you will be the head of the nations and not the tail but but Moses goes on to say if you rebel against the Lord and you do not obey His commandments you will become the tail and not the head in other words you will become the subservient one and you know as well as I do that the Jewish nation and the Jewish people have been subjected to incredible persecution and mistreatment and everything virtually since their existence and in some respects that continues even to this day despite the progress that has been made in Israel which is tremendous they still they still have they are they are surrounded by enemies on every side someone has said the only the only neighbor that Israel has that is not hostile to it is the Mediterranean Sea and that's that's the way it is so what we have here is Messianic as well and and the Lord is going to make the enemies of Christ his footstool when that time comes so this is a curious expression where the Father and the Son is speaking to them one to another and in verse 2 back to Zechariah now

I apologize for my voice I thought this is partly due to 84 year old vocal cords you know in the morning I got a little ritual that sometimes I use before I do any recording when I record Christianity Clarified I mix up a solution of apple cider vinegar and water and it kind of clears away the the phlegm there but I didn't have it this morning so the Lord said to Satan verse 2 the Lord rebuke you Satan indeed the Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you is this not a brand plucked from the fire and fellas there is no way that I can adequately explain God's care and concern for the city of Jerusalem and for the land of Israel for that matter Israel you know as well as I do that the whole earth is the Lord's he owns the cattle on a thousand hills and he's created all things and he brought all things into existence and therefore it all belongs to him yet at the same time the tiny state of Israel is the only geographical location in all of the universe that God refers to as my land isn't that interesting my land no other nation is designated by God as my land and that is really significant and needs to be kept in mind particularly with these prophetic studies the Lord has chosen

Jerusalem rebuke you is this not a brand plucked from the fire and that expression simply indicates that this Jerusalem this people is one that was at the edge of the precipice or in the burning coals of fire and was about to be destroyed and consumed and it is as though someone took a pair of tongs and reached into the fire and found the right coal that was burning and pulled it out to keep it from being consumed with the others that were in there that's Jerusalem that's Israel that's the picture that is being made that Israel is just indestructible is a brand plucked from the fire now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and standing before the angel Joshua as the high priest and this again not to be confused with the other Joshua that followed

[22 : 18] Moses this Joshua serving as the high priest is in these garments priestly garments that are contaminated with filth with dirt unacceptable that is nothing more than a picture of the whole state of Israel in rebellion and in rejection and it is typified by Joshua having these filthy garments because the high priest is supposed to be the spiritual epitome of Israel he is supposed to be the one closest to God he is supposed to be the one purest of all he is supposed to be the one most reflecting the character of God but what is he wearing garments of filth that is a picture suggesting that Israel is in a position of unacceptable to God beginning with the top of the religious echelon all the way down and it is as sort of pictured as it can possibly be he is standing before the angel with these filthy garments and he spoke and said to those who were standing before him saying remove the filthy garments from him again he said to him see

I have taken your iniquity away from you I will clothe you with festal robes fellas this represents as great an about face as could be imagined this is the casting off of the filthy garments and by the way the picture of course is just using how else would you describe the moral and spiritual condition of a nation how would you picture that well this is the way it is pictured for Zechariah you cannot in your mind's eye conceive of a nation that is inundated with moral filth and rejection so you condense it and you personalize it by assigning it to an individual who represents the ultimate in the religious aperture of Israel and it is the high priest and he's got these filthy garments on and they're going to be taken off this is a picture of their redemption of their cleansing of their pardon of their complete about face in verse five reinforces that let them put a clean turban on his head so they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments while the angel of the Lord was standing by this represents a complete reversal this is a transfer of the nation from its impurity and rejection and unbelief and sin and evil and everything else to a position of being acceptable to God cleansed in the proper garment it's kind of like a picture of believers who come to faith in Christ who are referred to as having their garments washed cleansed in the blood of the lamb that's a similar kind of thing that is being expressed here but the picture that is being drawn is one that I think is very significant and very obvious once you look at the context and the angel of the

Lord admonished Joshua saying thus says the Lord of hosts if you will walk in my ways and if you will perform my service then you will also govern my house and also have charge of my court this is talking of course of Jehovah's house this is the temple this is the structure in Israel and I will grant you free access among those who are standing here now listen Joshua the high priest you and your friends this is all in this vision that he is seeing who are sitting in front of you indeed they are men who are a symbol for behold I am going to bring in my servant the branch wow the branch the branch is the

