

## *Major Messages from the Minor Prophets*

Studies in the Minor Prophets

Wednesday Evening Bible Study

Jersey Shore Baptist Church

Pastor Phil Erickson

Began February 7, 2018

### **Message Seven – Zechariah**

#### **Introduction (Zechariah 1:1 – 6)**

Chapters 1 – 8 were written during the building of the temple (520 - 518 BC), and during the reign of Darius I. Chapters 9 – 14 were probably written later, during the reign of Ahasuerus (Xerxes – 486 – 464 BC).

Zechariah was the son of Berechiah, and the grandson of Iddo. His name means, “whom Jehovah remembers”. In fact, there is an interesting note regarding the names of his father and grandfather. Berechiah means “Jehovah will bless”; and Iddo means “the appointed time”. Putting the three names from v. 1 together we get Jehovah has not forgotten, and He will bless, in the appointed time.

According to Ryrie:

Zechariah’s father, Berechiah, probably died when his son was young, making Zechariah the immediate successor of his grandfather, Iddo (Neh. 12:4). Iddo was a priest who returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel and Joshua and was, according to tradition, a member of the Great Synagogue (the governing body of the Jews before the Sanhedrin).<sup>1</sup>

Zechariah was a prophet, but he also came from a family of priests, as did Ezekiel and Jeremiah. (Nehemiah 12:16) He is probably the same Zechariah referred to by Jesus in Matthew 23:35:

*"That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar."* (Matthew 23:35)

Some believe that Jesus was referring to the slaying of the Zechariah from 2 Chronicles 24:20 – 21, an event which occurred some 300 years earlier during the reign of King Joash. There are about 27 Zechariah’s in the Bible.

He was much younger than Haggai (2:4), but wrote at least the first eight chapters of the Book at the same time of Haggai’s ministry. (1:1, 7; 7:1) Zechariah is very prophetic and visionary whereas Haggai was more historical and extremely practical, which makes them a great team for ministering to God’s people. Ezra refers to both Haggai and Zechariah as encouraging the people of God in the rebuilding of the temple:

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<sup>1</sup> Ryrie, C. C. (1994). Ryrie study Bible: King James Version (Expanded ed., p. 1363). Chicago: Moody Press.

*"Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, even unto them." (Ezra 5:1)*

*"And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia." (Ezra 6:14)*

Zechariah is apocalyptic in nature, similar to Ezekiel, Daniel, and Revelation. It has an historic interlude in the middle (chapters 7 – 8), which makes it similar to Isaiah. This is the longest of all of the Minor Prophets, and is thought by many to be the most difficult to grasp. Zechariah writes more about Christ than any of the other Minor Prophets. Only Isaiah has more Messianic prophecies than Zechariah.

Prophecies concerning His first coming include Zechariah 3:8; 9:9, 16; 11:11–13; 12:10; 13:1, 6; and prophecies to be fulfilled at His second coming include 6:12; 14:1–21.<sup>2</sup>

The Purpose of the Book is Fourfold:

- 1 To bring about spiritual revival. Haggai was more concerned with the outward work of re-building the temple, but Zechariah goes straight to the heart.
- 2 To inspire and encourage the re-building of the temple.
- 3 To comfort and console a people that had been severely chastised by God.
- 4 To prophesy of the coming Messiah.

The Book is broken up into three main sections:

- 1 Ten Visions (Chapters 1 – 6)
- 2 Four Messages (Chapters 7 – 8)
- 3 Two Burdens (Chapters 9 – 14)

The basic message of this introductory section (1:1 – 6) of Zechariah is that the fathers had sinned against God, and had been severely judged for it; but God would bless this generation if they kept Him first. "Keep Going – Keep Building". This first portion of the Book was written in November of 520 BC.

### **Practical Truth**

God instructs these post-exile remnant to learn from their fathers.

Illustrate – Didn't you hate when your mother compared to your brother or sister.

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<sup>2</sup> Ryrie, C. C. (1994). Ryrie study Bible: King James Version (Expanded ed., p. 1363). Chicago: Moody Press.

God is saying here that these people can learn from the mistakes of their forefathers. We can learn from both the good things and the bad things that the people who have gone before us have done. (Turn to 1 Corinthians 10:1 – 14)

Learn from your own mistakes.

Socrates said, “The unexamined life is not worth living”. A wise Christian will examine the lives of others as well as his own live, and make the necessary adjustments in order to effectively fulfil the will of God.

Don’t let either the mistakes of others or your own mistakes to bog you down.

Don’t be too critical of those before you who have made mistakes, because you will make your fare share as well.

## **I The Ten Visions (1:7 – 6:15)**

### **A Vision 1 – The Red Horse Rider Among the Myrtle Trees (1:1 – 17)**

This vision was seen on February 24, 520 BC. The man in this vision is The Angel of the Lord.

Notes concerning the Angel of the Lord from Bible Doctrines Notes:

Many would claim that the Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament is a pre-incarnate appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is known as a Christophany or a Theophany:

- 1.) Appearance to Hagar: Proclamation (Genesis 16:7-14)
- 2.) Appearance to Abraham: Proclamation (Genesis 18:1; 22:11-13)
- 3.) Appearance to Jacob: Proclamation (Genesis 28:13; 32:24-32; 48:16)
- 4.) Appearance to Moses: Proclamation (Exodus 3:2-6; 23:20; 33:18-23)
- 5.) Appearance as Pillar of Cloud/ Fire: Protection (Exodus 14:19-21)
- 6.) Appearance to Joshua: Proclamation (Joshua 5:13-15)
- 7.) Appearance to Balaam: Punishment (Numbers 22:22-35)
- 8.) Appearance to Gideon: Proclamation (Judges 6:11-24)
- 9.) Appearance to Manoah: Proclamation (Judges 13:2-23)
- 10.) Appearance to David: Punishment (I Chronicles 21:15-18)
- 11.) Appearance to Elijah: Proclamation (I Kings 19:5-8)
- 12.) Appearance to the Assyrian Army: Power (II Kings 19:35)
- 13.) Appearance to Isaiah: Proclamation (Isaiah 6:1-13)
- 14.) Appearance to the Three Hebrew Children: Protection (Daniel 3:25)
- 15.) Appearance to Daniel: Protection (Daniel 6:22; 7:9-14)

16.) Appearance to Zechariah: Protection (Zechariah 1:8-13; 2:8-11; 3:10)

The problem with this theory is The Angel of the Lord also appears in the New Testament:

*"But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." (Matthew 1:20)*

*"And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him." (Matthew 2:13)*

*"And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid." (Luke 2:9)*

See Also Acts 5:19; 8:26; 12:7; 12:23

Myrtle trees are tall evergreen trees that grow in valleys. The man is riding a red horse, and is followed by three other horses that were red, but also mixed with speckled and white. In Revelation 6:3 – 4, another red horse is mentioned, which represents war or bloodshed. Isaiah also speaks of red and symbolism of judgment. (Isaiah 63:1 – 4)

God is saying in this vision that Jerusalem is oppressed today because of the heathen nations, but there will come a day when God will deal with these oppressing nations, and restore Israel to her place of power, peace, and prosperity.

Note – vs. 12 – The Temple and Jerusalem were destroyed in 586 B.C. Jeremiah prophesied of the seventy years of captivity. (Jeremiah 25:11 - 12; 29:10)

Note – vs. 16 – The Temple was finished in 516 B.C. according to Ezra 6:15:

*"And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king." (Ezra 6:15)*

God was reassuring His people that He was not through with Israel. MacArthur points out:

It should be noted that the millennial kingdom will provide the presence of God in Jerusalem (Ezek. 48:35), a glorious temple (Ezek. 40–48), a rebuilt Jerusalem (Jer. 31:38–40), the nations punished (Matt. 25:3), the prosperity of Judah's cities (Is. 60:4–9) the blessedness of the people (Zech. 9:17), and the comfort of Zion (Is. 14:1).<sup>3</sup>

## **B Vision 2 – The Four Horns (1:18 – 19)**

Note – many fine expositors have linked this vision with the one which follows.

These four horns represent the power of the heathen nations. (Daniel 2:31 – 45) Horns in the Bible speak of power and pride (Psalm 75:10; Micah 4:13), but may be specifically represent Gentile powers. (Daniel 7:24; Revelation 17:12) In Daniel 8, there were "four notable" horns

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<sup>3</sup> MacArthur, J., Jr. (Ed.). (1997). The MacArthur Study Bible (electronic ed., p. 1340). Nashville, TN: Word Pub.

representing the four generals that divided up the empire of Greece, after the death of Alexander, which rose up after the great horn (Alexander) was broken (Daniel 8:8 – 9). Some believe that these four horns represent the four world powers. (Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome)

You will notice that these horns specifically are associated with oppression of Israel.

### **C Vision 3 – The Four Carpenters (1:20 – 21)**

The four carpenters are craftsmen or “ironsmiths”, and represent those, including other nations that will help drive away the enemies of God’s people, and restore Jerusalem. It is interesting that some of the same nations that were used as horns, may also be used as carpenters. For example, God used Babylon to conquer Assyria, and Persia to conquer Babylon. The final carpenter will be the Messianic Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Daniel 2:44 – 45; Daniel 7:7 - 14)

### **D Vision 4 – The Man with the Measuring Line (2:1 – 13)**

This vision gives the assurance that Jerusalem and Judah will be completely rebuilt and restored, and will dwell in peace and safety because of the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ who will be in the midst of them. Ultimately, this prophecy will not be fulfilled until the Lord Jesus Christ is sitting on His throne in the Messianic Kingdom. However, God would also grant protection and prosperity in their immediate future as well as long as they were right with Him.

#### **1. The Restoration of Jerusalem (vs. 1 – 4)**

The man with the measuring line represents the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem. The city would gradually be rebuilt in the immediate context by men like Nehemiah. However, the city will be completely restored and will assume its position as the capital of the world when the Lord Jesus is sitting on His throne. The New Jerusalem will also be built and will hover around the Earth like a moon. (See Revelation 21)

Notice also that people will return to the land. When this prophecy was written, there were still many Jews (known as the Diaspora) living in various parts of the old Assyrian Empire (2 Kings 17:6), then Babylon, and now Persia. There were also Jews in Moab, Ammon, and Edom (Jeremiah 40:11 – 12); and in Egypt (Jeremiah 43:7) Nehemiah speaks of trying to get people to move back into the land:

*"Now the city was large and great: but the people were few therein, and the houses were not builded." (Nehemiah 7:4)*

*"And the rulers of the people dwelt at Jerusalem: the rest of the people also cast lots, to bring one of ten to dwell in Jerusalem the holy city, and nine parts to dwell*

*in other cities. And the people blessed all the men, that willingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem." (Nehemiah 11:1-2)*

God calls the people to return out of the land of Babylon. Someday, He will call them to come out of a future Babylon. (Revelation 1:1 – 8)

Even today, there are Jews all over the globe; but someday, they will return.

## **2. The Return of the Lord's Blessing (vs. 5 – 13)**

The promised blessing of the Lord include:

- a. The Lord's Provision (v. 4 – Cattle)
- b. The Lord's Protection for Jerusalem. (v. 5; 8)

Notice also the reference in v. 4 to no walls. There are two thoughts regarding this:

- i. Walls will not be necessary as God will be protecting them.
- ii. Walls are too restrictive and will hinder the tremendous growth that they will experience.

Notice also v. 8 – *the apple of his eye* – literally means, the little man in his eye; the pupil; has to do with God's focus.

