A book cover with a boat on water

Description automatically generated**ZECHARIAH**

*Return to me!*

A close-up of a logo

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*Now if their transgression is riches for the world and their failure is riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be …for if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?* Romans 11:12, 15

Quite possibly the most undervalued book in the Bible, Zechariah is a prophetic treasure hidden in the valley between the Major Prophets and the Gospels. As gold to be extracted, Zechariah lies glittering in the stream of biblical writings. A vein of love courses through every chapter, expressing Yahweh’s overwhelming affection for His beloved Israel.

Zechariah is likely the most apocalyptic, most eschatological, and most messianic book in the Old Testament. Illustrations throughout the book are both enlightening and convicting, portraying returnees who never really returned, mourners who sobbed in ignorance, and a high priest in filthy rags. There are also deceivers who cheated the flock and blind sheep who followed a worthless shepherd.

Zechariah uncovers both Israel’s need and God’s solution. Despite her fornication with foreign deities, God graciously preserved wayward Israel. By sacrificing His only Son, God provided salvation for Israel’s sins. Even though His nation rejected Him when He came (Jn. 1:11), Zechariah said the future would be different: “*They will look at Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn* (Zech. 12:10b.)”

Thankfully, God’s plans are never thwarted. One day, and hopefully very soon, the reunion of reunions will occur. At long last Israel will **return**!

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1st Edition

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**ZECHARIAH**

*Return to me!*

# Background Information

## Historical setting

### The entire book of Zechariah was written from Jerusalem in relation to **Jerusalem**.

### It was written between the years 520 BC and 490 BC. Zechariah, along with Haggai and Malachi, were **postexilic** prophets.

### At the time this book was written, Judah had recently come out of 70 years of **exile** in Babylon.

#### Long ago when Israel initially entered the Promised Land, God commanded them to let their farmland **rest** every seventh year (Lev. 25:1-12). During this “rest” year, they were to trust the Lord to provide their needs.

#### However, in 500 years, Israel as a nation had not followed God’s plan. Finally, during Israel’s exile in Babylon, the land lay **dormant**, providing it with the 70 years of rest it had missed. Leviticus 26:34-35, 43; 2 Chronicles 36:21

### There were three primary **returns** from Babylon to the Promised Land.

#### The first return came in 538 BC during the reign of Cyrus the Great, king of Persia. This return was led by Zerubbabel. **Zechariah** was part of this group. This group returned primarily to rebuild the temple. Ezra 1-6

#### In 458 BC, during the reign of Artaxerxes I, also king of Persia, there was a second return led by **Ezra**. Ezra’s task was to amend Israel’s negligence. Ezra 7-10

#### Finally in 444 BC, during the reign of Artaxerxes I, **Nehemiah** led a third return.

### In 539 BC, the Medo-Persian empire conquered Babylon. Approximately one year later in 538 BC, King Cyrus of Persia issued a **decree** allowing all Jews who so desired to return to Judah to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. 2 Chronicles 36:22-23; Ezra 5:13, 6:3; Psalm 126:1‑6

#### Amazingly, 150 years earlier, Isaiah **predicted** this. God’s words to Isaiah were, “*It is I who says of Cyrus, ‘He is My shepherd! And he will perform all My desire.’ And he declares of Jerusalem, ‘She will be built,’ and of the temple, ‘Your foundation will be laid.*’ (Is. 44:28).” Ezra 1:1‑2, 7-8, 3:7, 5:13-17, 6:14; Isaiah 45:1

#### King Cyrus appointed Zerubbabel as **governor** of the returnees and even gave him finances for the rebuilding the temple. Ezra 1:8, 3:2, 5:14-16; Haggai 1:1,14; Zechariah 4:8-9

##### Upon arriving in Jerusalem, the priests and Israelites reestablished themselves in their **original** cities. Ezra 2:70

##### When they saw the temple site, they **generously** gave funding for its reconstruction. Ezra 2:68-69

##### On the first day of the seventh month, the people came together in Jerusalem to rebuild the altar so they could **sacrifice** burnt offerings. Ezra 3:1-7

### In the second year of their return, they proceeded to lay the **foundation** of the temple. When the foundation was completed, they celebrated a great inaugural service in praise to God for His lovingkindness. Ezra 3:8-11

#### This inaugural event caused a lot of interest among the **Samaritans**. They wanted to help rebuild the temple, but the people of Israel refused their help.

#### Israel considered the Samaritans enemies. They did not want their help because they **syncretized** the worship of Yahweh with pagan religions. Ezra 4:1-3, 2 Kings 17:33, 41

#### When the temple rebuilders refused their help, the Samaritans and their neighbors created all sorts of **trouble** for Judah. Because of their opposition and a letter to King Ahasuerus the work was stalled for about 16 years. Armed guards were set up to stop construction. Ezra 4:4-24

#### This **opposition** lasted all the way till the second year of King Darius of Persia, but under Zerubbabel’s leadership and with the encouragement of the prophets, the people finally resumed the construction. Ezra 4:4-6, 23-24, 5:1-2

#### As before, Israel’s neighbors tried to oppose their efforts, but God miraculously allowed the work to continue until proof of authorization could be confirmed by King Darius. After much searching, Cyrus’s original **decree** was finally found, and the king immediately ordered the rebuilding to continue. Ezra 5:3-17, 6:1-12

#### Ironically, Darius commanded the governor of Samaria to not only allow the rebuilding of the temple, but also to fully support it by **paying** the full construction costs out of the taxes collected in that province. Ezra 6:8-12

#### It took four more years before the Jews successfully **finished** the rebuilding of the temple. Ezra 6:14-22

### It is important to note that Haggai’s and Zechariah’s prophetic **ministries** began approximately 16 years after Israel returned to the land and were instrumental in spurring on the beleaguered Israelites to finish the job.

## Zechariah’s audience

### The book of Zechariah was written to **Jews** who had come back to the land of Israel (Jerusalem) after having left it desolate for 70 years.

#### While some of the older generation survived the 70 years, many of the younger people who were born in **Babylon** had never seen Judah, Jerusalem, or Solomon’s temple.

