

Zechariah Chapter 11 — The Rejected Shepherd and the Broken Covenant

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Zechariah Chapter 11 is one of the darkest and most prophetic chapters in the book.

Earlier chapters spoke of restoration, blessing, the coming King, the gathering of God's people, and the strengthening of the remnant. Chapter 11 turns to the consequences of rejecting God's shepherding care.

The chapter presents several powerful pictures:

Falling cedars.

Weeping shepherds.

A flock marked for slaughter.

Two staffs named Favor and Union.

Thirty pieces of silver.

A foolish shepherd.

These images reveal both historical judgment and prophetic truth.

At the center of the chapter is the rejection of the true Shepherd.

God had cared for His people.

He had protected them.

He had warned them.

He had sent prophets.

Yet the flock rejected faithful shepherding.

That rejection is prophetically connected with the later rejection of Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd.

One of the most striking prophecies in the chapter concerns the payment of **thirty pieces of silver**.

Centuries later, Judas Iscariot would betray Jesus Christ for exactly thirty pieces of silver.

Zechariah 11 therefore teaches a sobering truth:

When people reject the true Shepherd, they eventually become vulnerable to false shepherds.

The chapter can be divided into five major sections:

1. Judgment on the Land — verses 1–3

2. **The Flock Doomed for Slaughter** — verses 4–6
3. **The Two Staffs** — verses 7–9
4. **The Broken Covenant and Thirty Pieces of Silver** — verses 10–14
5. **The Foolish Shepherd** — verses 15–17

I. JUDGMENT ON THE LAND

Zechariah 11:1

“Open your doors, Lebanon, so that fire may devour your cedars.”

Lebanon was famous throughout the ancient world for its magnificent cedar forests.

The cedar represented:

Strength.

Height.

Beauty.

Durability.

Majesty.

But God announces that fire will consume even the cedars of Lebanon.

This is a picture of overwhelming judgment.

What appears strongest to mankind is not strong enough to resist God.

Cross References in Simple American English

Isaiah 10:34 — God will cut down the great forests of Lebanon, showing that human pride and strength can fall before Him.

Ezekiel 31:3 — Assyria was compared to a magnificent cedar of Lebanon because of its greatness and power.

Jeremiah 22:7 — God warned that destroyers would come and cut down the finest cedars.

Principle

Human greatness is temporary.

Spiritual Lesson

Anything built on pride can eventually fall.

Application

Do not place ultimate confidence in:

Wealth.

Political power.

Buildings.

Reputation.

Human leadership.

Only God is permanently secure.

Zechariah 11:2

“Wail, cypress tree, for the cedar has fallen, the mighty are ruined! Wail, oaks of Bashan, for the dense forest has been cut down.”

The destruction spreads.

The cedar falls.

Then the cypress mourns.

The mighty trees of Bashan are cut down.

The picture is one of complete devastation.

If the greatest have fallen, the lesser have no reason for pride.

Cross References in Simple American English

Isaiah 2:13 — God will humble the proud cedars of Lebanon and the mighty oaks of Bashan.

Amos 2:9 — God reminded Israel that He had destroyed enemies who were tall like cedars and strong like oaks.

Ezekiel 27:6 — The valuable oaks of Bashan were used in the construction of ships, showing the strength and wealth connected with the region.

Key Truth

God is able to bring down what humans consider untouchable.

Application

Never judge security by outward appearance alone.

Zechariah 11:3

“Listen! The shepherds are crying because their glory is ruined. Listen! The lions are roaring because the lush thickets of the Jordan are destroyed.”

The devastation affects both leaders and the natural environment around them.

The shepherds cry because their pasture and prosperity are gone.

The lions roar because their habitat has disappeared.

Everything connected with security and abundance is being removed.

The word **shepherds** can also point symbolically toward rulers and leaders.

Their **glory** has collapsed.