*"For the LORD'S portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." (Deuteronomy 32:9-10)*

- c. The Lord's Punishment for Jerusalem's Enemies (v. 9)
- d. The Lord's Presence (vs. 5, 10, 11 – "midst of thee")

Notice also in v. 11 that many nations will be joined to the Lord. This is obviously not being fulfilled today, but it will be fulfilled someday. (See Zechariah 8:20 – 23)

*"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Isaiah 2:2-4)*

Notice also in v. 12 – *holy land* – this is the only place in the Bible that you see this phrase. It is holy, because God will be in the midst of her. You are holy because God is in the midst of you.

*“To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:” (Colossians 1:27)*

*“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.” (John 15:4)*

*“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,” (Ephesians 1:13)*

*“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?” (1 Corinthians 6:19)*

You and I have a choice – we can live our lives recognizing the presence of God, yielding to His will, obeying His Word, and being filled with His Spirit; or, we can live according to the desires of our old, wicked and sinful flesh.

Israel had the same choice. Her punishment was over, and her enemies were subdued. She now had the opportunity to live like the children of God should live. Will she do it. Unfortunately, she, like us, will have to learn this lesson over and over again until she finally gets it.

## **E Vision 5 – Joshua the High Priest (3:1 – 7; 6:9 - 15)**

Many expositors link this vision with the one following regarding the Branch, but I will deal with them separately.

In this vision, we see the high priest Joshua the high priest standing before the Lord in filthy garments. He is being accused by Satan, and is in actuality guilty and deserving of judgment. This is the first mention of Joshua in Zechariah. He is mentioned often and identified as the high priest in Haggai. This is obviously not the Joshua that led the people of Israel into the Promised Land approximately 900 years earlier.

As the high priest, Joshua represented the people of Israel. You will recall on the Day of Atonement that the high priest went in to the Most Holy Place and offered for the sins of the nation. (Leviticus 16) He also was a representative of the priesthood in general; and, in this context, he is a picture of the lost sinner today who stands guilty before a holy God.

This vision speaks of the spiritual cleansing of the high priest, Joshua; the redemption of Jerusalem, and pictures the spiritual cleansing of the lost sinner today.

God was not only confirming Joshua, but was also confirming the priesthood in general. Joshua is also a picture of the coming great High Priest, the Branch (v. 8)

Reminder of the overall context – Israel is back in the land after the captivity, and God is encouraging them to keep moving forward and yield to Him. There is also the long term prophetic implications of Zechariah dealing with Israel’s future in the Millennial Kingdom.

### **1. The Resister of the Saints (v. 1)**

Many believe the Angel of the Lord is pre-incarnate Christ. At the very least, he is a conduit or a special messenger for the Lord. The devil is resisting the work of Joshua and accusing him before the Angel (and the Lord).

Satan is pictured here resisting (Hebrew – verb form of satan – meaning adversary, accuser or resister) He is the enemy of God and he is enemy of God’s people.

*"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night." (Revelation 12:10)*

Satan is an accuser, but Jesus is our advocate:

*"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:" (1 John 2:1)*

The following is an excerpt from Bible Doctrines II – The Doctrine of Angelology:

### **A. The Works of Satan**

#### 1. His Works in General

- a. He is the instigator of sin
  - 1.) In the universe (Ezekiel 28:15)
  - 2.) In the human race (Genesis 3:1, 6, 14, 21)
- b. He is the tempter to sin (Luke 4:1-13)
- c. He is the inciter of sin (I Thessalonians 3:5; I Corinthians 7:5)
- d. He is the initiator of suffering and death (Acts 10:38; Hebrews 2:14)
  - Suffering and death are a direct result of the entrance of sin.
- e. He is the imitator of God
  - Everything good that God has done, Satan imitates with a counterfeit. The supreme motive of this malevolent being is unchanged – “to be like the most high.” Because of Satan, there is:
    - 1.) Another ‘God’ (II Corinthians 4:4; Isaiah 14:13)
    - 2.) Another ‘Trinity’ (Revelation 13:2; 16:13)
    - 3.) Another ‘Christ’ (II Corinthians 11:4; I John 2:18, 22; 4:3; Revelation 13)
  - Notice that the coming Antichrist will ride a white horse (Revelation 6:2; - will make a ‘messianic’ covenant with Israel (Daniel 9:27) – and will undergo some kind of ‘death’ and ‘resurrection’ (Revelation 13:3)
    - 4.) Another ‘Spirit’ (II Corinthians 11:4; I John 4:1-3, 6; Revelation 13:11-16)
    - 5.) Another ‘Gospel’ (Acts 15:1; II Corinthians 11:4; Galatians 1:6-9)
    - 6.) Another ‘Baptism’ (Acts 19:1-5)
    - 7.) Another ‘Ministry’ (Matthew 7:21-23; II Corinthians 11:13-15; II Peter 2:1, 2)
    - 8.) Another ‘Bible’ (II Corinthians 2:17)



- 9.) Another 'Church' (Revelation 17)
  - a.) A Counterfeit Church (vs. 1)
  - b.) A Universal Church (vs. 1)
  - c.) A State Church (vs. 2)
  - d.) A Seducing Church (vs. 2)
  - e.) A Blasphemous Church (vs. 3)
  - f.) A Pompous Church (vs. 4)
  - g.) A Wealthy Church (vs. 4)
  - h.) An Immoral Church (vs. 4)
  - i.) A Pagan Church (vs. 5)
  - j.) A Parenting Church (vs. 5)
  - k.) A Persecuting Church (vs. 6)
  - l.) An Identified Church (vs. 9)
- 10.) Another 'People' (Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43)
- 11.) Another 'Kingdom' (Matthew 12:26; Ephesians 6:12)
- 12.) Other 'Miracles' (Revelation 13:13)

## 2. His Works among the Unsaved

- a. The unsaved are the children of Satan (Matthew 13:38; Acts 13:10; I John 3:10)
- b. The unsaved do the lusts of Satan (John 8:44)
- c. The unsaved may be possessed by Satan
  - 1.) Satan entered Judas (Luke 22:3; John 13:2, 27)
  - 2.) Satan takes men captive (II Timothy 2:26)
  - 3.) Satan works in the lost (Ephesians 2:2)
- d. The unsaved are blinded and deceived by Satan
  - I Corinthians 6:9, 10; II Corinthians 4:4; Revelation 20:7, 8
  - Satan uses the following devices to blind and deceive men:
    - 1.) Religion (Matthew 7:21; 15:3-9, 23; Colossians 2:8)
    - Religion may be summarized by the word "DO!"
    - More people trust their religion to get them to Heaven than any other thing. Religion may mean ritualism, emotionalism, atheism, rationalism, paganism, humanism, intellectualism, or any number of "-isms," which replace faith in Christ with works of the flesh.
      - 2.) Science (I Timothy 6:20)
      - False science (knowledge) such as the Theory of Evolution denies the Creator. Many have placed their faith in technology and achievements of man to save them and the world.
        - 3.) Money and Materialism (Matthew 6:31-34; I Timothy 6:9, 10)
        - Wealth and possessions will never bring peace of mind, let alone peace with God.

- 4.) Entertainment and Worldliness (I Timothy 5:6; II Timothy 3:4; I John 2:15-17)
    - Satan promotes pleasure to numb any sense of eternity. Hedonism is widely practiced as a religion today.
      - 5.) Sensuality and Immorality (James 3:15; Jude 18, 19)
    - By inciting men to gratify his baser (sinful) nature, Satan diminishes thoughts of spiritual matters.
      - 6.) Sorcery
        - The word ‘sorcerer’ is translated from a Greek word – *pharmakeia* – which relates to drugs and intoxicating substances – Acts 8:9-11; 13:6-8; Revelation 18:23; 21:8; 22:15
  - e. The unsaved are deprived of the Word of God by Satan (Matthew 13:19)
3. His Works among the Saints
- a. Satan afflicts believers as God permits (Job 1:12; 2:4-7; II Corinthians 12:7-10)
  - b. Satan tempts believers (I Thessalonians 3:5; Luke 22:31)
  - c. Satan opposes God’s program
    - 1.) Opposes Gospel Preaching (Mark 4:15)
    - 2.) Hinders Missionary Work (I Thessalonians 2:18)
  - d. Satan accuses Christians (Revelation 12:9, 10)
  - e. Satan fosters false doctrine
    - 1.) That sin will not be punished (Genesis 3:4, 5)
    - 2.) That good men are hypocrites (Job 1:9-11)
    - 3.) That we can tempt God (Matthew 4:5, 6)
    - 4.) That marriage and the use of meats is sinful (I Timothy 4:1-3)
    - 5.) That the Word of God is not absolute (Genesis 3:1)
  - f. Satan opposes God’s servants
    - 1.) Hinders them (I Thessalonians 2:18)
    - 2.) Resists them (Zechariah 3:1; Daniel 10:13)
    - 3.) Buffets them (II Corinthians 12:7; Revelation 2:10)

## B. The Attack of Satan

- Satan probes for “chinks in the armor.” There are several areas of possible weakness where Satan may gain the advantage in the life of a believer:
  1. The Area of the Mind
    - The believer’s thought-life is the major battleground in spiritual warfare with Satan. Check the word “mind” in the following references: II Corinthians 11:3; Hebrews 12:3; II Corinthians 4:3, 4; Ephesians 4:23; Philippians 2:5
    - Evidently Satan worked on the imprisoned John the Baptist’s mind causing him to question the very thing he had been preaching (Matthew 11:2, 3)
  2. The Area of Health and Well Being

- Satan continually buffeted Paul through his “thorn in the flesh” (II Corinthians 12:7-10)
3. The Area of Physical Strength
    - The disciples’ strength failed them when they fell asleep in the garden as the Lord was praying (Matthew 26:40, 41)
  4. The Area of the Emotions
    - Elijah ran from Jezebel after a great victory. He had an attack of “Juniperitis” – he began to feel sorry for himself. Self-pity is a problem for many Christians. (I Kings 19:2-4).
  5. The Area of Personality
    - Satan will attempt to stir up the Christian with a quick temper, and provoke one another with a sarcastic tongue. Peter showed a weak disposition when he cut off the ear of Malchus (Matthew 26:51).
  6. The Area of Morals
    - a. Samson – world’s “STRONGEST” man
    - b. Solomon – world’s “SMARTEST” man
    - c. David – world’s most “SPIRITUAL” man
    - Someone has rightly observed that there are three areas a preacher must watch in his personal being: the WORLD, WEALTH, and WOMEN!
    - Attacks in these areas are designed to bring DOUBT, DISCOURAGEMENT, and DECLINE into the life of the Christian. This in turn leads to a neglect of prayer, Bible study, church attendance, and soul winning – consequently to further inroads of the devil.
    - The Secret to Victory Over Satan:
      1. Salvation (Hebrews 2:14)
      2. Protection (Ephesians 6:11-18)
        - Belt of Truth
        - Breastplate of Righteousness
        - Shoes of the Gospel of Peace
        - Shield of Faith: only mobile defensive armor
        - Helmet of Salvation (assurance): the heart can be revived, but brain cannot be.
        - Sword of the Spirit: only offensive weapon
        - All the armor is provided; we must put it on.
        - There is no armor for your back; nowhere is the saint ever told to retreat.
      3. Discipline (Ephesians 4:27)
      4. Watching (II Corinthians 2:11; I Peter 5:8)
      5. Resisting (James 4:7; I Peter 5:9)

### C. The End of Satan

1. Satan Is a Defeated Foe
  - The first promise of a Savior (Genesis 3:15) foretold of the bruising of the head of Satan. The defeat of Satan was accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ:
    - a. Christ resisted the temptation of Satan (Matthew 4:11; Hebrews 4:15, 16)
    - b. Christ destroyed the works of Satan (I John 3:8; 4:4)
    - c. Christ sealed Satan's doom on the Cross (Colossians 2:15; John 16:11; Hebrews 2:14)
  - When killing a snake with a stick there are two strokes needed. The first blow should be directed to the middle of the snake's back. This will break its back and immobilize it – thus enabling the second blow to be effected, one to the head that will kill it.
  - Satan's back was broken by Christ at the Cross; he is defeated, doomed but dangerous.
2. Satan Is a Desperate Foe
  - In the last days, Satan is making (it seems) one last desperate campaign to achieve his one ambition – to be God, and steal the hearts of men.
    - a. Before the Rapture – the Bible predicts an increase in Satanic activity (I Timothy 4:1; II Timothy 3:1-5)
    - b. After the Rapture – during the Tribulation Period the world will be turned over to Satan. At last he is God!!! (Or so he thinks.) Most of the world will worship him through the Antichrist as God (II Thessalonians 2:3-12; Revelation 13:4, 8, 15-18)
3. Satan Is a Doomed Foe
  - At the return of Christ to the earth Satan will be bound (Revelation 20:1-3). This binding will remain for the 1,000 years of the Millennium.
  - Following the Millennium, Satan will be loosed for a season to test those born during this golden age as to their true heart's allegiance (Revelation 20:10)
  - The final abode of Satan is the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41; Jude 6; Revelation 20:10).