#### There were 42,360 Jewish people who returned to Judah in the first wave. They were accompanied by 7,337 slaves and two hundred **singers**. Ezra 2

#### Included in this group were Israelites from the ten **northern** tribes who had been taken captive by Assyria in 722 BC. Ezra 2:64-65, 70

### When Zechariah wrote, he had a secondary audience in view, namely Israelites who needed to know God was far from finished with Israel. The unconditional promises of land, seed, and blessing He made to Abraham would indeed be **fulfilled** literally. Genesis 12:1-3

### Many of the promises and prophecies in Zechariah are yet future. These messages will have a great impact during the dark days of the **Tribulation** when God again works directly with Israel. Zechariah 12-14

### Zechariah 12:10 – *And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of* ***Jerusalem*** *the Spirit of grace and of pleading, so that they will look at Me whom they pierced; and they will mourn for Him, like one mourning for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn*.

## General information

### Genre of the book: Zechariah is **apocalyptic** literature. It contains a lot of Hebrew prose and poetry. This fact is a helpful key to understanding the book of Zechariah.[[1]](#footnote-1)

#### Much of **Zechariah** 1-8 is considered prose**[[2]](#footnote-2)** (except for Zechariah 2:6-13).

#### Much of Zechariah 9-14 is considered **poetry**,[[3]](#footnote-3) [[4]](#footnote-4) especially Zechariah 9:2-11:14, 17; 13:7‑9.

### Key phrase or theme of the book: **Return to Me!**

### Zechariah can be divided into two major **divisions**:

#### Zechariah 1-8 contains specifically **dated** material and the author is stated. This section is alluded to in the book of Revelation.

#### Zechariah 9-14 contains **undated** material and has no references to the author. Parts of this portion are quoted in the Gospels.

### Zechariah was not alone in his division of his prophecy into two major **sections**.

#### **Isaiah** has two major divisions: chapters 1-39 and chapters 40-66.

#### **Ezekiel** has two major divisions: chapters 1-39 and chapters 40-48.

#### **Daniel** has two major divisions: chapters 1-6 and chapters 7-12.

### The divisions of this book are also often presented as 8-4-2 since:

#### There are 8 visions.

#### There are 4 messages.

#### There are 2 burdens.

### A key thrust of the book is contained in one central message: “***Return*** *to me*.”

### The actual author of the book is the Holy Spirit, and He desires to guide you into all truth. Therefore, as you prepare to study this important Old Testament book, ask God to **unveil** its contents to you.

## Division of the book

### The following timeframes seem to be in focus:

#### 586-332 BC – **Jerusalem** in relation to the Medo-Persian empire (Zechariah 1-8)

#### 332-63 BC – Jerusalem in relation to **Greece** (Zechariah 9-10)

#### 63 BC-70 AD – Jerusalem under **Roman** domination (Zechariah 11)

#### Jerusalem in the **last** days. (Zechariah 12-14)

### As previously mentioned, Zechariah was written as **four** discourses:

#### The first discourse was written in the **eighth** month of 520 BC. Zechariah 1:1-6

#### The second discourse was written **three** months later. Zechariah 1:7-6:15

#### The third discourse was written in **518 BC**. Zechariah 7:1-8:23

#### There is no dating of the fourth discourse found in Zechariah 9:1 to 14:21. That discourse appears to have been written **later** than the rest of the book and under different circumstances.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Discourse #1 Zechariah 1:1-6** | **Theme of the Book** |
| **Discourse #2** **Zechariah 1:7-6:15** | **Eight Visions** |
|  | 1. The horseman - Testing the temperament of the nations |
|  | 2. The 4 horns - Keeping the powers of oppression at bay |
|  | 3. Measuring Jerusalem - Rebuilt and protected |
|  | 4. Joshua - A priest who removes all sin |
|  | 5. Zerubbabel - A king who gives light |
|  | 6. The flying scroll - Israel’s trouble and judgment on the nations |
|  | 7. Ephah - Removing wickedness from the land |
|  | 8. The 4 chariots - Preparing for the kingdom |
|  | Summary: A crown fit for a king |
| **Discourse #3** **Zechariah 7:1-8:23** | **Four Admonitions** |
|  | A. Seeking God’s favor |
|  | B. Word from the Lord #1 - A rebuke for empty ritualism |
|  | C. Word from the Lord #2 - A reminder of past covenant failure |
|  | C. Word from the Lord #3 - Ten promises for Jerusalem |
|  | B. Word from the Lord #4 - From mourning to joy |
|  | A. The nations seek God’s favor |
| **Discourse #4**  **Zechariah 9:1-14:21** | **Two Burdens** |
|  | 1. The Lord comes to His people. He is rejected! |
|  | 2. The people return to God and He returns to them! |

## Why Zechariah

### Zechariah is a message filled with admonishment, encouragement, exhortation, **hope**, and restoration. It was because of the prophecy of Zechariah (and Haggai) that construction of the temple resumed and was ultimately completed (4 years later). Ezra 6:14

### The promises contained in this short book provided inspiration for Israel to **return** to Yahweh Sabaoth (TSABA).[[5]](#footnote-5)

#### Three times Zechariah speaks of **returning** to the Lord of hosts. The people needed to understand that just because they had returned to Jerusalem, and were offering sacrifices, and had rebuilt the foundation of the temple, did not mean they had returned to the Lord by faith.

#### God desired a relationship of faith (trusting dependance) with Israel, not merely empty religious **activity**.

### Jerome called Zechariah the most obscure book in the Old Testament, nonetheless it is referred to extensively in the New Testament.

### The book of Zechariah **discloses** many prophetic details not seen anywhere else in Scripture and provides some important insights into the unseen world of spiritual warfare.

### Zechariah contains a **forward** pointing perspective on the gospel, although historically this fact may not have been understood by national Israel.

### The book of Zechariah shows God’s **faithfulness**. God never forgets or defaults on any of His promises. He is in control and will ultimately keep His word.

#### For over 2,500 years now, God has worked tirelessly to **preserve,** and ultimately bring about, Israel’s prophesied return to the land. With the rise of wars and antisemitism, we are likely witnessing this return in real-time today.