Cross References in Simple American English

Jeremiah 25:34 — God tells corrupt shepherds and leaders to cry because judgment is coming upon them.

Jeremiah 49:19 — A lion is pictured coming from the thick growth near the Jordan.

Jeremiah 12:5 — The dangerous thickets of the Jordan are used as a picture of threatening circumstances.

Spiritual Lesson

When God judges pride, positions of leadership cannot provide protection.

II. THE FLOCK DOOMED FOR SLAUGHTER

Zechariah 11:4

“This is what the Lord my God says: ‘Shepherd the flock marked for slaughter.’”

Zechariah is instructed to act as a shepherd.

But this is no ordinary flock.

It is described as:

“the flock marked for slaughter.”

The people were moving toward judgment.

Zechariah's shepherding role becomes a prophetic picture of God's care for a people who were nevertheless resisting Him.

Cross References in Simple American English

Jeremiah 12:3 — Jeremiah asks God to separate the wicked like sheep being prepared for slaughter.

Psalms 44:22 — God's people are pictured as sheep being led toward slaughter.

Isaiah 53:7 — The suffering Servant is described as a lamb led to slaughter.

Key Principle

God can faithfully shepherd people even while warning them of coming judgment.

Zechariah 11:5

“Their buyers kill them and go unpunished; those who sell them say, ‘Praise the Lord, I am rich!’ Even their own shepherds have no pity on them.”

This is a terrible description of corrupt leadership.

The flock is treated like merchandise.

Buyers kill them.

Sellers profit from them.

Their shepherds have no compassion.

Even worse, those making money from exploitation say:

“Praise the Lord, I am rich!”

They use God’s name to justify greed.

Cross References in Simple American English

Amos 8:4 — God condemns those who exploit and take advantage of the poor.

Ezekiel 34:3 — Israel’s shepherds fed themselves instead of feeding and protecting the flock.

James 5:4 — God hears the cries of workers who have been cheated out of what they were owed.

Spiritual Lesson

Religious language cannot make greed holy.

Application

A ministry is corrupt when leaders use people primarily to enrich themselves.

Zechariah 11:6

**“For I will no longer have compassion on the people of this land,” declares the Lord.
“I will hand everyone over to their neighbors and their king. They will devastate the land, and I will not rescue them from their power.”**

Persistent rebellion has consequences.

God had shown patience.

He had sent prophets.

He had repeatedly called His people to repentance.

But there comes a point when divine restraint is removed.

The people would experience the consequences of the path they had chosen.

Cross References in Simple American English

Judges 2:14 — Because Israel repeatedly rebelled, God allowed enemies to plunder them.

2 Kings 21:14 — God warned that persistent disobedience would cause His people to be handed over to their enemies.

Hosea 1:6 — God announced a withdrawal of compassion because of continued rebellion.

Key Truth

God's patience should never be mistaken for permission to continue in sin.

III. THE TWO STAFFS

Zechariah 11:7

“So I shepherded the flock marked for slaughter, especially the poor and oppressed of the flock. I took two staffs and named one Favor and the other Union, and I shepherded the flock.”

Zechariah takes two staffs.

They are given meaningful names.

The first is:

Favor.

The second is:

Union.

These staffs represent blessings connected with God's shepherding.

Favor

Favor represents God's gracious protection, care, and restraint.

Union

Union represents harmony and brotherhood among God's people.

Notice also Zechariah's concern for:

“the poor and oppressed of the flock.”

God's shepherding has special concern for those who are vulnerable.

Cross References in Simple American English

Psalms 23:1 — The Lord is the Shepherd who cares for and provides for His people.

Ezekiel 34:16 — God promises to search for the lost, restore the scattered, and strengthen the weak.

John 10:11 — Jesus identifies Himself as the Good Shepherd who gives His life for the sheep.

Christ Connection

Zechariah's role points beyond himself toward Jesus Christ, the true Good Shepherd.