## 2. The Rebuke of Satan (v. 2)

If the Lord was speaking through the Angel, then the Angel used the Lord's power to bring the rebuke, not his own. "The Lord rebuke thee."

*"Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee." (Jude 1:9)*

Satan is a powerful angel, perhaps more powerful than Michael or the Angel of the Lord. But the Angel of the Lord was operating in the strength and power of God.

Notice – "a brand plucked out of the fire" – could be a reference to Joshua or could be a reference to Jerusalem. Could also apply to Israel or the saved sinner today:

*"And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." (Jude 1:23)*

Satan's accusations against Joshua were true – he was a vile sinner; but he was gloriously saved through faith in the shed blood of the coming redeemer.

### 3. A Removal of Stain (vs. 3 – 5)

*"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." (Isaiah 64:6)*

*"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isaiah 1:18)*

*"As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." (Psalm 103:12)*

*"I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." (Isaiah 61:10)*

Note – the miter was worn by the high priest:

*"And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. And thou shalt put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre; upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be. And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD." (Exodus 28:36-38)*

*"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." (Isaiah 53:6)*

The clothing worn by the high priest were not only to be spotless signifying purity, but they also were an indication that he was set apart or sanctified before the Lord.

Our sin has been removed, which indicates that we are symbolically clean. We are priests of God also, which means that we are to be sanctified for God. (1 Peter 2:5 – 9; Hebrews 4:14 – 16)

### 4. A Reminder Regarding Service (v. 7)

Joshua was plucked from the fire, as was Jerusalem, as was all of Israel; but, in order for God to keep using them they had to walk in God's ways. If you and I are going to be used of the Lord in service, we are also going to have to walk with Him and follow His ways.

#### F Vision 6 – The Branch (3:8 – 10)

In this vision, we are definitely looking into the future and we see the Lord Jesus Christ reigning from His throne in Jerusalem during the Millennial Kingdom.

According to McArthur, the "fellows" that sit before Joshua represent future Israel.

We see three references to the Messiah in these verses.

**The Branch** - the Lord Jesus Christ. (see also 6:12 & 13;)

*"And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD. Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." (Jeremiah 23:3-6)*

*"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. In those days, and at that time, will I cause **the Branch** of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness." (Jeremiah 33:14-16)*

### **The Servant:**

*"Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth." (Isaiah 42:1-3)*

*"Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." (Isaiah 53:10-11)*

### **The Stone:**

*"I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation. The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes." (Psalm 118:21-23)*

*"Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. ... Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." (Daniel 2:34-35, 45)*

*"Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?" (Matthew 21:42)*

Also Isaiah 8:13 – 15; Ephesians 2:19 – 22; 1 Peter 2:6 – 8

### **The Sight (v. 9)**

Seven is the number of completeness.

*"And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." (Revelation 5:6)*

The sight of Christ speaks of his omnipresence and omniscience - His complete wisdom and knowledge:

*"In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Colossians 2:3)*

Notice that Christ will remove Israel's iniquity:

*"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." (Romans 11:25-27)*

### **The Safety and Security in Christ (v. 10)**

In verse ten, we see a familiar expression denoting the security and prosperity of the Millennium.

*"And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon." (1 Kings 4:25)*

*"But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it." (Micah 4:4)*

## **G Vision 7 – The Candlestick and the Two Olive Trees (4:1 – 14)**

The vision of the Branch was focused, at least in its immediate context with Joshua the High Priest, but here the focus will be on Zerubbabel who was the leader of the people and was responsible for rebuilding the Temple of the Lord. (See Haggai)

v. 1 – "as a man awakened out of sleep" The angel was going to reveal a new vision to Zechariah, and he stated it was as if he was awakened out of sleep. When God reveals truth to us, it is as if a lightbulb goes on, or as if we are awakened. It is the Holy Spirit's job to reveal the truth of the Word of God to us. Perhaps, Zechariah was exhausted from the last vision, and was actually sleeping. Daniel slept because of the exhaustion caused from the visions he saw. (See Daniel 10:1 – 11)

v. 2 - The oil in the candlestick represents the Spirit of the Lord. The candlestick itself is a picture of Israel as well as picture of the coming Messiah. The candlestick was similar to the one in the Tabernacle and Temple. (Exodus 25:31ff.) This candlestick had seven lamps and seven pipes flowing into the lamps. Some think that there were seven pipes for each lamp; others that there were seven pipes, each flowing from the bowl above, which supplied the oil for the lamps.

The lampstand in the Tabernacle and Temple were to be maintained by the priests, and they were never to go out. In Revelation, we see the Lord Jesus standing in midst of seven lampstands, which represent the seven churches of Asia Minor. (Revelation 1:12 – 13; 20) The lampstand figuratively speaks of Christ, and Christ working through his believers.

*"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8:12)*

*"As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." (John 9:5)*

*"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." (Matthew 5:14)*

*"Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;" (Philippians 2:14-15)*

v. 3 – These Olive trees supplied the oil that would be used to fill the bowl for the lamps. In the immediate context the two olive trees represent the offices of Zerubbabel, the governor; and Joshua, the priest. Zerubbabel was officially the governor, but he was also rightfully a king, in the line of David and Christ. (Luke 3:27) God would use these two trees, Joshua and Zerubbabel to supply the oil through the Holy Spirit of God in order bring light back into Israel after the captivity, Zerubbabel and Joshua would do this through the rebuilding of the Temple.

vs. 4 & 5 – At this point, Zechariah does not understand the meaning behind what he is seeing.

Vs. 6 – 7 – God is assuring Zerubbabel that if the Spirit of God is working through him, He will be victorious.

Everything that is done for the Lord must be done in the power of God's Holy Spirit:

*"And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about." (Luke 4:14)*

*"And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:" (1 Corinthians 2:4)*

*"And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness." (Acts 4:31)*

*"And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost." (Acts 13:52)*



According to Wiersbe:

There are three ways we can attempt to do the work of God: we can trust our own strength and wisdom; we can borrow the resources of the world; or we can depend on the power of God. The first two approaches may appear to succeed, but they'll fail in the end. Only work done through the power of the Spirit will glorify God and endure the fires of His judgment (1 Corinthians 3:12–15).<sup>4</sup>

The mountain here may speak figuratively of obstacles, or it may be a reference to Mt. Zion where the Temple was being rebuilt. This may have been what Jesus was referring to when he spoke of moving mountains. (Matthew 17:20; 20:21) Zerubbabel had obstacles. He had a limited budget, enemies from without, and the constant complaining of the people.

The headstone or capstone is the last stone to be installed signifying the completion of the Temple.

vs. 8 – 10 – refer to the Temple and the comparisons that people were making to the previous temple built by Solomon. (See Ezra 3:10 – 13)

*"Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and to the residue of the people, saying, Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing? Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts:" (Haggai 2:2-4)*

God is telling them, the size of the Temple is not important, the amount of gold in the Temple was not important; the God of the Temple is important, and as long as He was present, everything was going to be fine.

#### Practical Applications

The size of the congregation does not matter.

The size of the building does not matter.

The presence of God does matter, and what God is doing in and through the people.

vs. 11 – 14 – as was stated earlier, the two Olive Trees refer to Joshua and Zerubbabel in the immediate context. In the Book of Revelation we learn, however. That prophetically the two olive trees refer to the two witnesses or prophets that will speak for the Lord in the Tribulation Period (See Revelation 3:3 – 13):

*"And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth." (Revelation 11:3-4)*

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<sup>4</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (1997). *Be heroic* (p. 104). Colorado Springs, CO: ChariotVictor Pub.

The identity of the two witnesses is intriguing. Most expositors believe that Elijah is one of them, but everybody debates who the second one is. Some say it is Moses; others Enoch; and still others, John the Baptist. It could really be anybody. The important thing is that they will be God's witnesses in the middle of a very dark period when Antichrist will be ruling the world.

## H Vision 8 – The Flying Roll (5:1 – 4)

Ezekiel had a similar vision about a roll. (Ezekiel 2:9 – 3:4) Ezekiel was commanded to consume the Word of God and then give it to the people. That is our job also.

The roll (scroll) represented the Word of God and the Law in particular, emphasizing God's judgment against those who break it. The scroll is 30 feet long by 15 feet wide, and is written on both sides. Interestingly, the scroll is exactly the same size as the Holy Place in the Tabernacle as well as Solomon's Porch in the Temple (1 Kings 6:3).

There were more than just the commandments against stealing (commandment 8) and swearing falsely (Commandment 3) on this flying roll; but those two commandments were representative of the whole Law. James 2:10 states that if you offend in one point of the Law you are guilty of violating all of it.

See Exodus 20: 1 – 17 for the Ten Commandments

*"Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another. And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD." (Leviticus 19:11-12)*

God was telling Israel that they needed to follow the Word of God now that they were back in the land. This will also be true in the Millennial Kingdom. (See Deuteronomy 28 for the blessings and curses contained in the Law for obedience and rebellion.)

God wanted the evil to be purged from Israel at the time in history, just as He will purge all iniquity from Israel in the Millennial Kingdom. (See Ezekiel 20:33 – 38)

*"For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, **and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.**" (Zechariah 3:9)*

The New Jerusalem will also be free of sin:

*"And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." (Revelation 21:24-27)*

God forgives sin, but He will also work to purge the sin from your life. What sin is in your life that God wants to purge? Israel was given a second chance to live in a godly nation with His

blessings, but they would blow it if they did not deal with sin. God has saved us from the eternal penalty of our sin, but He will not tolerate us continuing in sin. He says, "God forbid."

Not every Israelite that was entering back into the land was a true believer in God. It will be that way also as Israel enters into the Kingdom. God will have to separate the sheep from the goats.

*"Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."* (Romans 9:6-8)

See also Psalm 50:15 – 23 – God is going to deal with sin in His nation, and in His children.

Christian, you and I are not under the Law but under grace. Grace, however, does not give us a free pass to sin. Grace teaches us something better:

*"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."* (Titus 2:11-14)

This flying roll pronounced a curse upon the people for disobeying it as a nation, and it pronounces a curse on us for disobeying it individually. Thank God for the Cross. Jesus forgives, Jesus saves, but Jesus will also sanctify and purge these things from our lives.

See 1 Corinthians 6:9 - 20

## I Vision 9 – The Ephah (5:5 – 11)

According to verse five, whatever the angel and Zechariah were looking at is described as "*this that goeth forth*", which means to proceed or depart. So whatever it was, it was moving.