Messiah the branch is Jesus referred to in a number of places as the branch and I won't take time to go there but if you want to jot down the references and if you want to go there we can but Isaiah 4 2 Messianic refers to Jesus as the branch Isaiah 11 1 refers to him as the branch Jeremiah 23 5 is the branch and while we're in a ballpark come over if you would to Zechariah chapter 6 just a couple of verses away in chapter 6 and verse 12 then say to him thus says the Lord of hosts behold a man whose name is Branch for he will branch out from where he is and he will build the temple of the Lord this is the Messiah this is messianic Christ is referred to as the branch sometimes sometimes he's referred to as the root out of

David or the root out of Jesse which means of course he is a direct descendant of that and this branch is none other than Yeshua Hamashiach who is going to come and it will be a glorious glorious thing when he does behold I will engrave an inscription on it declares the Lord of hosts and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day and fellas how this is going to be accomplished is what we will see later on in Zechariah and just jumping ahead a little bit to chapter 12 and verse 10 this is in reference to the Messiah coming and he will make himself visible this is wow it's kind of kind of difficult to explain this but I'll do the best I can with the time we've got there is a place in southern

[29 : 28] Israel or actually it's southern Jordan that is referred to as Edom E-D-O-M it is the land of the Edomites these are the descendants of Esau not the descendants of Jacob but the descendants of Esau and there are principal cities there one of which is Petra and another is Basra and there is this huge area that is referred to as Petra some of you have seen pictures of it it is a monstrous place beautiful to behold it's a major tourist attraction and it is going to accommodate hundreds of thousands of Jews in the last day who will be gathered there in refuge from the Antichrist who was seeking to destroy them and these Jews are going to undergo an intense revival they are going to repent of their sin they are going to repent of their fathers their ancestors sin and rejecting the

Messiah and they are going to cry out to God to return his Messiah whom their forefathers rejected earlier and God will hear their cry and Jesus will come and he will come there to Petra in response to these people who cry out and these will be the ones of whom Zechariah will say later on they shall look upon him whom they pierced and they shall mourn and the mourning will be tears of repentance tears of acceptance tears of joy because the Messiah will return and he will indeed save them the Antichrist had been trying to destroy them but they were going to be providentially protected and provided for in the same way God provided for Israel when they came out of

Egypt and this is a glorious time this is where this is all going and where Zechariah is going to conclude his book we've got material to cover in between that so I'm sure some of you have questions or comments so David yeah back back back back in chapter three where you were about the brand being plucked from the fire I thought that and it goes to what you were just talking about when the revival comes of all of the Jews when they've all gathered together I thought the brand was the brand like you brand your cattle because the Jews will be and I thought that this is why the Muslims are so afraid of the Jews because even the Muslims say that the Jews are going to lead the world and that God is saying that the

Jews are his people and that they will lead the world and the brand is the Jews are the brand they're being plucked from the fire and they're going to brand God's people as you would cattle that belong to God and that they are the leaders of God's people and it's up to them to go out and gather God's people together and you know the twelve tribes you are part of my tribe I'm branding you and that's this hot brand that has been plucked from the fire to identify all of God's people well that's an interesting application to it and I certainly could not deny that I can see very easily how that fits in and it's just part and parcel of the of the what shall I say of the preeminence that God has placed upon Israel and you know all of this goes back to the covenant that

God made with Abraham Isaac and Jacob and it's an unconditional covenant because what I mean when I say it's an unconditional covenant is God told Abraham Isaac and Jacob this is what I'm going to do and it is not dependent upon your obedience it's dependent upon my faithfulness and I am not going to respond to you you have rejected me but I'm not going to respond in kind by rejecting you although we know that Israel is temporarily set aside that Romans 10 11 9 10 and 11 until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in so Israel is now set aside in divine discipline but the time is coming when God is going to bring them back on center stage and finish what he began with his people Israel and then Israel will be the head and not the tail so all of this just beautifully ties together and I appreciate your comments because that just one more aspect to enlighten us

[34 : 37] Joe right absolutely he just wants to prevent God from keeping his promise it's as simple as that and we know of course that he's not going to succeed and part of our problem in understanding all of this is we don't know how much Satan really knows and really understands sometimes I think we assign more intelligence to him than what he has but make no mistake about it he knows far more than we do and he's far stronger than we are we're no match for him at all but at the same time he has his limitations and

I have described Satan in the past like a mad dog who is on a leash and God and God and he will allow him to have whatever latitude he wants but he can yank on his leash anytime he wants it seems like his only limitations are what God what you're just saying using your analogy there is what God restricts him from that's his only limitations is what God restricts him from doing you know well he did so with Job he said I'll let you have your way with Job you can do anything take anything from him you want but I will not allow you to take his life so there he gave some restrictions