#### One day, in the not-so-distant future, Zechariah’s book will find its **fulfillment** in a literal way. On that day, all will know Yahweh is the Lord.

### Most importantly, Zechariah **reveals** the Messiah. This book delves deeply into many prophecies concerning the person and work of Jesus Christ in both His First and Second Advents. Revelation 19:10

### The book of Zechariah presents Christ as:

#### The angel of the Lord. Zechariah 1:11

#### *The* ***man***. Zechariah 1:10, 1:11, 13:7

#### *The* ***Branch***. Zechariah 3:8, 6:12

#### God’s ***Associate***. Zechariah 13:7

#### *The* ***Shepherd***. Zechariah 13:7

#### *A* ***Priest***. Zechariah 6:13

#### *The* ***King***. Zechariah 9:9, 14:16, Isaiah 6:5, John 12:41

#### The ***Redeemer***. Zechariah 9:11

#### God’s ***Servant***. Zechariah 3:8

#### The ***Stone***. Zechariah 3:7, 10:4

#### The tent **peg**. Zechariah 10:4

#### *Lord of the* ***whole*** *earth*. Zechariah 4:14, Revelation 11:4

#### *The Lord of* ***Hosts***. Zechariah 14:16

## Neglected book

### Bible teachers tend to avoid the book of Zechariah because it is truly difficult to **interpret**. Its prophetic value concerning Christ, Israel, and the Gentile nations is not easily perceived, therefore many Bible teachers and students ignore its importance.

### Here are a few **difficulties** standing in the way of understanding Zechariah:

#### The visions, messages, and burdens of Zechariah are packed with puzzling **symbolism**.

#### At first glance, there seems not to be a singular **theme** that unifies the entire book.

#### Many topics seem out of order **chronologically**. This makes it difficult to follow the flow of the book.

#### Chapters 1-8 seem **disconnected** from chapters 9-14.

### Insights

#### The genre of Zechariah is prophecy written in both prose and poetry. It must therefore be carefully interpreted. Zechariah’s prophesies are somewhat like **snapshots** of Israel’s coming restoration. Unlike Daniel and Revelation for example, Zechariah is not so much of a chronological map of the future.

#### One insight that greatly aids in understanding Zechariah is that the **prophecies** about the future have little, if anything, to do with predicting Judah’s return from Babylon. Judah had already been in the land approximately 16 years when the book was written.

#### The book of Zechariah shows how God worked when Israel **strayed** and how He continues to patiently call her back to Himself. Romans 9-11

#### Zechariah does indeed contain God’s plan for Israel’s ultimate **restoration** and points to her definitive acceptance of Christ in the end.[[6]](#footnote-6)

# Zechariah 1:1-6 – Theme of the Book

## Zechariah 1:1 – Date and author

### Zechariah 1:1a – *In the eighth month of the* ***second*** *year of Darius…* Darius I, also known as Darius the Great, was the son of Darius Hystaspes. He reigned over the Persian Empire from September 29, 522 BC until October 486 BC.[[7]](#footnote-7)

#### The dating of Zechariah was given in relation to a **Gentile** king. This is natural since no Jewish king was reigning at the time. As prophesied in Daniel, the *Times of the Gentiles* were already well underway. Even today, we are living in this time period which will continue and worsen until the return of Christ. Daniel 9:24-27, Luke 21:24, Mark 13:14

#### When the Israelites returned to Judea from captivity, they were **subject** to the whims and wishes of the Persian government. God used this period for Israel’s refinement.

#### Zerubbabel was **governor** over Judah, having been selected by the Medo-Persian rulership.[[8]](#footnote-8)

#### Though Zerubbabel was in the **lineage** of David (Mat. 1:12, Lk. 3:27), he could never be king because of the curse on Coniah (Koniah or Jehoiachin). Jeremiah 22:24-30

### Zechariah 1:1b – …*the word of the LORD came to Zechariah…* Zechariah’s name means “Yahweh **remembers**.” What a fitting name in light of the prophecies he was inspired to record in this book.[[9]](#footnote-9) Nehemiah 12:1, 16

#### Zechariah was likely born in Babylon. In Zechariah 2:4 he is referred to as a “***young*** *man*.”

#### As with Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and John the Baptist, Zechariah was a prophet of the **priestly** lineage. It seems that at some time Zechariah became the head of a division of priests. Nehemiah 12:12, 16

#### Zechariah was a contemporary of the prophet Haggai. Haggai began his ministry in September of 520 BC[[10]](#footnote-10), the same year Zechariah’s ministry began. While Haggai’s prophecies focused largely on rebuilding the temple, Zechariah focused on Israel’s need to return to the **Lord**.

#### Haggai’s messages focused on the past and present while Zechariah’s message reached into the future when a returning generation would be fully restored to **fellowship** with God Almighty.

### Zechariah 1:1c – …*the word of the LORD came to Zechariah the prophet…* Zechariah’s prophecy came directly from the **Lord**; it was not an imagined or contrived message. 2 Peter 1:19‑21

#### The book of Zechariah did not become the word of the Lord at the time it was included in the canon of Scripture; it was and is God’s word from the day it poured forth from Zechariah’s **pen** as the Holy Spirit inspired it.

#### The prophet received his message from the Lord and **relayed** it to the nation.

### Zechariah 1:1d – *Zechariah* …*the son of Berechiah*… Not much is known about Berechiah, Zechariah’s father, except that his name means Yahweh **blesses**. He is not mentioned in Ezra among the returnees.

#### In Matthew 23:35 Jesus said, “*So that upon you will fall the guilt of all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you* ***murdered*** *between the temple and the altar*.”

#### There has been much debate over this statement made by Jesus. Here are some options concerning its **meaning**:

##### Option 1: 2 Chronicles 24:20-22 records the martyrdom of “*Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest*.” Since the names Jehoiada and Berechiah have **similar** meanings, Jesus may have interchanged their names.

##### Option 2: Some commentators suggest a copyist made an **error** in Matthew.

##### Option 3: (the most plausible option) It seems to be that this tragedy happened when Zechariah was old. God witnessed Zechariah son of Berechiah’s **murder**, just as He witnessed Abel’s murder.