Zechariah 11:8

“In one month I got rid of three shepherds. The flock hated me, and I grew weary of them.”

The identity of these three shepherds is not clearly explained in the text.

Many interpretations have been suggested.

The safest conclusion is that the verse represents the removal of corrupt or opposing leadership.

But the more important statement is:

“The flock hated me.”

The faithful shepherd was rejected.

This anticipates a theme that reaches its ultimate expression in Jesus Christ.

Cross References in Simple American English

Jeremiah 15:6 — God describes becoming weary with His people's repeated rebellion.

Matthew 23:37 — Jesus longed to gather Jerusalem under His care, but the people refused.

John 10:20 — Some people rejected Jesus and falsely accused Him instead of receiving Him as Shepherd.

Spiritual Lesson

People sometimes reject faithful shepherding because they do not want to submit to truth.

Zechariah 11:9

“So I said, ‘I will not be your shepherd. Let the dying die, the perishing perish, and let those who remain eat one another’s flesh.’”

The rejection of the shepherd leads to severe consequences.

If the flock will not accept faithful leadership, the shepherding protection is withdrawn.

The result is:

Death.

Destruction.

Division.

Self-destruction.

The flock begins devouring itself.

Cross References in Simple American English

Hosea 4:17 — Ephraim had chosen idols so persistently that God told the prophet to leave them alone.

Jeremiah 15:2 — Those who continually rejected God would face different forms of judgment.

Matthew 15:14 — Jesus warned that blind leaders and blind followers would fall together.

Key Principle

Rejecting God's authority does not create true freedom.

It creates chaos.

IV. THE BROKEN COVENANT

Zechariah 11:10

“Then I took my staff called Favor and broke it, revoking the covenant I had made with all the nations.”

Zechariah breaks the staff called **Favor**.

This represents the withdrawal of protective favor.

The covenant language here pictures God's restraint of surrounding nations and His shepherding protection over the flock.

That protection was being removed because the Shepherd had been rejected.

Cross References in Simple American English

Genesis 15:18 — God established a covenant with Abraham and promised the land to his descendants.

Jeremiah 31:32 — Israel repeatedly violated the covenant God had made with them.

Ezekiel 34:25 — God promises a covenant of peace in which His flock will live securely.

Spiritual Lesson

Grace is precious and should never be treated with contempt.

Zechariah 11:11

“It was broken that day, and the poor of the flock who were watching me knew it was the word of the Lord.”

Some among the flock understood the significance of the prophet's actions.

The poor and oppressed were watching.

They recognized that the message came from God.

This reveals an important biblical pattern:

The humble often recognize truths the proud reject.

Cross References in Simple American English

Zephaniah 3:12 — God promises to preserve a humble and lowly people who trust Him.

Luke 2:8 — Shepherds were among the first people to hear the announcement of Jesus' birth.

Matthew 11:25 — Jesus said that God often reveals spiritual truth to the humble while the proud fail to understand.

Key Truth

A humble heart is often more receptive to God's Word than a proud mind.

Zechariah 11:12

“I said to them, ‘If you think it best, give me my wages; but if not, keep them.’ So they paid me thirty pieces of silver.”

Now comes one of the most astonishing prophetic details in Zechariah.

The Shepherd asks the people to determine what His service was worth.

Their answer:

Thirty pieces of silver.

Under the Law, thirty shekels of silver was associated with compensation for the death of a slave.

The amount communicates contempt.

The Shepherd had been treated as though His value were little more than the price of a slave.

Cross References in Simple American English

Matthew 26:15 — Judas asked what the religious leaders would give him to betray Jesus, and they paid him thirty pieces of silver.

Exodus 21:32 — Thirty pieces of silver was the compensation associated with the death of a slave.

Matthew 27:3 — After Jesus was condemned, Judas regretted his betrayal and returned the thirty pieces of silver.

Christ Connection

This prophecy points directly toward the betrayal of Jesus Christ.