Verse six tells us that what they saw was an ephah. An ephah was a container of measure equivalent to three-fifths of a bushel or about five gallons. The phrase, "this is their appearance through all the earth," is a little confusing, but it seems to indicate that whatever is in this ephah or basket was representative of what was happening in the whole earth, or more specifically, the whole land of Israel.

Verse seven shows us that the basket had a lid on top of it that was made of a talent of lead. Apparently this particular container was large enough to contain a woman. Remember, the flying roll was also very exaggerated in its size, perhaps for the purpose of emphasis for the vision. A talent was a measurement of weight that weighed anywhere seventy-five pounds to one hundred and thirty pounds of weight, depending on what kind of talent is referred to here. Underneath the talent was a woman, which symbolically is used to represent evil. Putting the three symbols together – the woman, the talent, and the ephah – we can assume that the evil particularly had to do with commercialism. Commercialism was not Israel's big problem before

the captivity, idolatry was; but, after the captivity this particular sin would be a major stumbling-block for Israel.

Verse eight tells us that the angel sealed the woman back up in the ephah with the talent of lead.

Verses nine thru eleven indicate that two more women appear to carry the woman in the ephah away to the land of "Shinar." Shinar was the ancient name for Babylon. (See Genesis 11:1 – 9) Shinar may have been used because of its connection with the Tower of Babel, the first worldwide rebellion against God. Babylon is also used symbolically for the one world religion and government in Revelation (Revelation 17 and 18)

The vision seems to be teaching that just as the sin of idolatry had to be purged from the land of Israel and brought to Babylon before the captivity, so will the sin of commercialism, materialism, and covetousness have to be removed from Israel after the captivity, and also before the Lord sets up his Millennial Kingdom.

The following verses deal with Israel's problems with money: Nehemiah 5:1 – 13; Malachi 3:8 – 12.

*"Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat?" (Amos 8:4-6)*

*"A false balance is abomination to the LORD: but a just weight is his delight." (Proverbs 11:1)*

*"Divers weights are an abomination unto the LORD; and a false balance is not good." (Proverbs 20:23)*

#### Practical Truth for Today Regarding Covetousness and Materialism

1. God wants His children today to trust him to provide for their needs.

*"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:19)*

2. God wants His children to work hard to support their families.

*"For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat." (2 Thessalonians 3:10)*

3. God wants His children to demonstrate their dependence on Him by giving back to Him a portion of what He supplies them with. (See Matthew 6:19 – 34)

*"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." (Luke 6:38)*

*"No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." (Luke 16:13)*

4. God wants our giving to demonstrate our love for Him. (See 2 Corinthians 8:1 – 15)
5. God wants His children to be generous with other people rather than covetous. (See Acts 2:41 – 47)

*"And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet." (Acts 4:33-37)*

*"I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."  
(Acts 20:35)*

## **J Vision 10 – The Four Chariots (6:1 – 8)**

This is a very mysterious passage, and the exact meaning of this vision is uncertain, at least to me. However, this vision seems to speak of God's judgment upon the nations of the world, especially Babylon. In the immediate context, Babylon was already conquered, but would be put down again after they attempted a revolt against the Persians three years after this vision.

Let's break down what we know:

A There are four chariots with horses with four different colors of horses, each chariot having a horse color different from the others. The angel explains that these chariots with horses represent "spirits", which in this context are angels:

*"But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Hebrews 1:13-14)*

*"The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place." (Psalm 68:17)*

All of these spirits or angels are said to go forth from standing before the Lord of all of the earth. Some of them (the bay horses) were said to go "to and fro" through the earth.

In Job 1 and 2, there were angels that were present before the Lord, including Satan, who was said to be going "to and fro" in the earth.

*"Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan*

*answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it." (Job 1:6-7)*

*"Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD. And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it." (Job 2:1-2)*

- 1 Chariot with red horses – does not say where they were going
- 2 Chariot with black horses – went forth to the north country (Babylon?)
- 3 Chariot with white horses – followed the black horses
- 4 Chariot with grisled and bay horses (both are spotted horses) – the grisled were said to go to the south country (Egypt?); but the bay horses were said to go “to and fro” through the earth.

Note – east and west are not mentioned as the Mediterranean Sea was to the west, and the great Arabian Desert was to the east.

We also know that the black horses and the white horses were said to have quieted God’s “spirit” in the north country, which probably is a reference to God’s anger with the north (Babylon?).

*"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." (Proverbs 16:32)*

We also saw horses in the first vision, which are also angels. (See Zechariah 1:7 – 11)

There are also horses in Revelation 6:1 – 9. Here the horses are said to be representative of four different judgments. McGee believes that the judgments in Zechariah are identical with the judgments in Revelation 6.

The Lord Jesus also returns to judge the earth on a white horse, which we will see later.

We don’t specifically know what these chariots in Zechariah were doing, but it appears that they were instruments of God’s judgment as well. In the immediate context, they could be judging the Babylon, which was already conquered, but would suffer again after they would attempt a rebellion against the Kingdom of the Medes and Persians. In the future, more distant prophetic context, this could be speaking of a judgment against both spiritual (Mystery) Babylon (Revelation 17) and commercial Babylon. (Revelation 18)

B There are also two mountains of brass. Most theologians believe that these two mountains are Mount Zion and the Mount of Olives. In between these two mountains is the Kidron Valley. They could also be what is left of the Mount of Olives after the Lord splits it in two when He returns to judge the earth at the end of the Tribulation. (See Zechariah 14:1 – 9; Joel 3:2, 12, and 14; Revelation 19:11 - 21)

The fact that they are mountains of brass, also indicates that they are representatives of judgment as well. The brazen altar in the Tabernacle and Temple was where the sacrifices were burnt. Most Bible scholars believe that what the Bible calls brass (copper and zinc) was probably actually more like what we would call bronze (copper and tin).

God's spirit cannot be quieted until judgment takes place. The Millennium is a time of rest and peace for God's people, but it cannot come until God's enemies are judged.

We could have peace with God until our sin was judged by the Lord on Calvary.

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:"  
(Romans 5:1)

But, Christ had to go to war with sin first. Until men accept God's payment for sin and come to Him on His terms, they are still at war with Him; and will eventually face God's judgment.

## Conclusion

Though, I cannot be sure what exactly these chariots mean, I know that God is in control, and that He will put away all evil in the last day, and then there will be peace for the people of God. The Millennium will be 1000 years of peace and rest for all of God's people, but before that time comes, God will have to put down all those who oppose Him. That judgment will begin in the Kidron Valley, but will spread through the Valley of Megiddo where all nations will be gathered.

See Revelation 16:16 - 21

*"And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs." (Revelation 14:20)*

## II The Four Messages (7:1 – 8:23)

This is an historic interlude, which starts with a question regarding fasting. In Haggai there was also a little interlude in 2:10 involving the unclean coming in contact with the clean. (See notes from Haggai) Isaiah chapters 36 thru 39 also are an historic interlude.

This section was written on December 4, 518 BC, which was two years after Zechariah's introduction (Zechariah 1:1) and two years before the completion of the Temple. (Ezra 6:15) The context of this section involves this question regarding ritualistic fasting. There is a dispute among theologians as to the meaning of the phrase "unto the house of God" in verse 2. Many believe that it should be rendered "from Bethel", because the Hebrew, "bayith el", is always (some 250 times) used to refer to the town of Bethel, which was located in what used to be the northern kingdom.

*"And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he*

*called the name of that place Bethel ("Bayth el"): but the name of that city was called Luz at the first." (Genesis 28:17-19)*

Most of the modern English translations agree that the meaning should be Bethel. The Christian Standard Bible says, *"Now the people of Bethel had sent Sharezer, Regem-melech, and their men to plead for the Lord's favor."*<sup>5</sup> While, the overall emphasis of the passage is not changed at all by the changes in translation, it is unwise to attempt to correct the King James Bible.

It is clear, however, in verse three the Temple is the meaning of "house of the Lord" (*"bayith Yehohah"*). Even though the Temple was not yet completed at the time of this message, it was under construction and it's site was still the center of Jewish worship.

I have taken the position never to side against the King James Version. I believe that God's hand was not only on the original autographs, but it was also upon the English translation. God's breath or Spirit is preserved in the King James Bible.

*"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:" (2 Timothy 3:16)*

*"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter 1:19-21)*

*"The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever." (Psalm 12:6-7)*

## **A Message 1 (7:1 – 7) - Should We Fast?**

The delegation from Bethel asks a question regarding whether or not they should continue to fast, as they had done while they were in captivity. These fasts were not commanded by the Lord. The only regular fast that was commanded by the Lord was on the Day of Atonement:

*"Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD." (Leviticus 23:27)*

Even on the Day of Atonement, there was no specific instructions regarding eating. The Bible just states that they were to "afflict [their] souls", which seems to be more specifically related to abstaining from work. (Leviticus 16:29, 31; 23:32; Numbers 29:7)

The fast on the fifth month was done to commemorate the destruction of the first Temple in Jerusalem. (Jeremiah 52:12 – 13) The seventh month fast may have commemorated the assassination of Gedaliah, the Jewish governor of Judah. (2 Kings 25:23 – 25) It was good that

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<sup>5</sup> *Christian Standard Bible*. (2017). (Zec 7:2). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.



they mourned over their former spiritual condition as well as the consequences that came as a result.

*"By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof."* (Psalm 137:1-2)

However, these fasts that were started with good intentions, appeared to have become ritualistic. God is not a big fan of rituals, especially when they are exercised without the heart.

Zechariah raises a question regarding their question. He asked them whether or not they were really seeking God through their fasts. (See also Isaiah 58:3 – 9)

The main thrust of this message is not instruction regarding fasting, but rather it is a rebuke of heartless rituals. As J. Vernon McGee states: when the heart is right, the ritual is right (vv. 4–7), and when the heart is wrong, the ritual is wrong (vv. 8–14).<sup>6</sup>

Fasting is a great thing for God's people to do, if it is done with the right motivation and for the right reasons.

Examples of people who fasted in the Bible: Jesus, Moses, Elijah, John's Disciples, Anna, Cornelius, Paul, Church at Antioch, Ezra, David.

Reasons for fasting: mourning; your children (David – 2 Samuel 12:16); big problems ("this kind" – Matthew 17:21; Mark 9:29); contrition; ordaining (Paul and Barnabas - Acts 13:2); special power; leading of the Spirit; confession; getting right with God.

### **What does fasting do?**

- 1 It Brings the Body Under Subjection (1 Corinthians 9:27; Galatians 5:17)
- 2 It Denies Bodily Pleasure (Isaiah 58:3 – 4)
- 3 It Breaks the Yoke of Flesh (Isaiah 58:6)

### **What does fasting involve: (What to fast)**

- 1 Food – Jonah 3:6 – 9; Esther 4:15 – 17
- 2 Sex – Exodus 19:14 & 15; 1 Corinthians 7:5
- 3 Sleep – Psalm 88:1 & 2; Luke 2:36 & 37; 6:12
- 4 Entertainment – today fasting might include television and social media.

### **Practical Thoughts on Fasting**

- 1 Don't seek pleasure when you are fasting.
- 2 It should not be business as usual.
- 3 Fasting is designed to afflict the soul.

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<sup>6</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed., Vol. 3, p. 938). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

4 When fasting, put prayer above all else.

5 When fasting, do the opposite of what the flesh desires

Fasting can be a very cleansing and spiritually refreshing time for the Christian. Too many of us have neglected this awesome spiritual exercise.

## **B Message 2 (7:8 – 14) – Execute True Judgment**

In the first message, God says that He is not interested in rituals, but here in this second message, we see that what He really wants is a heart of obedience, mercy, and compassion. If the heart is right, the ritual will be right; if the heart is wrong, the ritual will be wrong.