###### Matthew was familiar with the book of Zechariah, since he **quoted** from it at least three times. Matthew 27:9-10, 23:35, 21:5, 26:31; (Paul in Romans 12:19-20)

###### Apart from Scripture, the Jewish Targum[[11]](#footnote-11) records that a prophet and priest named Zechariah, the son of Iddo, was killed in the sanctuary. These **rabbis** would have had no desire to agree with Jesus.

###### The historian Josephus also recounts a murder in the temple of a “Zecharias, the son of Baruch.” [[12]](#footnote-12)

### Zechariah 1:1d – …*the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo…* **Iddo** whose name means “appointed time” was Zechariah’s predecessor.

#### A priest named Iddo was **listed** among those who returned from Babylon. Nehemiah 12:1, 12:4, 12:16

#### Since Zechariah is referred to as “*the son of Berechiah*, *the son of Iddo,*” Zechariah was likely Iddo’s grandson. The statement “the son of” was a common way of referring to someone’s son, grandson, or **descendant**. Zechariah 1:1; Ezra 6:14; Matthew 1:20, 15:22

#### In Ezra 5:1, Ezra wrote about “*Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo*.”

### Combined, the names Zechariah, Berechiah, and Iddo become “Yahweh remembers, Yahweh blesses, and at the appointed time.” This **combination** harmonizes wonderfully with the message of the book. At the appointed time God will remember, and fulfill with overflowing blessing, all His promises.

## Zechariah 1:2-3 – “*Return to Me…*”

### Zechariah 1:2 *– The LORD was very angry with your fathers*. The ***fathers*** were specifically those Israelites who rebelled and caused the deportation to Babylon. 2 Chronicles 36

#### In Hebrew the term “*very angry”* literally reads “angry with **anger**.”

#### The pre-exilic fathers were an example to the post-exilic returnees of what not to do. Their refusal to listen and change their minds had sent **stubborn** Israel into exile.

### Zechariah 1:3a *– Therefore say to them thus says the LORD of hosts*… Zechariah’s primary audience was the **diaspora** that had returned from Babylon. God commanded Zechariah to speak in the name of “*the Lord of hosts*.” He was to speak God’s words, not his own, to the returning Jewish refugees.

#### This message was for all who **returned** from Babylon, young and old alike.

#### Zechariah did not include his own assumptions or his own interpretations in his message to the people (2 Pet. 1:19-21). Rather, Zechariah was a faithful prophet who spoke the exact words of God. The book of Zechariah is the **inspired** word of God. Zechariah 1:7, 1:7, 4:6, 4:8, 6:9, 7:1, 7:4, 7:8, 8:1, 8:18, 9:1, 11:11, 12:1

##### From Hebrews 1:1 we know that God “*spoke long ago to the fathers in the* ***prophets*** *in many portions and in many ways*.”

##### 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says that “*all Scripture is* ***inspired*** *by God and beneficial*.”

##### When God utters something, He **obligates** Himself to fulfill His words. Numbers 23:19 says it powerfully: “*God is not a man, that He would lie, nor a son of man, that He would change His mind; has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?*” Ezra 1:1, Proverbs 30:5, Hebrews 6:17-18

### Zechariah 1:3b *– …thus says the LORD of hosts…* Just who is the *Lord of* ***hosts***?

#### Zechariah’s message came directly from *the* ***Lord*** *of hosts*.

#### The meaning of the Hebrew name *LORD of hosts* is Lord (Yahweh) of heaven’s **armies**. The name LORD of hosts is found 52 times in this book and 235 times in the Old Testament.

##### Zechariah used this **powerful** title “*LORD of hosts”* more than any other writer in Scripture.

##### It is a title that eloquently reveals God’s sovereignty, **greatness**, and infinite power. This title is also found in the following scriptures: Genesis 2:1; Nehemiah 9:6; Psalm 33:6, 84:1-12; Isaiah 37:16; Matthew 26:53; Luke 2:13; Acts 7:42

#### *LORD of hosts* means the Lord is the **commander** of all heaven’s armies. It implies sovereignty. Exodus 15:3; 2 Samuel 6:18, 7:27; 1 Kings 22:19; 2 Kings 6:15-16; Isaiah 1:9; Zechariah 9:14-16, 12:9

##### Isaiah 13:4b – *The LORD of hosts is mustering the* ***army*** *for battle.*

##### Isaiah 19:16 – *In that day the Egyptians…will tremble and be in* ***dread*** *because of the waving of the hand of the LORD of hosts*… Isaiah 1:24, 2:12, 5:7

##### David rejected Saul’s **armor** in favor of trusting in the LORD of hosts. David reacted to Goliath with these words: *You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have taunted* (1 Sam. 17:45). 2 Samuel 5:10, 1 Chronicles 11:9

##### Speaking of godless Nineveh, Nahum 2:13 says, “*Behold, I am against you,” declares the LORD of hosts. “Behold, I am against you,” declares the LORD of armies. “I will burn up her chariots in smoke, and a sword will* ***devour*** *your young lions.*” Psalm 103:20-21; Isaiah 1:24; Malachi 4:1-3; Matthew 13:41, 24:30-31

#### The *Lord of hosts* is the supreme **king** over everything.

##### Psalm 24:10 says, “*Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of* ***glory****! Selah*.” 1 Kings 22:19; 2 Kings 6:17; Isaiah 13:14, 29:6; Zechariah 14:9

##### Isaiah 9:7 shows God (Messiah) as the ultimate and **eternal** monarch. “*There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.*”

##### In the future when Christ is seated on His **throne**, He will be called *the Lord of Hosts*. Zechariah 14:16 says, “*Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths*.”