Spiritual Lesson

The world can place a very low price on the One heaven values infinitely.

Zechariah 11:13

“And the Lord said to me, ‘Throw it to the potter—the magnificent price at which they valued me!’ So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the Lord, to the potter.”

The Lord responds with irony:

“The magnificent price at which they valued Me!”

Thirty pieces of silver was an insultingly low valuation.

Notice the prophetic details:

Thirty pieces of silver.

Thrown into the house of the Lord.

Connected with the potter.

These details later appear in the events surrounding Judas' betrayal of Jesus.

Judas returned the thirty pieces of silver.

He threw them into the temple.

The religious leaders used the money to purchase the potter's field.

Cross References in Simple American English

Matthew 27:9 — Matthew connects the betrayal money and the potter's field with the prophetic Scriptures.

Jeremiah 18:2 — Jeremiah was sent to the potter's house where God taught him a spiritual lesson.

Jeremiah 32:9 — Jeremiah recorded a symbolic purchase involving silver and God's promises of restoration.

Key Truth

Christ's betrayal was not outside God's knowledge.

The prophetic pattern had already been revealed centuries earlier.

Zechariah 11:14

“Then I broke my second staff called Union, breaking the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.”

The first staff, Favor, has already been broken.

Now Union is broken.

This represents division.

When God's shepherding rule is rejected, relationships among people begin breaking down as well.

Cross References in Simple American English

Ezekiel 37:19 — God promised eventually to unite Judah and Joseph into one people again.

1 Kings 12:16 — Israel divided into northern and southern kingdoms after Solomon's reign.

Hosea 1:11 — God promised that Judah and Israel would one day be reunited under one leader.

Spiritual Lesson

Rebellion against God eventually produces division among people.

V. THE FOOLISH SHEPHERD

Zechariah 11:15

“Then the Lord said to me, ‘Take once more the equipment of a foolish shepherd.’”

Zechariah is now commanded to portray another kind of shepherd.

The true shepherd has been rejected.

A foolish shepherd follows.

That progression is extremely important.

Principle

When people reject truth, they become more vulnerable to deception.

Cross References in Simple American English

John 10:12 — Jesus describes the hired worker who abandons the sheep when danger comes.

1 Samuel 13:13 — Samuel described Saul's disobedient behavior as foolish.

Ezekiel 34:8 — God condemned shepherds who allowed His flock to become prey.

Zechariah 11:16

“For I am raising up a shepherd in the land who will not care for the lost, or seek the young, or heal the injured, or feed the healthy. Instead, he will eat the meat of the fat sheep and tear off their hooves.”

This shepherd is everything a shepherd should not be.

He does not:

Seek the lost.

Care for the young.

Heal the injured.

Feed the healthy.

Protect the flock.

Instead:

He consumes the sheep.

This is leadership turned completely upside down.

Instead of sacrificing himself for the sheep, he sacrifices the sheep for himself.

Some interpreters understand this foolish shepherd as pointing beyond immediate historical leaders toward a final deceptive ruler opposed to God.

Cross References in Simple American English

John 5:43 — Jesus warned that though He came in His Father's name and was rejected, another coming in his own name would be received.

2 Thessalonians 2:4 — Paul describes a final arrogant ruler who exalts himself against God.

Ezekiel 34:10 — God promises judgment against shepherds who feed themselves rather than caring for His flock.

Spiritual Lesson

False shepherds use people.

The Good Shepherd gives Himself for people.

Zechariah 11:17

“Woe to the worthless shepherd who abandons the flock! May the sword strike his arm and his right eye! His arm will be completely withered, and his right eye totally blinded.”

The foolish shepherd will eventually face judgment.

Two parts of his body are specifically targeted:

His arm.

His right eye.

The arm represents power.

The eye represents perception, direction, and leadership.

His strength will fail.

His ability to lead will be destroyed.

