

Harvest

Evangelical Free Church

SERIES: Confidence in a Broken World • Lesson 10
 For Adult Bible Fellowships and Small Groups May 16– 22, 2010

Join us in being on mission with God!

OUR VISION

To continually mature and grow as a united body of Jesus-imitators who live out God’s greatest commandment to “Love” by exalting God and serving one another, and His greatest commission to “Go” by reaching into and shaping our local, regional, and global communities.

“Nomads or Warriors?”

Zechariah Chapter 10

Getting Started

After an introductory time, discuss the following questions in your group or class.

What picture comes to your mind when you think of a nomad? Describe some of the images you see in the lines below.

It’s easy to see nomads in our world today. They teach in our schools and universities, they run our factories and malls. They do surgery on our bodies, grow our food, and design our web sites. They may never have been in a desert, but they are *rootless people*. They seem to always be looking for greener pastures. They may not change houses or jobs, but their spirits are restless, uncertain. They pin their hopes for security, significance, and meaning on things that change with time.

Q: What are some of the factors in modern life that you think contribute to the restlessness that we frequently see in the world around us?

Looking at the Nomadic Spirit

Many of the Jews God addresses in chapter 10 had recently relocated from Babylon to Palestine. We can sometimes forget the changes that they had to deal with because they grew up in one place and moved to another.

1. What are some of the adjustments you’ve had to make in your life when you moved from one place to another?

2. Which adjustments were welcome, and which were difficult?

Verses one and two contrast different ways to solve problems and find solutions to the issues of life. The Jews experienced one approach in Babylon, but they were called to a different approach by the prophet Zechariah in Israel.

3. List some of the alternatives to trusting in God that the people saw others rely on in the culture around them. (Verse 2.)



Zechariah 10:1-12

¹ Ask the LORD for rain in the springtime; it is the LORD who makes the storm clouds. He gives showers of rain to men, and plants of the field to everyone. ² The idols speak deceit, diviners see visions that lie; they tell dreams that are false, they give comfort in vain. Therefore the people wander like sheep oppressed for lack of a shepherd. ³ “My anger burns against the shepherds, and I will punish the leaders; for the LORD Almighty will care for his flock, the house of Judah, and make them like a proud horse in battle. ⁴ From Judah will come the cornerstone, from him the tent peg, from him the battle bow, from him every ruler. ⁵ Together they will be like mighty men trampling the muddy streets in battle. Because the LORD is with them, they will fight and overthrow the horsemen. ⁶ “I will strengthen the house of Judah and save the house of Joseph. I will restore them because I have compassion on them. They will be as though I had not rejected them, for I am the LORD their God and I will answer them. ⁷ The Ephraimites will be-

- 4. What would be some of the places our non-Christian culture directs us to go (besides God) to get what we need in life?

- 5. The first sentence of verse two speaks of several alternatives to God that were common in Zechariah’s day. List each alternative and describe what the problem with each one is.

- 6. As you look at these options, what do the drawbacks have in common?

- 7. At the end of verse two, what is the impact on the people of relying on the wrong solutions? Where do you see some of that happening around us today?

God’s response

- 8. What awaits those who lead God’s people by proposing solutions that do not involve him? (Verse 3a)

- 9. Look at verse 3b-5. God uses some word pictures to describe some of the things he will do for his dispirited people if they are willing to trust him. Identify the things God compares them to and describe what you think the comparison is about. (The first one is started for you.)
“proud horse in battle” = _____

- 10. Where do the cornerstone, tent peg, battle bow, and ruler come from according to verse 4? Who is the “him” in that verse? (See Ephesians 2:20.)

- 11. When the tribes split into two nations after Solomon’s time, the group in the south was Judah, and the most prominent tribe in the north (Israel) was often Ephraim. Knowing this, what is God describing he will do in verse 6. What is the reason God gives for his action?

Nomads or Warriors?

come like mighty men, and their hearts will be glad as with wine. Their children will see it and be joyful; their hearts will rejoice in the LORD. ⁸ I will signal for them and gather them in. Surely I will redeem them; they will be as numerous as before. ⁹ Though I scatter them among the peoples, yet in distant lands they will remember me. They and their children will survive, and they will return. ¹⁰ I will bring them back from Egypt and gather them from Assyria. I will bring them to Gilead and Lebanon, and there will not be room enough for them. ¹¹ They will pass through the sea of trouble; the surging sea will be subdued and all the depths of the Nile will dry up. Assyria's pride will be brought down and Egypt's scepter will pass away. ¹² I will strengthen them in the LORD and in his name they will walk," declares the LORD.



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12. When we taste God's restoration, it changes our perspective on life. What is the attitude God describes in verse 7?
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13. Why do you think a Christian can have a restored relationship with God and still be joyless much of the time?
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14. Verses 10 and following mention two world powers in Israel's past—Egypt and Assyria. By this time, Egypt was not a major threat and Assyria had been conquered by Babylon and was no more. So the use of the words *Egypt* and *Assyria* stand for something other than the literal kingdoms. What do you think God means when he pledges to rescue his people from Egypt and Assyria in the future? What might these nations represent?
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15. We can tell God is speaking metaphorically because he refers to a "sea of trouble" in verse 11. This is not a geographical location. What are some of the troubled seas from which God has rescued you?
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16. In what places does this chapter challenge you to trust God more and not be afraid of the things in our world that would normally make you timid, cautious, or pessimistic about the future?
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