### **1 Pure Religion Required (vs. 8 – 10)**

The Book of James is a perfect parallel passage that teaches this principle. James 1:22 – 27 teaches that we should be doers of the Word and not just hearers; and that our religion should make a difference in the way we live, and in the way we treat others, especially those less fortunate than ourselves. James 2 further illustrates this regarding our dealing with people who are poor.

Specifically, God admonishes the people to:

#### **a. True Judgment**

This means that we treat people with equity. We give preferential treatment to people with money; or people who are of a different ethnic background; or people who are of a different educational background; or people who cannot recompense us.

*"Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." (Luke 14:12-14)*

#### **b. Mercy and Compassion**

*"For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." (Hosea 6:6)*

*"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 John 3:16-17)*

*"And of some have compassion, making a difference:" (Jude 1:22)*

#### **c. Not Oppress the stranger or the poor**

*"He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor." (Proverbs 14:31)*

*"He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want." (Proverbs 22:16)*

d. Not imagine evil

*"These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren." (Proverbs 6:16-19)*

## 2 Past Rebellion Reviewed (vs. 11 – 14)

The "they" referenced in verse eleven is not speaking of the people in Zechariah's day, but rather the people of the northern kingdom who were taken into Assyrian captivity in 722 BC, or the southern kingdom who were taken into Babylonian captivity in 586 BC.

The bottom line is that there are consequences to our actions. God's judgment fell upon both the northern and southern kingdoms of Israel because they did not heed God's warnings in these areas. God will judge us as well. Saved individuals will not go to hell, but we will be chastised by the Lord.

*"And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Hebrews 12:5-11)*

Saved individuals get corrected, but nations may get punished. God's wrath may get poured out on a nation.

*"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." (Psalm 9:17)*

Notice in v. 11, they "stopped their ears", and "pulled away the shoulder."

Illustrate – Grocery Manager getting yelled at by the store director. He stopped his ears and started singing loudly so he could not hear the rebuke.

Compare vs. 12 & 13 with Proverbs 1:22 – 33.

## C Message 3 (8:1 – 17) – *Speak the Truth and Do Right*

This is the third of the four messages contained in chapters 7 – 8. The first two messages were somewhat negative, containing a lot of correction, the second two messages in chapter eight contain a great deal of encouragement.

In this section, God encourages the people regarding His blessings upon them, if they will continue to follow Him in obedience. Many of the things mentioned here will not be ultimately or completely fulfilled until the Millennium (see vs. 4 – 5). The blessings associated with the return to Jerusalem in that day are a miniature and a picture of the future.

Note – there are some significant terms in this message, and in Chapter 8:

“Lord of Hosts” is found eighteen times – meaning the Lord of the Armies.

“Thus saith the Lord” occurs ten times.

“Jerusalem – six times

“Zion” - appears twice

Note from the Bible Knowledge Commentary regarding the name “Zion:”

Zion was originally the name of the mound where the Jebusites lived, whose fortress David conquered (2 Sam. 5:7). Later Zion (and Mount Zion) were names for the temple site in Jerusalem (Ps. 2:6; Isa. 8:18; Joel 2:1). Also Zion became a synonym for the entire city of Jerusalem (Isa. 2:3; 4:3; 33:20; Amos 1:2; Micah 3:10, 12). Zion and Jerusalem are mentioned together several times by Zechariah (Zech. 1:14, 17, 8:3; 9:9).<sup>7</sup>

“Jealous” – three times

“Remnant” – appears twice and refers to the returning captives

### 1. God’s Deliverance for a Returning People (vs. 1 – 8)

V. 2 – God is jealous over His children (see also Zechariah 1:14):

*“Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: **for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God**, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.”* (Exodus 20:3-6)

Israel had been unfaithful to God. They had worshipped other gods; they had committed spiritual adultery and had forsaken Him. He was jealous, and He fought for what rightfully belonged to Him.

God will not share His children with other false gods. The glory that is due God, He will not allow to be given to another:

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<sup>7</sup> Lindsey, F. D. (1985). Zechariah. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 1560). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

*"I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." (Isaiah 42:8)*

Note – God does not like sharing His people today with this world. He tells us to “love not the world.” He wants us to love Him supremely, and He is jealous when we don’t.

V. 3 – God says that His anger has subsided and that He is now returned to Jerusalem, and would dwell with His people. The Shekinah glory, which represented God’s presence was with Israel as they travelled in the wilderness; it was with them in the first temple, which was built by Solomon. Haggai stated that God’s glory would be even greater in this second temple, often known as Zerubbabel’s temple, even though this new temple was not nearly as costly:

*"The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts." (Haggai 2:9)*

God says that He would abide with them. Later He says that His people will dwell with Him in the city of Jerusalem. In John 15, Jesus said that we are to abide in Him, and His words would abide, or dwell, in us. (See John 15:1 – 10)

Notice also that the city would be called, “a city of truth.” Why? Because God dwells there, and He is Truth. Jesus said, “... *I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*” (John 14:6) The Bible would be the rule of Law in Jerusalem, and His word is truth. God said that the disciples would be set apart, or sanctified, because of the truth; and, so would Jerusalem:

*"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." (John 17:17)*

The mountain would be called, *the holy mountain*. Our God is holy. The angels in Heaven are singing day and night, Holy, Holy, Holy:

*"And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." (Revelation 4:8)*

As long as God was going to be in Jerusalem, it would be a Holy Place.

*"But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." (1 Peter 1:15-16)*

Ultimately, this prophecy will not be completely fulfilled until the Millennial Kingdom when Christ will rule from His throne in Jerusalem. Isaiah said:

*"The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." (Isaiah 2:1-3)*

Notice vs. 4 – 5 – God’s people would be safe in Jerusalem and they would live healthy and long lives; safe from destruction, safe from diseases, safe from disasters. They wouldn’t have to lock their doors, and the kids could safely play out in the streets. Illustrate – When I was a boy, we played outside in the streets all day. We came in when our mothers called us for dinner, or when it was time for bed.

Again, this will not be completely fulfilled until the Millennium:

*"There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD."* (Isaiah 65:20-25)

V. 6 – God says that it may be marvelous (meaning something beyond belief) for the people to see and experience God’s blessings, but it is not marvelous for Him, meaning that it is not something extraordinary for God. Our God is a God who can do the impossible. This was merely a crumb falling off of the master’s table. Having said that, God is pleased to see His children living in obedience to Him. God desires to bless His children, and it grieves God to have to chasten them. God takes no pleasure in punishing. Neither does God take pleasure in destroying the wicked:

*"Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"* (Ezekiel 33:11)

Vs. 7 – 8 – The complete fulfillment of these verses will not take place until Israel receives their Messiah, and returns to Him. He will gather His people from all over the world into the Land of Israel:

*"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth."* (Isaiah 11:11-12)

*"Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth;"* (Isaiah 43:5-6)

## 2. God's Difference for a Remembering People (vs. 9 – 16)

In this portion of the message, God compares the blessings of God that they are now experiencing with the chastisement that they had lived through in and before the captivity.

V. 9 is an interesting verse – God is speaking to the people that were there when the foundation of the temple was laid back in 535 BC: the people that heard the preaching of Haggai as well as Zechariah's own messages. Prior to the preaching of Haggai and Zechariah, the people were discouraged due to the opposition that they had faced, and had given up on building the Temple. (See Ezra 4:1 – 5) They gave up and went about trying to live their own lives and build their own houses. But, God was not blessing them. They were now seeing God's blessings as they restarted the project and were continuing to build the temple, which would be completed in a few years, in 515 BC. God was telling them that everything the prophets had told them was coming to pass, just as God had told them.

Practical Point – We need to trust God that He will do everything exactly as He says. He says that He will bless us as we obey Him, and He will. He says He's coming again to receive us unto Himself, and He will. He says that He is building a home for us in Heaven, and He is. He says that He will meet all of our needs as we put Him first, and He will.

Vs. 10 – 12 - Before the people started putting God first, they were not being blessed financially. (see Haggai 1:1 – 15) The people were not being blessed because they were not putting God first.

*"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."* (Matthew 6:33)

Vs. 13 – 15 – In the past, God was not blessing them in their fights with the enemy. As we saw in our introduction to the Book of Judges. God's people have followed a cycle. They obey God and do right and experience God's blessings, and then they move away from God into idolatry, which results in God's chastisement. One of the evidences of the chastisement of God upon Israel was the their inability to defeat their enemies.

See Deuteronomy 28 for the contrast between God's promised blessing and curses on Israel based upon their obedience. (Deuteronomy 28:36 – 48)

## 3. God's Directive for a Repentant People (vs. 16 – 17)

God says that there are four things that Israel should do, if they wanted to keep the blessings of God:

- a. Speak truth to his neighbor – Jeremiah stated that Israel was guilty of this in the past:

*"And they will deceive every one his neighbour, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity."* (Jeremiah 9:5)

- b. Execute the judgement of truth and peace – this has to do with equity and justice (see 7:8 – 12) This is similar to the message that Micah preached to the people:

*"He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:8)*

- c. Not imagine evil against his neighbor – to imagine means to devise or conspire; to think up ways to defraud or injure your neighbor.

*"These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren." (Proverbs 6:16-19)*

- d. love no false oath

Jeremiah recorded in the past that the Israelites were guilty of swearing falsely regarding their relationship with God:

*"Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it. And though they say, The LORD liveth; surely they swear falsely." (Jeremiah 5:1-2)*

God had warned them about all of these things in the Law:

*"Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another. And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD. Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning. Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumblingblock before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I am the LORD. Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour." (Leviticus 19:11-15)*

### **Conclusion to the Third Message**

In this third message, God assures His people that He is now with them. Just as Haggai told the people when they had restarted the work of building the Temple: "I am with you." (Haggai 1:13; 2:4) God says that He would dwell with them. He states that Jerusalem would be a place of truth and true holiness once again.

He also reminds them that all of the promises He had made them were coming to pass. Israel had forsaken God in their past, and even since their return from Babylon, they were guilty of putting other things before God; but, if they would remember to keep God first, He would continue to bless them.



Thirdly, He gives them a homework assignment. He gives them for things to do, but basically He admonishes them to continue doing right; to be just and honest with Him, and with their neighbors.

#### **D     Message 4 (8:18 – 23) – God Is With You – *We Want to be With You Also***

The fourth message begins with the subject of fasting just as the first message did (Zechariah 7:1 – 7) God states that their fasting will be turned to feasting and joy. Notice in verse 19 “joy and gladness and cheerful feasts” are connected with “truth and peace”. It is interesting that when we think of joy and gladness and cheerful feasts, we are thrilled; but are we thinking of the same thing that God is declaring here. Are we thinking of some party that we might participate in today, or are we thinking of a celebration of praise and worship of the Lord.

Illustration – Years ago the parking lot of Solid Rock Baptist Church back in the Kirkwood building was filled with cars on Tuesday evenings because of the School of the Scriptures. Today, the parking lot is still filled at the new Berlin building, but not because of the Bible study. The people are coming out because of basketball. There is nothing wrong with basketball, but there is something very right with studying the Bible. This celebration in Jerusalem will not be surrounding a sports event or even family and friends; it will be a celebration of God. God will have to change His people in order to get them to the place where this celebration would truly be a time of joy for them.

Jesus stated that his disciples didn’t fast because the Bridegroom was with them, but He also said that they would fast when He was taken away. (Matthew 9:14 – 15) However, God said in the third message that He would be with them. This message, like many of the prophecies in this Book will see its ultimate fulfillment in the Millennial Kingdom.