#### The *Lord of hosts* is the **redeemer**.

##### Isaiah 44:6 – *Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his* ***Redeemer****, the LORD of hosts: “I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me."* Psalm 59:5, Isaiah 44:6, Jeremiah 50:34, Zechariah 14:16, Malachi 3:17, Revelation 22:13

##### Isaiah 47:4 – *Our* ***Redeemer****, the LORD of hosts is His name, The Holy One of Israel.*

#### The *Lord of hosts* is **holy**. Isaiah 6:3 shows this when he says, “*Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts.*” Isaiah 8:14, 5:16; Jeremiah 11:20, 32:18

#### The *Lord of hosts* is almighty, **sovereign** God. Daniel 4:35 pointed this out when he wrote, *“All the inhabitants of the earth are of no account, but He does according to His will among the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth; and no one can fend off His hand or say to Him, ‘What have You done?’”*

#### The Lord of hosts promised King **David** the Messiah would come from his lineage and would establish an everlasting kingdom.

##### 2 Samuel 7:8 – “*Now therefore, thus you shall say to My servant David, ‘Thus says the* ***Lord*** *of hosts, “I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people Israel.’”*

##### 2 Samuel 7:16 – “*Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established* ***forever****.”’”* 1 Chronicles 17:11–14, 2 Chronicles 6:16

##### In their vulnerable circumstances, the people could be sure that the God of heaven’s armies would fulfill His **promise** to David and to them as a nation. 2 Samuel 7:8-17

##### In Zechariah’s day, Israel had lost its army. By referring to Yahweh as “*the LORD of hosts* (armies),” Zechariah reminded his readers of God’s sovereign **power**.

##### For the prophets, the title *Lord of hosts* did not have an abstract meaning. To them it stressed Yahweh’s sovereignty in action. The prophets saw the Lord as leading all **armies**, whether armies of angels or of people.

### Zechariah 1:3c – *Thus says the Lord of hosts* ***return*** *to Me…* God Almighty, the Lord of heaven’s armies, called for Israel to come back to Him.

#### While Haggai’s prophecies focused on the rebuilding of the temple, Zechariah encouraged Israel to return to a right **relationship** with God as they rebuilt the temple. God wanted more than a rebuilt structure; He wanted Israel’s heart.

#### Even though they had returned from exile, the hearts of the people were still **distant** from the Lord.

#### God urged, “*Return to Me*,” yet Israel resisted His call and deliberately defied His will. Romans 10:21 says, “*But as for Israel, He says, ‘I have spread out my hands all day long to a disobedient and* ***obstinate*** *people*.’” Much more than a return to the land, God desired Israel’s hearts. He had put up with their rebellion for a long time. Psalm 86:5

#### God is after **uncoerced** responses from humankind; He allows people to accept or reject His invitation. This is seen in the book of Zechariah.

##### When God issues an **invitation**, He leaves the response up to the individual. He does everything possible to draw people to Himself, but sadly all do not respond to Him. John 12:32, 48

##### God’s warning about withholding His blessings until Israel returned to Him with her whole heart was an honest **warning**. Zechariah showed this to be true.

##### God will return to Israel when they return to Him in faith, just as Zechariah prophesied. In Zechariah 12:10, Zechariah clearly described a future **return** (repeated in Romans 11:23).

##### Meanwhile, until that day, God is protecting Israel from total annihilation. He limits what Gentile nations can do to Israel. God will protect a **remnant** of Israel until that wondrous day when she finally returns to Him with all her heart. Malachi 3:6-7, Romans 11:33

##### Human rebellion cannot obstruct God’s global plans and purposes. Even though Israel ignored God’s commands and rebelled against Him, God still **accomplished** His will. And He will continue to do so. You can be certain everything God has purposed to do will be done. Psalm 33:11, Daniel 4:35

#### The returning remnant needed to **understand** that returning to the land, reinhabiting Jerusalem, and rebuilding the temple were not the same as returning to the Lord of hosts.

##### Zephaniah 3:1-2 shows this truth: *Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city!* *She obeyed not the voice; she received not correction;* ***she trusted not*** *in the LORD; she drew not near to her God*.

##### By refusing to trust the Lord of hosts, Israel was in effect forsaking Him. Israel placed her trust in **religious** formalities, wealth, and even in foolish idolatry. The people kept the Law only in part. Deuteronomy 4:25, 17:2-5

### Zechariah 1:3d – …*return to Me declares the LORD of hosts…* Zechariah transmitted the exact words of Yahweh to Israel.

#### One might think this exhortation was **unnecessary** since the people of Israel had indeed returned after suffering the terrible ordeal of divine discipline in Babylon.

#### The truth is that this new generation had indeed **physically** returned to rebuild the temple and reestablish daily sacrifices, but where were they spiritually? They had left Babylon and Persia, but were they returning to the Lord or to the land?

### Zechariah 1:3e – *“…that I may return to you,” says the LORD of hosts*. What a tender request made by the Lord of hosts toward ambivalent Israel! It is one thing to claim the Lord of hosts as your God, but it is another thing to have Him **personally** by your side. Isaiah 31:6

#### The tabernacle was meant to be a reminder of God **residing** among His people.

#### The Lord was not simply saying, “I am going to bless you,” He was saying, “I am going to **dwell** with you.” I will live among you and share my heart with you. Exodus 25:8, 29:46

#### Now in the Church Age, God dwells **in** **every believer** through the person of the Holy Spirit. Our bodies are the **temple** of the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Ephesians 1:13-14

#### Hebrews 8:8-12 talks about Israel during the Millennium. Concerning that time, God says, “*I will effect a new covenant with Israel…and they shall not teach everyone his fellow citizen, and everyone his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ For all will* ***know*** *Me, from the least to the greatest of them*.” Ezekiel 36:26, 2 Corinthians 6:16

## Zechariah 1:4-6 – Their fathers erred.

### Zechariah 1:4a – *Do* ***not*** *be like your fathers…* Do not follow the **example** of your fathers. 2 Chronicles 30:7, Ezra 9:7, Nehemiah 9:16, Psalm 78:8

### Zechariah 1:4b – …*to whom the former prophets proclaimed…* **Countless** times God had warned their fathers through the prophets.

#### These “***former*** *prophets*” included Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Micah, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah. Jeremiah 26:5, Daniel 9:6, Zechariah 7:7, 2 Chronicles 36:21, Matthew 21:34, Mark 12:2, Luke 20:10

#### Zechariah warned the Israelites not to be like their (pre-exilic) forefathers who **refused** to respond to the preaching of earlier (pre-exilic) prophets.