Cross References in Simple American English

Psalms 10:15 — David asks God to break the power of the wicked.

Jeremiah 23:1 — God pronounces judgment upon shepherds who destroy and scatter His sheep.

Job 38:15 — God breaks the power of the wicked.

Key Truth

Abusive leadership may survive temporarily, but it never escapes God's judgment.

VI. MAJOR THEMES OF ZECHARIAH 11

1. God Judges Pride

The mighty cedars fall.

Human greatness cannot resist divine judgment forever.

2. God Condemns Corrupt Shepherds

Leaders are responsible for how they treat God's people.

3. Religious Language Can Hide Greed

The corrupt leaders said:

“Praise the Lord, I am rich!”

Their wealth did not prove God's approval.

4. The True Shepherd Can Be Rejected

The flock hated the shepherd who cared for them.

5. Rejection of God Has Consequences

Favor is broken.

Union is broken.

Protection disappears.

Division follows.

6. The Thirty Pieces of Silver Point to Christ

The exact amount later appears in Judas' betrayal of Jesus.

7. The Potter Points Toward the Betrayal of Christ

The silver is connected with the temple and the potter, just as it later would be in the betrayal account.

8. Rejected Truth Leads to False Shepherds

The faithful shepherd is rejected.

The foolish shepherd follows.

9. God Judges Worthless Leadership

The foolish shepherd eventually loses both strength and sight.

VII. CHRIST IN ZECHARIAH 11

Zechariah 11 contains remarkable prophetic pictures of Jesus Christ.

1. Christ Is the Good Shepherd

Jesus declared:

“I am the Good Shepherd.”

He did what the false shepherds refused to do.

He sought the lost.

He healed the broken.

He fed the hungry.

He protected His sheep.

He gave His life for them.

2. Christ Was Rejected

The Shepherd in Zechariah was despised by the flock.

Jesus likewise came to His own and was rejected.

3. Christ Was Betrayed for Thirty Pieces of Silver

This is one of the clearest prophetic details in the chapter.

The amount stated by Zechariah appears exactly in the betrayal of Jesus.

4. The Silver Was Thrown into the Temple

Zechariah threw the silver into the house of the Lord.

Judas threw the betrayal money into the temple.

5. The Silver Became Connected With a Potter

The prophecy mentions the potter.

The betrayal money was later used to purchase a potter's field.

6. The True Shepherd Gives His Life

The foolish shepherd consumes the sheep.

Jesus does the opposite.

He says:

“The Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep.”

VIII. THE THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER

The thirty pieces of silver deserve special attention because they provide one of the strongest connections between Zechariah and the events surrounding Christ's crucifixion.

The Shepherd is asked to be valued.

The people choose thirty pieces of silver.

That was the price associated with a slave.

Centuries later:

Judas went to the chief priests.

He asked:

“What will you give me if I betray Him to you?”

They counted out:

Thirty pieces of silver.

After Jesus was condemned, Judas returned the money.

The silver was thrown into the temple.

It was eventually used in connection with the potter's field.

The details are remarkable.

Spiritual Lesson

The world may undervalue Christ, but heaven knows His true worth.

IX. FAVOR AND UNION

The two staffs teach an important spiritual lesson.

Favor

Favor represents God's gracious protection and blessing.

When Favor is broken, protection is removed.

Union

Union represents brotherhood and harmony.

When Union is broken, division results.

The order is significant.

First the relationship with God is damaged.

Then relationships among people fall apart.

Principle

Vertical rebellion eventually produces horizontal division.

X. THE GOOD SHEPHERD AND THE FOOLISH SHEPHERD

The contrast could not be stronger.

The Good Shepherd

Seeks the lost.

Cares for the weak.

Heals the injured.

Feeds the flock.

Protects the sheep.

Gives His life for them.

The Foolish Shepherd

Ignores the lost.

Neglects the young.

Refuses to heal.