There will come a time in the future when all of the rituals and observances done by the people of God will be pure and right, because their hearts will be right. It will be a time of both truth and peace:

*"But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying." (Isaiah 65:18-19)*

There are four feasts mentioned in the fourth message: two of which were not mentioned in the first message. The fast on the fifth month was done to commemorate the destruction of the first Temple in Jerusalem. (Jeremiah 52:12 – 13) The seventh month fast may have commemorated the assassination of Gedaliah, the Jewish governor of Judah. (2 Kings 25:23 – 25) It was good that they mourned over their former spiritual condition as well as the consequences that came as a result. According to McArthur, In the fourth month they commemorated the breaching of the wall of Jerusalem (2 Kings 25:3; Jeremiah 39:2–4) and in

the tenth month they remembered the beginning of the final siege of Jerusalem which began in 588 B.C. (2 Kings 25:1; Jeremiah 39:1).<sup>8</sup>

The blessings of God will not be limited to Israel, either. Notice vs. 22 – 23. In the Millennial Kingdom Israel will be a blessing to the rest of the world, (See Isaiah 2:2 – 4; Micah 4:1 – 5)

This is truly the fulfillment of the prophecy given to Abraham in Genesis 12:

*"Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." (Genesis 12:1-3)*

Notice v. 23 – God's blessing on the Jews will attract the attention of the Gentiles.

Practical Point – We ought to make God look so good in our lives that people say, "Hey – You going to church. We're going with you.

*"He delivereth me from mine enemies: yea, thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me: thou hast delivered me from the violent man. Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name." (Psalms 18:48-49)*

*"I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD. Blessed is that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies."*

When is the last time that somebody said to you, "I have heard God is with you, or I see that God is with you; I want to go with you."

Keep a positive attitude, especially in front of lost people.

Watch your behavior, especially in front of lost people.

Specifically pray for God to work on the lost people around you.

Specifically pray that you will be a great testimony – shining light for the Lord Jesus.

Talk about Jesus and the church in a favorable light. Brag on Jesus often.

Look for opportunities to bring Jesus into the conversation.

Invite people to church, especially on special days.

Get the church to pray for those people by name.

Illustration – "Present the Gospel to everybody you meet, and, if necessary, use words.

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<sup>8</sup> MacArthur, J., Jr. (Ed.). (1997). *The MacArthur Study Bible* (electronic ed., p. 1349). Nashville, TN: Word Pub.

### III The Two Burdens (9:1 – 14:21)

This section contains prophecies concerning the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The **Crown** is in view.

In these last two sections of Zechariah five major events are in view:

Christ's first advent

The worldwide dispersion of the Jews

The Tribulation Period

Christ's second advent

The Millennial Kingdom

#### A Burden 1 (9:1 – 11:17) – The Savior

This section contains prophecies leading up to the first coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The **Cross** is in view.

Chapter nine gives the chronicles prophetically of the conquests of Alexander the Great of Greece. Verse 8, however, states that God will protect Jerusalem, and verse 9 is clearly a reference to the triumphal entry of the Lord Jesus Christ.

##### 1 Alexander's Conquests (9:1 – 8)

Verse 1 – 2a deal with Syria – Hadrach is likely Hattarika, which was near Hamath in northern Syria. Damascus is the capitol of Syria. Syria was (and still is today) a bitter enemy of Israel.

Vs. 2b – 4 deal with Tyre and Sidon, which were both destroyed by Alexander in 330 B. C.

Tyre was located on the Mediterranean Sea due west of the Sea of Galilea.

Both Philistia and Tyre were guilty of trafficking in Hebrew slaves; Hiram, king of Tyre, had previously been friends with David, and had also made a covenant with Solomon, but apparently Tyre had eventually broken it. (1Kings 5:1 - 12; 9:10 - 14)

Ezekiel also prophesied against Tyre. (Ezekiel 26:1 – 18) Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the old city of Tyre, which was on the mainland, forcing the people of Tyre to relocate onto an island off the coast. Eventually the island city of Tyre was completely destroyed by Alexander the Great in 330 B. C., when he built a causeway out to the island.

Vs. 5 – 7 discuss the destruction of the Land of the Philistines.

Verse 8 speaks of the protection of Jerusalem.

Alexander spared the City of Jerusalem after being shown a prophecy regarding him from the Book of Daniel. (Daniel 2:32, 39; 7:6, 17; 8:3 – 8; 20 – 21; 10:20, 21; 11:2 - 35)

Josephus, the Jewish historian, who wrote his Antiquities of the Jews in 94 AD, records an historical event involving Alexander the Great and his Greek Empire involving the Book of Daniel:

And when the Book of Daniel was showed him (23) wherein Daniel declared that one of the Greeks should destroy the empire of the Persians, he supposed that himself was the person intended. And as he was then glad, he dismissed the multitude for the present; but the next day he called them to him, and bid them ask what favors they pleased of him; whereupon the high priest desired that they might enjoy the laws of their forefathers, and might pay no tribute on the seventh year.<sup>9</sup>



<sup>9</sup> Josephus, Flavius (2011-07-06). The Antiquities of the Jews by Josephus [Annotated Edition] (Halcyon Classics) (Kindle Locations 9510-9514). Halcyon Press Ltd. Kindle Edition.



## 2 A Prophecy of Christ's First Coming and a Comparison with Alexander (9:9)

See Matthew 21:1 – 5 – Notice Matthew leaves out the part of the verse that deals with Christ's Second Coming. Israel rejected Christ's first coming:

*"He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:"* (John 1:11-12)

Also, notice the difference between Alexander and Christ. Christ is humble.

### ***Jesus and Alexander***

*Jesus and Alexander died at thirty-three;  
 One lived and died for self; one died for you and me.  
 The Greek died on a throne; the Jew died on a cross;  
 One's life triumphed seemed; the other a loss.  
 One led armies forth; the other walked alone;  
 One shed a whole world's blood; the other gave His own.  
 One won the world in life and lost it all in death;  
 The other lost His life to win the whole world's faith.*

*Jesus and Alexander died at thirty-three;  
 One died in Babylon; and one on Calvary.  
 One gained all for self; and one Himself He gave;  
 One conquered every throne; the other every grave.  
 The one made himself god; The God made Himself less;  
 The one lived but to blast; the other but to bless!*

*When died the Greek, forever fell his throne of swords  
 But Jesus died to live forever Lord of lords.  
 Jesus and Alexander died at thirty-three.  
 The Greek made all men slaves; the Jew made all men free.  
 One built a throne on blood; the other built on love,  
 The one was born of earth; the other from above;  
 One won all this earth, to lose all earth and heaven.  
 The other gave up all, that all to Him be given.  
 The Greek forever died; the Jew forever lives;  
 He loses all who get, and gains all things who gives.*

### 3 Christ's Second Coming (9:10 – 17)

Because Israel rejected the first Christ at His first coming, Israel will have to wait until the second coming to enjoy the blessings of the Millennial Kingdom described in the remainder of this chapter.

The latter part of the chapter deals with the coming Millennial Kingdom.

v. 11 - Notice – “the blood of thy covenant” – this may be a reference to the Abrahamic Covenant, which was ratified with a blood sacrifice. (Genesis 15:1 – 10)

Notice also in v. 13 – “Greece” – The Grecian Empire was divided after the death of Alexander into four kingdoms, each ruled by one of Alexanders generals. One of the rulers over the area of Palestine was Antiochus Epiphanes who was a very cruel anti-Semite. The Jews revolted against Antiochus and for a short time gained sovereign control over their land.

### 4 The Restoration of Jerusalem and Return of God's People (Chapter 10)

Chapter ten deals with the restoration of Jerusalem preceded by the return of the people of God from all of the places where they had been scattered.

#### a. The Restoration of Israel (10:1 – 7)

v. 1 – the rain could be a reference to the physical blessing of water for parched soil in this post-exilic period, or it could be a reference to spiritual revival both now and in the future (the Millennium); or, it could be both.

*"Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth." (Hosea 6:1-3)*

*"For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses." (Isaiah 44:3-4)*

According to Isaiah 35:1 – 7, during the Millennium Israel will have both spiritual blessing as well physical water. The desert will "blossom as the rose." Zechariah 12:10 speaks of the spiritual blessings that God will pour out on Israel when they recognize and receive their Messiah:

*"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn." (Zechariah 12:10)*

vs. 2 & 3 – the idols (teraphim – household statues) could never give Israel her needs and left her empty and without a Shepherd. (See Ezekiel 34:6 – 10) The shepherd (v. 2) was the Lord, but the shepherds (v. 3) were the spiritual leaders who allowed Israel to fall into apostasy. The spiritual condition of Israel at the time of Christ's first coming was much the same. They were without a shepherd, but this time it was not because of idolatry, but because Israel was trapped in a legalistic religious system and had rejected their Messiah (John 1:11):

*"But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd." (Matthew 9:36)*

Both Isaiah and Jeremiah spoke of this time when Israel would be without spiritual leadership:

*"His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter. Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant." (Isaiah 56:10-12)*

*"My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their restingplace." (Jeremiah 50:6)*

The shepherds job is to feed and water the flock, and to protect the flock from predators and disease. Israel's shepherds: her kings and her priests had failed her.

The New Testament equates the shepherds with the local church pastor:

*"The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.*

*And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." (1 Peter 5:1-4)*

*"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."  
(Acts 20:28)*

Notice the reference to the goats. McGee says the goats are the leaders of Israel:

When I was a young fellow I worked in an abattoir, a place where they killed cattle, sheep, and pigs for the butcher shop. It was a very bloody business, and during the first two days I worked there, I had to go outside occasionally to recover from it. But the thing that seemed to me more cruel than anything was the use of an old goat with a bell around his neck. He was called a Judas goat because he would lead sheep to the slaughter. Instead of the workmen driving the sheep, they would start this old goat up the ramp, and all the sheep would follow him. Then the goat would step aside while the sheep went to the slaughter. Now when the Lord said, "I punish the goats," He is talking about the leaders in Israel. They should have been leading their people into the Word of God, to the place where they could have peace with God, peace in their own hearts. Instead, they were false prophets, giving them false comfort, and actually leading them away from God. God said that He was angry with them.<sup>10</sup>

Though Israel were like sheep militarily, God says here that they (specifically Judah) will become powerful, like a "goodly horse in the battle."

v. 4 – "Out of Him (Judah) came forth the corner" - Jesus Christ is the cornerstone:

*"Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste." (Isaiah 28:16)*

*"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;" (Ephesians 2:19-20)*

*"Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed." (1 Peter 2:6-8)*

Jesus is not only the corner, He is also the nail. Nails or pegs fasten things down or anchor things. He is also the battle bow, or weapon that will be used to put down all of Israel's enemies. This will be ultimately fulfilled at the Battle of Armageddon. (Revelation 19:11 – 21)

Vs. 5 – 7 – Zechariah specifically mentions Judah, Joseph, and Ephraim in these verses. Judah is the tribe that the Lord Jesus comes from, but is also the tribe of the southern kingdom. The

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<sup>10</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed., Vol. 3, p. 961). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.



tribe of Joseph contained Ephraim and is probably used symbolically and synonymously representing the entire northern kingdom of Israel.

## b. The Regathering of Israel in the Land (10:8 – 12)

The Lord Jesus was crucified around 30 A.D., and the City of Jerusalem was destroyed around 70 A.D. by Titus. Most of the millions of Jews that were in Jerusalem and Israel at that time were scattered all around the Roman Empire. In 1948, Israel was re-established as a sovereign nation and many Jews returned to the land. When the Soviet Union broke apart in the 1980's many more Soviet Jews returned to Israel. God is going to continue bringing His people back to the land before the start of the Millennial Kingdom.

v. 8 – "I will hiss for them" – has the idea of whistling for them, like you would whistle for a dog to come.

Illustrate – My neighbor's father would whistle for his daughter to come home.