### Zechariah 1:4c – …saying, “*Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘Return now*…’” It was not God who had distanced Himself from Israel. They were the ones who had **distanced** themselves from the Lord. The people of Israel needed to acknowledge their present stubborn state, change their minds, and return to the Lord without delay.

#### God did not simply want the Israelites to stop sinning and start obeying the Law. God was looking for genuine inward change, not a superficial alliance. God wanted Israel to return to Him in a trusting relationship. It was an **internal** issue of the heart for Israel to return to God. 2 Chronicles 12:14; Jeremiah 4:4; Zechariah 7:4-6, 8:2

#### Legalism is opposed to relationship. God does not want mere legalism and its resultant **religious** facade. Isaiah 1:12-14, Amos 5:21-27. Philippians 3:2-7

#### More than anything, God wants us to **know** Him. In Luke 10:38-42 Jesus taught Martha that sitting at His feet was more important than doing work for Him. Paul’s greatest desire was to get to know the Lord (Phil. 1:21, 3:8-11) and Peter’s last appeal was to “*grow in the grace and knowledge or our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ* (2 Pet. 3:18).”

#### Hosea 6:6 – *For I delight in* ***loyalty*** *rather than sacrifice, and in the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings*. Matthew 9:13

### Zechariah 1:4d – …*return now from your evil ways and from your evil deeds…* Israel’s sinful behavior was a manifestation of their wayward hearts. As a nation, Israel constantly committed **adultery** against the Lord; they lusted after the world rather than seeking intimacy with God. Genesis 6:5, Ezekiel 14:5, Matthew 15:18-19

#### Zechariah’s generation, like their fathers, still needed a heart change. If their hearts had returned to God, they would have stopped loving the world and indulging in **evil**. Deuteronomy 4:29, 1 Chronicles 22:19, 1 John 2:15-16

#### 2 Chronicles 12:14 says King Rehoboam “*did evil because he did not set his* ***heart*** *to seek the Lord*.” This tendency has been true of Israel from the beginning. Deuteronomy 5:29

#### Zechariah’s admonishment to the people of his generation was that they learn from the bad **example** of their forefathers and listen to the Lord’s call to return to Him. 1 Samuel 12:24

### Zechariah 1:4e – “*But they did not listen or give heed to Me,” declares the LORD.…* The real issue resided in the **stubbornness** of their hearts: “…*they did not listen.”* Isaiah 6:10, Jeremiah 13:10

#### Israel’s rebellion often showed itself in their refusal to **listen** to the warnings of God’s prophets. Jeremiah 17:23, 29:19, 35:17, 44:5

#### This present generation was in grave danger of committing the same sin as the previous generations. Due to the delayed reconstruction, the people were becoming discouraged and concluding it was not the right time for the temple to be **rebuilt**. Haggai 1:2, 2:17

### Zechariah 1:5a – *Your fathers, where are they?* Most of their “*fathers*” had either been killed by the Babylonians, died in Babylon, or remained in **Babylon**. Psalm 90:5-10

### Zechariah 1:5b – *And the prophets, do they live forever?* The prophets were also mortal. They eventually died of natural causes or were killed by those to whom they prophesied. Their fathers should have listened to the prophets while they had **opportunity**. Jeremiah 26:1-7

### Zechariah 1:6a – *But did not My words and My statutes, which I commanded My servants the* ***prophets*** *overtake your fathers?* God raised up prophets to speak His words. His statutes were also written down so there would be no mistaking His message. 2 Peter 1:19‑21

#### *My words…* Prophets spoke God’s words. Any prophet who spoke his **own** words was to be put to death. That prophet should not be feared (Deut. 18:22). The Israelites would know if a prophet was legitimate by whether or not his prophecies came true. Deuteronomy 13:5, 18:17-22; Jeremiah 28:15-17

#### *My statues…* Prophets spoke God’s statutes. Long ago, through the prophet Moses, God gave Israel laws by which to **govern** the nation of Israel. They were not to add to these laws or take away from them. Deuteronomy 4:1-8

#### In Deuteronomy 4:6 Moses told the Israelites **why** they were to follow the Law: “*for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes and say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people…what great nation is there that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this whole law*?’”

#### In Deuteronomy 28:45 Moses ominously warned the nation that if they did “*not obey the LORD your God by keeping His commandments and statutes …all these curses shall come on you and pursue you and overtake you until you are* ***destroyed***.”

##### God does not lie. He does not frivolously threaten and then fail to carry through. In His perfect time, He always does exactly what He says He will do. Whether He promises blessing or punishment, you can **depend** on His every word. Numbers 23:19, 1 Samuel 15:29

##### Everything God predicted through Moses **happened** to the fathers of those to whom Zechariah prophesied.

### Zechariah 1:6b – *…then they repented and said…* *Repented* (SHUB) means to **return** or to turn back.

#### God used this same Hebrew word (SHUB) in Zechariah 1:3 when He **exhorted** His people to return to Him and He would return to them.

#### Here in verse six, it likely refers to their **physical** return from Babylon to the land of Israel. For other uses of the term SHUB, see Zechariah 4:1, 9:12, 10:6, 10:9-10.

### Zechariah 1:6c – *As the LORD of hosts purposed to do to us in accordance with our ways and our deeds, so He has dealt with us.* The fathers experienced the **veracity** of God’s word. God did just as He said He would do, yet the attitude of Israel remained unchanged. Lamentations 1:18, 2:7

#### The first **deportation** was in 605 BC, while the first return occurred in 536 BC, a gap of about 70 years. Jeremiah 25:10-12, Daniel 9:1-2

#### The temple was destroyed in 586 BC, and the reconstructed **temple** was finished in 516 BC, a gap of 70 years. Ezra 5:13-15

##### Upon Cyrus's **decree** in 538 BC, the first wave of Jewish captives returned to Jerusalem. Ezra 1:1-2, Isaiah 44:23-45:13

##### On the second month of the second year (536 BC) of their return, the rebuilding of the temple **foundation** began. Ezra 3:8-11

##### It took two years to rebuild the foundation of the temple. Construction was **delayed** by the Samaritans for approximately 16 years. Ezra 3:8-13, 4:1-5

##### Later, **Darius** issued an order to continue building the temple according to Cyrus's original decree. Ezra 6:8-12

##### The temple was **finished** on the 24th day of the ninth month in 516 BC. Haggai 2:18

#### Not only did the exiles have God’s written word, but they also had the spoken word of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah. They knew God was faithful to do what He said. (Deut. 28). The testimony of the forefathers gave **credibility** to God’s word.