Fails to feed.

Abandons the flock.

Consumes the sheep for his own benefit.

Key Truth

The character of a shepherd can be measured by what happens to the sheep under his care.

XI. A WARNING TO PASTORS AND SPIRITUAL LEADERS

Zechariah 11 carries a serious warning for anyone entrusted with spiritual leadership.

Pastors.

Teachers.

Elders.

Deacons.

Ministry leaders.

Parents.

Anyone responsible for guiding others.

God's people are not possessions.

They are His flock.

The shepherd must never use the sheep merely for:

Money.

Power.

Prestige.

Control.

Recognition.

Personal ambition.

Principle

Biblical shepherding asks:

How can I serve the flock?

Corrupt shepherding asks:

How can the flock serve me?

XII. A WARNING TO THE FLOCK

The chapter does not only condemn bad shepherds.

It also warns the sheep.

The flock rejected the faithful shepherd.

That means God's people must exercise discernment in two directions.

We must reject false shepherds.

But we must also recognize and receive faithful shepherding.

Sometimes people reject a good shepherd because truth makes them uncomfortable.

Application

Do not mistake correction for cruelty.

Do not mistake flattery for love.

The shepherd who always tells you what you want to hear may not be the shepherd who truly cares for your soul.

XIII. KEY LESSONS FROM ZECHARIAH 11

1. God's judgment reaches the mighty.

The strongest cedar cannot stand against Him.

2. Corrupt shepherds exploit the flock.

God condemns leaders who use people for selfish gain.

3. Prosperity does not automatically prove God's approval.

The exploiters became rich while doing evil.

4. The true Shepherd can be rejected.

Jesus Himself experienced rejection.

5. Rejecting God's leadership has consequences.

Favor and unity can be lost.

6. Christ was prophetically valued at thirty pieces of silver.

This was fulfilled in Judas' betrayal.

7. The temple and potter details point toward Christ's betrayal.

The prophecy contains remarkable correspondence with the New Testament account.

8. False shepherds follow the rejection of the true Shepherd.

People who reject truth become vulnerable to deception.

9. God holds spiritual leaders accountable.

No shepherd ultimately escapes God's evaluation.

10. Jesus is completely different from the foolish shepherd.

The false shepherd consumes the sheep.

Jesus died for them.

XIV. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Zechariah 11 challenges us to ask:

Do I truly recognize Jesus as my Good Shepherd?

Am I listening to His voice?

Have I rejected biblical truth simply because it made me uncomfortable?

Do I confuse material success with spiritual faithfulness?

Do I evaluate spiritual leaders by Scripture?

If I lead others, do I serve them or use them?

Do I care about the weak, wounded, and lost?

Am I contributing to unity among God's people?

Have I allowed pride or rebellion to damage relationships?

Do I value Christ more highly than the world does?

Would I recognize a foolish shepherd if one appeared?

XV. QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY WITH ANSWERS

Question 1

What is the overall theme of Zechariah Chapter 11?

Answer

The chapter describes judgment upon corrupt leaders and a rebellious people, the rejection of the true Shepherd, the breaking of Favor and Union, the prophetic payment of thirty pieces of silver, and the rise of a foolish shepherd after the faithful Shepherd is rejected.

Question 2

What do the falling cedars of Lebanon represent?

Answer

They represent the downfall of strength, pride, greatness, and powerful leadership under God's judgment. Even what appears mighty cannot stand when God determines to judge it.

Question 3

Why are the shepherds crying in verse 3?

Answer

They are mourning because their prosperity, security, influence, and glory have been destroyed.

Question 4

What does the flock marked for slaughter represent?

Answer

It represents people who are moving toward severe judgment because of rebellion and failed leadership.

Question 5

What was wrong with the shepherds in verse 5?

Answer

They did not care about the flock. They exploited the people for personal gain and showed no compassion toward those they were supposed to protect.