*"Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land." (Jeremiah 23:7-8)*

*"Behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely: And they shall be my people, and I will be their God:" (Jeremiah 32:37-38)*

*"And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth: and, behold, they shall come with speed swiftly:" (Isaiah 5:26)*

*"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." (Isaiah 11:11-12)*

*"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." (Matthew 24:29-31)*

In the New Testament, Jesus said the sheep were scattered, and without a Shepherd, but someday soon God will regather all of His sheep together, and they will be united for Him and against their enemies. God will then bring down all of Israel's enemies.

Note – when we are united for God, He will bring tremendous victories against our enemy, the Devil. Like Israel, the Church is too often scattered, squabbling with each other and not in harmony with God’s purposes.

## 5 (Chapter 11)

Chapter eleven speaks of the rejection of the good shepherd (the Lord Jesus), which will open the door for the “foolish shepherd”, the antichrist. Verses 10 – 17 are actually a parable that was acted out by Zechariah. Notice in vs. 12 and 13 the reference to the thirty pieces of silver that were paid to Judas for betraying Jesus.

Vs. 1 – 3 – describe the geography of a judgment, which is most likely a reference to the destruction of Jerusalem and the surrounding areas by the Roman General Titus in 70 AD. Lebanon was to the northwest; Bashan was to the northeast. The judgment was going to sweep in like a raging forest fire and devour the whole land from the north and then travel down through the Jordan Valley to the southern border.

J. Vernon McGee describes “The Great Rift”, which is the route that was taken by many conquerors as they traveled from the north, through Palestine, and then down into northern Africa:

The Romans used the same method that Alexander the Great used—they came down from the north. If you go to Lebanon today, you will see above Beirut a river which is known as the Dog River. There, right at the entrance by the sea, on the face of the mountain are inscriptions which have been labeled “The Calling Cards of the Nations of the World.” Every great general of every great nation who went through there carved his name in the rock. I have looked at it, and the translation was given to me. The only one I could read for myself was the one in Greek—I finally figured out that one. All the great generals came that route because it is the beginning of what is known as the Great Rift, which moves inland and extends into North Africa. The Sea of Galilee, the Jordan River, and the Dead Sea are all part of the Great Rift. So Zechariah is describing here the advance of the conqueror who is coming into Palestine.<sup>11</sup>

In v. 3, the shepherds are probably a picture of the false religious or political leaders of Israel at the time of Christ. They are wailing due to their loss of their “pasture land” and their “flocks”. The lions could be symbolic of the destroying army or they could also represent the princes or political leaders who would also lose their prey (the poor of Israel) when Rome destroyed them.

### a. The Good Shepherd (vs. 4 – 14)

Zechariah acts out the part of the Good Shepherd, and is commanded to feed them who are appointed to slaughter. They are appointed to slaughter because though God had compassion on them and back into their land, they would again reject Him. This time, however, they would reject Him in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Vs. 5 – 6 probably describe the oppressors from within Israel – the corrupt religious system as well as the Herod’s who were descendants of Herod the Great, a Jewish proselyte. Unger states, “Herod was not only an Idumaeen in race and a Jew in religion, but he was a heathen in practice

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<sup>11</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible Commentary* (electronic ed., Vol. 3, p. 965). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

and a monster in character.”<sup>12</sup> A striking example of his barbarism was demonstrated when Herod was just given power. He slew all of the members of the Sanhedrin, which had previously opposed him, and had them all replaced with a fresh group who would be submissive to his control.<sup>13</sup> He was not much nicer to his family. Wiersbe tells us, “He had nine wives (some say ten), and he thought nothing of slaying his own sons or wives if they got in the way of his plans.”<sup>14</sup> Phillips comments:

Herod filled Jerusalem with foreign mercenaries and the cities of Palestine with spies. No man or woman was safe while Herod reigned. One by one he murdered every rival claimant to the throne. He stamped out the Hasmoneans; he murdered his wife’s brother, a lad of seventeen, because he was popular with the Jews; he murdered Mariamne, the beautiful Maccabean princess he had married, because he was suspicious of her, and he murdered both her sons; five days before his death he murdered his son and heir. Herod hacked and hewed his way through life, slaughtering six to eight-thousand of the best people in his realm. Caesar Augustus is reported to have cynically said, “I’d sooner be Herod’s swine than Herod’s son.”<sup>15</sup>

He was a brutal despot who murdered anyone who threatened his authority.<sup>16</sup> He saw Jesus, though a mere babe in a manger in Bethlehem, as just such a threat to his power: so much so that he had every child two years of age and under in Bethlehem executed so that any potential risk would be eliminated. (Matthew 2:16)

## 1 Beauty – symbolic of grace (vs. 7, 10 – 13)

vs. 8 - 11 describe God’s breaking of His conditional covenant with Israel. He had promised then that if they would serve Him, He would protect them from enemies and provide for them. (Deuteronomy 28)

vs. 12 – 13 are prophetic of the rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ by the nation. Judas sold Jesus for thirty pieces of silver, which was the price of a servant. (Exodus 21:32) He later returned it. The religious leaders refused to put the money in the treasury, and instead purchased the potter’s field. The potter’s field was the place that the potter threw away all of his broken or hardened pieces of clay.

See Matthew 26:14 – 16; 27:1 - 10

## 2 Bands – symbolic of unity (vs. 7, 14)

Jesus wanted to bring unity to Israel, but Israel rejected Him:

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<sup>12</sup> Unger, Merrill F. *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary* (p. 557). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.

<sup>13</sup> Josephus, Flavius. *The Antiquities of the Jews by Josephus* [Annotated Edition] (Halcyon Classics) (Kindle Locations 11859-11862). Halcyon Press Ltd. Kindle Edition.

<sup>14</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible Exposition Commentary* (Vol. 1, p. 49). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>15</sup> Phillips, J. (2014). *Exploring the Gospel of Matthew: An Expository Commentary* (Mt 2:2). Kregel Publications; WORDsearch.

<sup>16</sup> Hester, Richard H. (2008) *New Testament Bible History* (p. 41). Blacktown, NSW, AU: www.missionaryoutpost.com.

*"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."*

(Matthew 23:37-38)

### **b. The Foolish Shepherd (vs. 15 – 17)**

Because Israel rejected the truth, they would instead believe a lie. (2 Thessalonians 2:11; John 5:43)

Between the Good Shepherd's rejection and the reception of the foolish shepherd is a period of time known as the Church Age.

See Daniel 9:23 - 27

The word foolish here does not mean stupid, it means worthless. The foolish shepherd is the antichrist. He will pretend to be Israel's friend, but will turn on them with a vengeance.

*"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."* (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4)

Note – the right arm is a symbol of his power. His right eye is a symbol of his intelligence, or perhaps his sight, as God will miraculously hide Israel from him. (Revelation 12:6)

### **Practical Thought – v. 17**

God pronounces a "woe" or a judgement upon the idol shepherd that leaves the flock. The shepherds job is to protect the flock and to provide for the flock whatever it needs to be healthy. Jesus is our chief Shepherd and He will never leave us nor forsake us. (Hebrews 13:5) However, sometime His under-shepherds neglect the flock, by not feeding them and not protecting them from spiritual harm. Sometimes shepherds even abandon the flock.

*"The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."* (1 Peter 5:1-4)

*"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."* (Acts 20:28-31)

This church is a flock – it is my responsibility to protect it from false doctrine and to feed it with the Word of God.

Your family is a flock – It is your job to nurture, feed, and protect your family.

Jesus is the Good Shepherd and he will always be there for us:

*"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." (John 10:11-16)*

## **B Burden 2 (12:1 – 14:21) – The Sovereign**

The phrase, "in that day", occurs 16 times in these last three chapters of Zechariah.

The name, "Jerusalem", is mentioned twenty-two times.

The phrase, "saith the Lord", appears five times. This is not the word of the prophet; this is the Word of God:

*"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:" (2 Timothy 3:16)*

*"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter 1:19-21)*

The Bible is not a compilation of the words of men; it is the very Word of God.

### **1 Armageddon - The Gathering of the Armies of the World Against Israel (12:1 – 9)**

See also Zechariah 14:1 - 2

The Tribulation is a seven-year period known as the "time of Jacob's trouble" (Jeremiah 30:7); also known as Daniel's seventieth week. Throughout the Great Tribulation, which we believe is the last three and one-half years of the seven year period, Antichrist and his armies will be in pursuit of Israel. Finally, at the very end of the period, the Lord will gather all the nations of the earth together for a final battle where He will put an end to the world's rebellion against Him, and the world's persecution against Israel.

V. 1 – Notice here that the Lord identifies Himself as the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe, as well as the one who breathed life into man.

*"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."*  
(Colossians 1:16-17)

Notice the phrase, "stretcheth forth the heavens". It wasn't until 1925 that Edwin Hubble figured out that the earth was constantly expanding. He developed a law which showed the direct relationship between the distances that galaxies are from the earth, and the speed at which they are moving away. The further away they are, the faster they move.

This same God that created and controls the Universe, is the one who gave man life.

*"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."* (Genesis 2:7)

This same God is also in total control of the eschatological events in our future.

Vs. 2 – 9 describe the armies of Antichrist as they gather together against Israel in the Valley of Megiddo, or Armageddon.

Notice the reference to the word, "cup". The cup is symbolic of judgement:

*"For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them."* (Psalm 75:8)

*"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:"* (Revelation 14:9-10)

See Revelation 16:12 – 16; Revelation 19:11 – 21; Revelation 14:18 – 20; Joel 3:9 – 16; Psalm 2:1 – 3.

Compare Matthew 24:15 – 44 with Luke 17:34 - 37

## **2 Acceptance – The Realization of Israel Regarding Their Messiah (12:10 – 14)**

Verses 12:10 – 14 speak of the nation of Israel returning to the Lord by turning to their Saviour. See Romans 11:1 – 27, which explains God's relationship with Israel: their fall due to their rejection of the Saviour, and their favor due to their repentance and faith.

Notice in Zechariah 12: 10 – 14, there are repeated references to Israel's mourning. This is the contrition that is associated with their repentance. Israel was not just sorry for sin in general, they were sorry for their rejection of their Messiah.

*"For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death."* (2 Corinthians 7:10)

There may be sorrow without repentance, but there is rarely repentance of sin without sorrow. V. 11 is probably a reference to the death of Josiah, which also occurred in the Valley of Megiddo. (See 2 Chronicles 35:20 – 25; also note below from *LBD*)

**Hadad-rimmon** (הַדָּד־רִמּוֹן, *hadad-rimmon*). Name of either a deity or a place; appears only in Zech 12:11.

There are two primary options for interpreting Hadad-rimmon: as a deity or as a place in the valley/plain of Megiddo. The genitive construction in Zech 12:11 is unclear; it could describe mourning either *for* or *at* Hadad-Rimmon. A number of English translations use the preposition “for” (CEV, ESV, LEB, NJB, NLT [second edition], NRSV, RSV, TEV), which indicates that Hadad-rimmon is a deity or person being mourned. Other translations use “at” (NET, NKJV), referring to Hadad-rimmon as the place of mourning. Other versions use “of” (CEB, KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV [1984, 2011], NLT [first edition]), which leaves the meaning ambiguous.

### Deity

Hadad is the name of the Northwest Semitic storm god, called Baal at Ugarit. Rimmon appears to be a variant form of Ramman and is associated with the word for thunder, though Meyers and Meyers suggest that it could just as likely carry the West Semitic meaning of “high, elevated, exalted” (Meyers and Meyers, *Zechariah 9–14*, 343). Rimmon was the chief god worshiped by the Arameans of Syria (2 Kgs 5:18; Greenfield, “Aramean God”) though it is used as a theophoric element in certain Akkadian and Aramaic names. The Hebrew form technically means “pomegranate,” which allows the possibility that the author is slighting the god.