#### Despite these confirmations, their **focus** was on the land, the temple, and material blessings. They returned physically, but their hearts remained far from God. Zechariah 1:6

##### Jeremiah 7:4 – *Do not trust in* ***deceptive*** *words, saying, “This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD*.”

##### Jeremiah 7:8 – *Behold, you are trusting in deceptive words to no* ***avail***. Jeremiah 7:9‑29

#### The book of Zechariah demonstrates Israel’s need to spiritually return to the Lord. “*Return to me!*” There were many **obstacles** to Israel’s full spiritual return.

##### **The smug returnees** – Those who returned from Babylon thought God's blessings were because He was **pleased** with their ways. This was not the case.

##### **The busy returnees** – Due to the approximate 16-year delay in the temple reconstruction, these busy returnees concluded it was **not** God's will to rebuild the temple, so they began building their own elaborate homes. Haggai 1:2, 4, 8

##### **The rebellious fathers** – These had been deported because of their persistent **unresponsiveness** toward God. Zechariah 1:4-6

##### **The unmovable exiles** – The Jews who remained scattered among the nations were now quite **comfortable** in exile. Zechariah 2

##### **The soiled priesthood** – The priesthood (i.e. Joshua's garments) had become **defiled**. Zechariah 3

##### **The temple grumblers** – Since the new temple was not as **grand** as Solomon’s temple, many among Israel scorned and belittled it. Zechariah 4

##### **The wickedness in the land** – Wickedness would have to be **removed**. Why did God have to remove wickedness if Israel deserved His blessings? They did not deserve His blessings. Wickedness was in the land because Israel had repeatedly failed to keep God’s covenant. Zechariah 5

##### **The insincere mourners** – Israel continued to mourn even though they had forgotten the real **reason** they mourned in the first place. Zechariah 7-8

##### **The rejectors of the Good Shepherd** – God had provided a caring, compassionate, and protective Shepherd for Israel, yet they **rejected** Him. Zechariah 9

##### **The evil shepherds** – Israel tolerated shepherds who **abused** them for financial gain. Zechariah 11:1-5

##### **The future foolish followers** – The people will readily embrace a **foolish** shepherd who does not care for them or protect them. As a result, they will be slaughtered. Zechariah 11:15‑17

##### **Those who will pierce their Deliverer** – The generation who **killed** their liberator, Jesus Christ, should have trusted in Him. Zechariah 12

##### Each of these illustrations serves as a reminder of Israel’s **bleak** spiritual condition (past, present, and future). Will they wake up and see their need or will they continue on the path their fathers took?

# Zechariah 1:7-6:15 – Eight Visions

## Introduction

### Three months after God spoke to Zechariah the first time, God gave Him **eight** visions in one night.

### All the visions dealt exclusively with Israel, and they all pointed to **literal** future events. Some parts of the visions have already been fulfilled, but much is yet future.

### A primary purpose of these visions was to reassure Israel and Judah that God was actively involved in fulfilling the promises He made to the fathers. During the Millennium, God will destroy Israel’s enemies, and **Messiah** (Jesus Christ) will reign from Jerusalem.

### These visions were given to encourage the people of Zechariah’s day to **finish** building the temple.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Passage** | **Vision** | **Meaning** |
| 1 | Zechariah 1:7-17 | **The horseman** | God is jealous for Israel. God is prepared to fight the nations for Israel’s restoration and bring true justice and world peace |
| 2 | Zechariah 1:18-21 | **Four horns and four craftsmen** | The nations who have scattered Israel will ultimately be thrown down |
| 3 | Zechariah 2:1-13 | **Measuring Jerusalem** | Jerusalem will be restored |
| 4 | Zechariah 3:1-10 | **Joshua, the high priest** | The priesthood is reinstated |
| 5 | Zechariah 4:1-14 | **The lampstand** | Zerubbabel is encouraged, the temple will be rebuilt |
| 6 | Zechariah 5:1-4 | **The flying scroll** | Righteous judgement on God’s people |
| 7 | Zechariah 5:5-11 | **The ephah** | Wickedness removed from the land and taken to Shinar |
| 8 | Zechariah 6:1-8 | **Four chariots** | The enemy nations are judged and destroyed |
|  | Zechariah 6:9-15 |  | A crown of crowns fit for the King |

## Zechariah 1:7-17 – Vision One: The horseman

### Zechariah 1:7-8 – The vision described

#### Zechariah 1:7a – *On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month*… Three months after receiving the first message, Zechariah received a second **communication** from the Lord.

#### Zechariah 1:7b – …*which is the month Shebat*… The eleventh month of the year on the Hebrew calendar is called **Shebat**.

##### This corresponds to January-February. It would have been **winter** in Israel.

##### The 24th day of Shebat marked five months since **reconstruction** of the temple began. Haggai 1:14-15, 2:10, 18, 20

#### Zechariah 1:7c – …*in the second year of Darius*… After Cyrus died, it took two years for Darius to bring **stability** to Medo-Persia. Darius boasted that in nineteen battles he had defeated nine rebel leaders and subdued all his enemies. By 520 BC the empire was again essentially peaceful.[[13]](#footnote-13)

#### Zechariah 1:7d – …*the word of the LORD came to Zechariah the prophet, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo as follows:* Zechariah once again provided the details of his person. This introduction may indicate these were separate **messages** that were later compiled into one book.

#### Zechariah 1:8a – *I saw at night*… This was not a dream. Zechariah was **awake** and saw the things he described. God often communicated His message to the prophets in this manner. Numbers 12:6, Daniel 8:1

#### Zechariah 1:8b – …*and behold, a man was riding*… Only one rider is mentioned. In verse 11 this rider will be identified as the ***angel of the Lord***.