Question 6

Why is the statement “Praise the Lord, I am rich” so serious?

Answer

It shows religious hypocrisy. The leaders were treating financial gain as evidence of God's blessing even though their riches came through exploitation.

Question 7

What does God teach us about spiritual leadership in this chapter?

Answer

Spiritual leaders are responsible to care for God's people rather than use them. God holds shepherds accountable for how they treat His flock.

Question 8

What were the names of Zechariah's two staffs?

Answer

The first staff was called **Favor**, and the second was called **Union**.

Question 9

What did the staff called Favor symbolize?

Answer

Favor symbolized God's gracious protection, care, blessing, and restraint over His people.

Question 10

What did the staff called Union symbolize?

Answer

Union symbolized brotherhood, harmony, and unity among God's people, particularly between Judah and Israel.

Question 11

Why did Zechariah stop shepherding the flock?

Answer

The flock rejected and hated the shepherd. Their persistent resistance brought the withdrawal of shepherding protection.

Question 12

What lesson do we learn from the flock rejecting the shepherd?

Answer

People can reject the very truth, guidance, and protection they desperately need. Rebellion against faithful shepherding eventually brings serious consequences.

Question 13

What happened when the staff called Favor was broken?

Answer

It symbolized the withdrawal of God's protective favor and restraint.

Question 14

Who recognized that Zechariah's actions represented the Word of the Lord?

Answer

The poor and oppressed members of the flock who were watching understood that the symbolic actions came from God.

Question 15

How much was the Shepherd paid?

Answer

He was paid thirty pieces of silver.

Question 16

Why were thirty pieces of silver significant?

Answer

Thirty pieces of silver were associated with the compensation value of a slave under Old Testament law. The amount therefore expressed contempt for the Shepherd.

Question 17

How does the thirty pieces of silver prophecy point toward Jesus Christ?

Answer

Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus for exactly thirty pieces of silver, fulfilling the prophetic pattern found in Zechariah 11.

Question 18

What did Zechariah do with the thirty pieces of silver?

Answer

He threw them into the house of the Lord, where they were associated with the potter.

Question 19

How was this connected with the betrayal of Jesus?

Answer

Judas returned the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the temple. The religious leaders later used the money to purchase the potter's field.

Question 20

What happened when Zechariah broke the staff called Union?

Answer

It symbolized the breaking of brotherhood and unity between Judah and Israel.

Question 21

What happens after the true Shepherd is rejected?

Answer

A foolish shepherd appears. This teaches that rejection of faithful truth can leave people vulnerable to false and destructive leadership.

Question 22

How is the foolish shepherd described?

Answer

He does not seek the lost, care for the young, heal the wounded, or feed the flock. Instead, he exploits and consumes the sheep for himself.

Question 23

How does the foolish shepherd differ from Jesus Christ?

Answer

The foolish shepherd sacrifices the sheep for himself. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, sacrifices Himself for the sheep.

Question 24

What judgment comes upon the worthless shepherd?

Answer

His arm is withered and his right eye is blinded, symbolizing the destruction of his power and his ability to lead.

Question 25

What does the withered arm symbolize?

Answer

The arm symbolizes strength and power. Its destruction shows that God will remove the false shepherd's ability to dominate the flock.

Question 26

What does the blinded right eye symbolize?

Answer

The eye represents perception and leadership. Blindness shows the loss of discernment, direction, and governing ability.

Question 27

What does Zechariah 11 teach pastors and church leaders?

Answer

It teaches that God's people belong to God, not to leaders. Shepherds must protect, feed, heal, guide, and care for the flock rather than exploit it for money, control, recognition, or personal advancement.

Question 28

What does Zechariah 11 teach believers about choosing spiritual leaders?

Answer

Believers should judge leaders by biblical faithfulness, character, concern for the flock, and obedience to God rather than charisma, popularity, wealth, or promises of personal prosperity.