The idea of mourning for a deity was common in the ancient Near East. Mourning rituals were connected to Baal’s revival, which was understood to lead to a restoration of the land’s fruitfulness (compare 1 Kgs 18 and the *Baal Cycle* of Ugaritic literature). Mourning rites for other deities were known in the exilic period (Ezek 8:14). Merrill (following the argumentation of Delcor, “Deux Passages Difficiles,” 68–69) argues against this reading, however, on the grounds that weeping for a Canaanite deity would be repugnant to the restored people of Judah in the era of Zechariah (Merrill, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*, 283–84).

### Place

The plain of Megiddo is where the pharaoh Neco’s archers killed King Josiah, who was mourned by all Judah and Jerusalem (2 Chr 35:22–24). The text indicates that it was a “requirement” that mourning for Josiah, the last of Judah’s righteous kings, continue in perpetuity (2 Chr 35:25). In light of this apparent practice, Zech 12:11 could be referring to Hadad-rimmon as the specific place where Josiah was mourned; however, there is no location in the plain of Megiddo known by this name.

### Intentional Ambiguity

The connections between Hadad-Rimmon and mourning—both the mourning rites associated with Western Semitic deities and the plain of Megiddo as a mourning place for Josiah—suggest intentional ambiguity or perhaps even double entendre as the most likely explanation for the word (following Meyers and Meyers, *Zechariah 9–14*, 344).

## Other Readings

The Aramaic Targum of Zech 12:11 reads, “like the mourning of Ahab son of Omri who was killed by Hadad-rimmon the son of Thabrimmon and like the mourning of Josiah son of Amon who was killed by Pharaoh the lame in the valley of Megiddo,” which would lend some early support to interpreting this with reference to the death of King Josiah. The Syriac equally attests such a reading, but with the alteration of reading “Hadad-rimmon” in place of “son of Amon.”<sup>17</sup>

Notice vs. 12 – 14 – the mourning will be complete throughout the whole nation:

The Princes (David)

The Prophets (Nathan)

The Priests and Levites (Levi and Shimei [Gershon’s son – Numbers 3:21])

### 3 Atonement – The Cleansing of Israel (Chapter 13)

#### a. The Cleansing of Israel’s Sin (v. 1)

Remember, the atonement of Israel is preceded by her repentance. (Zechariah 12:10 – 14; “mourning”)

V. 1 – “In that Day” – refers to the Great Tribulation and the Millennial Kingdom. The fountain for sin and uncleanness was not opened for Israel when Christ died for the sins of the world because at that time they rejected him. (John 1:11)

Phillips supports this principle:

The blood of Christ is sufficient to cleanse the sin of all the human race, but it is efficient to cleanse only when it is applied to the guilty soul by saving faith. “In that day” the Jews will see that fountain and avail themselves of its cleansing power. That fountain will have been there all along, but the Jews will have been too blind to see it (Romans 9–11).<sup>18</sup>

*“For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.”* (Romans 10:3)

However, in this time of Great Tribulation, Israel will turn to Christ:

*“And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.”* (Zechariah 12:10)

*“For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the*

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<sup>17</sup> Rick Wadholm Jr. (2016). Hadad-rimmon. In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>18</sup> Phillips, J. (2009). *Exploring the Minor Prophets: An Expository Commentary* (Zec 13:1). Kregel Publications; WORDsearch Corp.



*Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." (Romans 11:25-27)*

This is God's New Covenant with Israel:

*"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."*  
(Jeremiah 31:31-34)

"William Cowper based his hymn "There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood" on Zechariah 13:1, for it's the sacrifice of Christ that atones for sin. The Jews could cleanse their external ceremonial uncleanness by washing in water, but for internal cleansing the sinful heart of men and women can be cleansed only by the blood of the Savior (Leviticus 16:30; 17:11)".<sup>19</sup>

#### **b. The Cutting Off of Israel's Seers (vs. 2 – 5)**

When Christ returns, He will cut off all false prophets as well as all idols and unclean spirits. One of the unclean spirits is Satan. In Revelation 13, it speaks of an "image" of the beast (an idol), which lost people will worship. There are obviously many unclean spirits, as well as false prophets and idols that will need to be cleansed from the land.

Vs. 3 and 4 are interesting. When Jesus returns, He will cleanse all of the world of the false prophets, idols, and devils. However, during the Millennial Kingdom, there will eventually be people born on the earth who will not be saved. Eventually, false prophets will enter in.

Phillips develops this thought:

Although the world will be filled with beauty and bliss during the golden age, the unregenerate will be discontented. A strange new voice will be heard, the voice of a false prophet. He will promise emancipation from the oppressive tyranny of Jerusalem and hint that a coming liberator is being hindered from bringing his benefits to the race.

The false prophesies will only be whispers at first, but the Lord will be instantly aware of them. Warnings will be issued, but judgment will be stayed for a while to give grace an opportunity to work. However, the infection will spread. The false prophet will win converts, who will emulate their teacher and go even farther astray; indeed they will assume the garb of the Old Testament prophets. The Adamic nature will still be the Adamic nature. Enmity against God is its root; sin and death are its fruit.

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<sup>19</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (1997). *Be Heroic* (pp. 147–148). Colorado Springs, CO: ChariotVictor Pub.

The original offender's parents, outraged by their son's wickedness, will take action.<sup>20</sup>

In the Old Testament, parents were to put God above their children and were commanded to even put their children to death for rebellion (Deuteronomy 21:18 – 21), or for prophesying falsely. (Deuteronomy 13:6 – 11; 18:20)

### c. The Crucifixion of Israel's Saviour (vs. 6 – 7)

There has been some debate as to the meaning of v.6. Many sound expositors (Ryrie, McArthur, Wiersbe, Walvoord) say that it belongs in the context of vs. 2 – 5, and thus refers to one of the false prophets. The belief is that the wounds referred to here are actually wounds of self-mutilation. Remember, the prophets of Baal cut themselves. (1 Kings 18:28) This is certainly possible. The "him" in v. 6 may refer all the way back to Zechariah 12:10. The "wounds in thine hand", and the "the house of my friends" bring immediate thoughts of the Saviour who was pierced in His hands at the crucifixion inside of the City of Jerusalem on Mount Calvary, near the Temple. (the house of [His] friends)

*"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." (Isaiah 53:5)*

*"For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet." (Psalm 22:16)*

V. 7 is clearly a reference to Christ as Jesus quoted from this verse alluding to His crucifixion.

*"Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad." (Matthew 26:31)*

Notice v. 7 – "the man that is my fellow" The Father is speaking of His association with Christ.

*"I and my Father are one." (John 10:30)*

*"Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?" (John 14:9)*

### d. The Culling of Israel's Sheep (vs. 8 – 9)

God will refine Israel, as the goldsmith purifies gold. Notice that during the Tribulation many will be "cut off", and only about one-third will survive to enter into God's Kingdom. This is the remnant spoken of in Romans 9:27.

*"Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved:" (Romans 9:27)*

The ones that remain are the ones that "call[ed] upon the name of the Lord." (See Acts 2:16 – 21) Note – many saved Israelites as well as Gentiles will be martyred for the Lord in the Tribulation Period. (See Revelation 6:9 – 11; 7:9 – 17)

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<sup>20</sup> Phillips, J. (2009). *Exploring the Minor Prophets: An Expository Commentary* (Zec 13:2b–5). Kregel Publications; WORDsearch Corp.

## 4 The Arrival of the Day of the Lord (Chapter 14)

*"The day of the Lord cometh"*

Chapter 14 refers to the events immediately preceding and including the Battle of Armageddon, as well as the beginning of Christ's Millennial Kingdom. Keep in mind that Armageddon is not just a one day battle, but is siege against Israel and God's people, and it will take several days to complete. In the first two verses of this chapter, we will see that for a time it looks as if God's people were going to lose. That is, until Christ comes down and puts an end to the battle.

### a. The Kingdom (Jerusalem) is Surrounded by Enemies (vs. 1 – 2)

These armies from "all nations" will be led by Antichrist.

Some will be able to flee, but others will not. (Matthew 24:15 – 22; Revelation 12:1 – 6) The ones that are unable to escape will suffer horribly.

### b. The King is Subduing His Enemies (vs. 3 – 7; 12 – 15)

V. 4 – Mount of Olives – see Acts 1:11; Christ's return - see Revelation 19:11 – 21

V. 5 - earthquake – Amos 1:1

*"The words of Amos, who was among the herdmen of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake." (Amos 1:1)*

Josephus said this about the earthquake:

Accordingly, when a remarkable day was come, and a general festival was to be celebrated, he put on the holy garment, and went into the temple to offer incense to God upon the golden altar, which he was prohibited to do by Azariah the high priest, who had fourscore priests with him, and who told him that it was not lawful for him to offer sacrifice, and that "none besides the posterity of Aaron were permitted so to do." And when they cried out that he must go out of the temple, and not transgress against God, he was wroth at them, and threatened to kill them, unless they would hold their peace. In the meantime, a great earthquake shook the ground and a rent was made in the temple, and the bright rays of the sun shone through it, and fell upon the king's face, insomuch that the leprosy seized upon him immediately. And before the city, at a place called Eroge, half the mountain broke off from the rest on the west, and rolled itself four furlongs, and stood still at the east mountain, till the roads, as well as the king's gardens, were spoiled by the obstruction.<sup>21</sup>

Judah's King Uzziah reigned was from 791 – 740 BC.

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<sup>21</sup> Josephus, Flavius (2011-07-06). The Antiquities of the Jews by Josephus [Annotated Edition] (Halcyon Classics) (Kindle Locations 7936-7943). Halcyon Press Ltd. Kindle Edition.

“and all the saints with thee” – a reference to saints from Revelation 19 who return with the Lord.

Vs. 6 – 7 – there will be cosmic disturbances. (Acts 2:19 – 20; Matthew 24:29 – 30; Revelation 6:12 – 17)

**c. The King is Sovereign Over All of the Earth (vs. 8 – 11; 16 – 21)**

*"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."* (Revelation 11:15)

The “living waters” in v. 8 will cleanse the blood from the Valley Of Megiddo. (See Revelation 14:18 – 20; note – a furlong [ἑξακόσιοι – *hexakosioi*] is approximately 600 feet; 600 furlongs = 360,000 feet or 68 miles)

The “former sea” is the Dead Sea. The “hinder sea” is the Mediterranean Sea. (See Ezekiel 47:1 – 12)

This water will cause the desert to blossom:

*"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose."* (Isaiah 35:1)

Notice – “in summer and in winter” – Most Palestinian streams dry up in the summer, but not this one.

This is a glorious picture of the living water that Christ gives to those who trust Him. In the Bible, water is symbolic of the Bible (Ephesians 5:26), the Spirit (John 4:13 – 14), and salvation (Titus 3:5).

Salvation will provide a means for the Word of God and the Spirit of God to cleanse us, and rid our lives of all of the impurities; and, like the Dead Sea will come alive, we will have abundant life as well. (John 10:10)

Notice in vs. 16 – 19, all of the nations will be submitted to the rule of Christ. The Feast of Tabernacles is one of three feasts that will be celebrated during the Millennium:

Feast of Tabernacles (Leviticus 23:33 – 36; Numbers 29:12 – 38; Deuteronomy 16:13 – 17)

Feast of the New Year (Ezekiel 45:18 – 20)

Feast of the Passover (Ezekiel 45:21 – 25)

V. 20 – “Holiness Unto The Lord” – see Exodus 28:36 - 38

The word, “Canaanite”, here is more symbolic of an unregenerate (unsaved) person, not someone who was genetically a Canaanite or geographically from the Land of Canaan.