

Questions for Further Reflection – Zechariah:

1. What do you think “peace” meant to the Israelites? What does the word “peace” mean to you? The Hebrew word *shalom* (which we translate as “peace”) literally means “to be complete, whole, or sound.” So the concept of peace in the Hebrew Scriptures is the presence of wholeness, rather than just the absence of war or conflict. What does it mean to be whole or complete as a nation? As an individual?
2. What were the 8 visions of Zechariah that led to peace? List them below or on a separate sheet of paper. In what ways is each vision the next logical progression from the previous one? Can you translate this list for Christianity? In other words, thinking about Christianity, what would be the 8 New Testament steps leading towards peace? How might this progressive list translate to your personal life? What steps do you need to take towards achieving personal wholeness?
3. Pastor Tim said that 2nd Zechariah paints a picture of all life being sacred to God and God’s holiness permeating all aspects of life. What would it look like for God’s holiness to permeate *all* aspects of life? Think of the most mundane aspects of our existence. How might God’s holiness be present and active there – in our cooking, cleaning, mowing, eating, etc.?

Questions for Further Reflection – Malachi:

1. One of the issues God has with Israel is that, whether it’s a blemished sacrifice or less than the full tithe, they aren’t giving him their very best. Why is it important to give God our best? What does giving God our best look like for us today?
2. God doesn’t need our sacrifices or our worship to be exalted. So why does God demand both? In what ways is worship more for our benefit than for God’s? How does sacrificing and giving God our best make our lives better?
3. When you hear the first words of God in Malachi, “I have loved you, says the Lord,” how does it make you feel?
4. In discussing the major theme of Malachi, that our lives should be consistent with our worship of God, Pastor Tim said the following: *If we are outwardly religious and say we honor God, yet do not honor God with our commitments to God and to others in the community, if our lives do not bear evidence of our faith, then we deceive God, ourselves, and our community.* According to Malachi, in what specific ways should our lives demonstrate and bear evidence of our faith? What might this look like in your life?