Question 29

Why is the rejection of the true Shepherd so serious?

Answer

Because rejecting the Shepherd means rejecting the protection, guidance, truth, and blessing that come through His leadership. Continued rejection opens the door to confusion, division, and deception.

Question 30

Who is the ultimate Good Shepherd?

Answer

Jesus Christ is the ultimate Good Shepherd. He seeks the lost, cares for the weak, protects His people, lays down His life for the sheep, and gives eternal life to those who belong to Him.

Question 31

How does Zechariah 11 point to the crucifixion story?

Answer

The chapter prophetically anticipates the rejection of the Shepherd, His valuation at thirty pieces of silver, the money being thrown into the house of the Lord, and its association with a potter—all details closely connected with Judas' betrayal of Jesus.

Question 32

What is one of the strongest warnings of this chapter?

Answer

One of the strongest warnings is that when people repeatedly reject the true Shepherd, they can become vulnerable to foolish and destructive shepherds.

Question 33

What is one of the strongest encouragements in the chapter?

Answer

The chapter points us toward Jesus Christ, who is completely different from corrupt shepherds. He does not exploit His sheep. He gave Himself for them.

Question 34

What should believers learn from the staffs Favor and Union?

Answer

We should recognize that God's gracious favor and unity among His people are precious gifts that should never be treated casually.

Question 35

What is the central message of Zechariah Chapter 11?

Answer

The central message is that rejecting God's true Shepherd brings judgment, loss of favor, division, and vulnerability to false leadership, while the prophetic details point directly toward Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd who was betrayed for thirty pieces of silver.

XVI. FINAL THOUGHT

Zechariah Chapter 11 begins with destruction.

The cedars fall.

The shepherds cry.

The flock suffers.

But the greatest tragedy of the chapter is not the fall of forests.

It is the rejection of the Shepherd.

The Shepherd comes to care for the flock.

He carries two staffs:

Favor.

Union.

He offers protection.

He offers guidance.

He offers unity.

Yet the flock rejects Him.

Then comes one of the most startling moments in Old Testament prophecy.

The Shepherd asks:

What am I worth to you?

Their answer:

Thirty pieces of silver.

Centuries later, Judas Iscariot stood before the religious leaders and asked what they would pay him to betray Jesus Christ.

Their answer was the same:

Thirty pieces of silver.

The Shepherd had come.

The Shepherd had healed.

The Shepherd had taught.

The Shepherd had fed the hungry.

The Shepherd had sought the lost.

The Shepherd had shown compassion.

Yet He was valued at the price of a slave.

Judas threw the silver into the temple.

The money became connected with a potter's field.

Zechariah had described the prophetic pattern centuries earlier.

But the chapter contains another warning.

After the faithful Shepherd is rejected, a foolish shepherd appears.

That is spiritually significant.

When people reject truth, they do not become neutral.

They become more vulnerable to deception.

When they reject the Good Shepherd, they become easier prey for bad shepherds.

That makes the question of Zechariah 11 deeply personal:

Whose voice are you following?

Jesus said that His sheep hear His voice.

He does not exploit the flock.

He does not abandon the wounded.

He does not ignore the lost.

He does not consume the sheep.

He gives His life for them.

That is the difference between the Good Shepherd and every false shepherd.

The foolish shepherd takes from the sheep.

Jesus gives Himself for the sheep.

The foolish shepherd abandons the flock.

Jesus says:

“I am the Good Shepherd.”

So listen to His voice.

Follow His Word.

Trust His leadership.

Value Him above everything.

And never forget:

The One who was once valued at thirty pieces of silver is actually the priceless Son of God, the Good Shepherd, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords.

Key Verse

“So they paid me thirty pieces of silver.” — Zechariah 11:12

Key Phrase

The true Shepherd was rejected and valued at thirty pieces of silver, but Jesus Christ remains the Good Shepherd who gives His life for the sheep.