#### Zechariah 1:8c – *…on a red horse*… Horses are often found in the context of war. Red frequently symbolizes **bloodshed**, particularly as a result of war. Revelation 6:4

#### Zechariah 1:8d – …*and he was standing among the myrtle trees*… It appears the man riding the red horse came to a halt under the shade of some **myrtle** trees.

##### In the Millennial Age, God will turn the place where **briars** (the result of the curse) grew into a place where myrtle trees will grow. This will be for the glory of the Lord. Isaiah 41:19, 55:13

##### Interestingly, **Hadassah**, meaning myrtle, was Esther’s Jewish name. Esther 2:7

#### Zechariah 1:8e – …*which were in the* ***ravine****, with red, sorrel, and white horses behind him.*

##### We are not told the meaning of the different **colors** of the horses.

##### The horses likely symbolize **angelic** beings, since they were God’s representatives sent to “*patrol the earth*.” Zechariah 1:9-10

##### Persian monarchs used messengers on swift **steeds** to keep them informed on all matters concerning their empire.[[14]](#footnote-14)

### Zechariah 1:9-17 – The vision explained

#### Zechariah 1:9a – *Then I said, “My lord, what are these?”* Zechariah wanted to know the **meaning** of what he saw.

#### Zechariah 1:9b – *And the angel who was speaking with me said to me, “I will show you what these are.”* It was never the responsibility of the prophet receiving the vision to **speculate** what a vision meant. 2 Peter 1:20-21

#### Zechariah 1:10a – *And the man who was standing among the myrtle trees answered and said*… Then the man standing among the myrtle trees spoke up. This was the angel of the Lord. He **explained** the vision to Zechariah. Revelation 1:1

#### Zechariah 1:10b – *“These are those whom the LORD has sent to patrol the earth.*” As already mentioned, the horses here likely represent **angelic** beings sent by the Lord.

##### These agents patrol the earth to **observe** what is happening and report back to the Lord. Zechariah 6:7

##### We know from Job 1:6-7 and 1 Peter 5:8 that **Satan**, a fallen angel, also roams the earth. He has a devious reason for his roaming. He seeks to devour.

#### Zechariah 1:11a – *So they answered the angel of the LORD*… The term “*angel of the Lord*” is found **six** times in Zechariah (1:11-12, 3:1, 3:5-6, 12:8) and over 50 times in the Bible. The patrol responded to the angel of the Lord. He was their commander.

##### We believe the term angel of the Lord typically refers to the Lord Jesus **Christ**.

##### The following verses **equate** the angel of the Lord with God (the preincarnate Christ):

###### Genesis 22:15-16 – *Then the angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said, “By Myself I have sworn, declares the* ***Lord****, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son*…”

###### Exodus 3:2-3 – *The angel of the Lord* ***appeared*** *to [Moses] in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed. So, Moses said, “I must turn aside now and see this marvelous sight, why the bush is not burned up*.”

###### Exodus 3:4-5 – *When* ***the******Lord*** *saw that he turned aside to look,* ***God*** *called to him from the midst of the bush and said, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” Then He said, “Do not come near here; remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground*.”

###### Exodus 3:6 – *He said also, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” Then Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at* ***God***.

###### Exodus 14:19 – *The angel of God, who had been going before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the* ***pillar*** *of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them*.

###### Exodus 33:14 – *And He said, “****My******presence*** *shall go with you, and I will give you rest*.”

###### 1 Corinthians 10:4 – …*and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was* ***Christ***. This statement makes us understand that Christ was with them in the person of the angel of the Lord.

##### Zechariah 3:1-4 speaks of the angel of the Lord removing **iniquity**, which Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ alone, can do. Christ took away the sin of the world when He died on the cross and rose again. John 1:29

##### Zechariah 12:8 speaks of the angel of the Lord one day **destroying** the nations that go up against Jerusalem. We know this refers to Jesus Christ. Jeremiah 25:29‑31

#### Zechariah 1:11b – *So they answered the angel of the LORD who was* ***standing*** *among the myrtle trees*… The angel of the Lord is the same person who was standing among the myrtle trees in verses eight and ten. The Bible makes mention of three other instances of Jesus standing, ready for action.

##### **Stephen** saw Jesus standing when he was being stoned. Soon afterward he appeared to Saul on the road to Damascus. Acts 7:55-56, 9:1-6

##### Jesus is seen standing when he receives the **scroll** in heaven. Revelation 5:6, 6-19

##### Jesus will be seen standing on Mount Zion when He **returns**. This is His second coming when he will defeat the Antichrist and begin to reign for 1000 years. Revelation 14:1, 19-20

#### Zechariah 1:11c – *So they answered…, “We have patrolled the earth, and behold, all the earth is peaceful and quiet.”* The **horses** had gone to gather intel regarding the current social-political climate of the earth.

##### In the second year of Darius, universal peace prevailed. All the nations of the earlier Chaldean empire were at rest and lived in **undisturbed** prosperity.[[15]](#footnote-15)

###### *Peaceful* (YASHAB) is to dwell or settle at **ease**. Genesis 20:15, Genesis 25:27

###### *Quiet* (SHAQAT) describes a state of undisturbed **tranquility**. It is the condition which prevails during the absence of war. Judges 3:30

##### This may have seemed like good news, but it was not well-**received** by the angel of the Lord.

#### Zechariah 1:12a – *Then the angel of the LORD said,* *O LORD of hosts, how long will You have no* ***compassion*** *for Jerusalem and the cities of Judah*…” Instead of answering Zechariah, the angel of the Lord asked the LORD of hosts a question: For how long will You discipline Jerusalem and Judah? Jeremiah 25:11-12

##### We are reminded of Habakkuk’s cry to the Lord before Judah was taken into exile: “*How long, O Lord, will I call for help, and You will not hear? I cry out to You, ‘****Violence****!’ Yet You do not save*.” Habakkuk 1:2

###### The Gentile nations were at **peace** at the expense of the violence done to God’s people Israel. Zechariah 1:14-15

###### The nations were indifferent and **unsympathetic** towards Israel. They did nothing to help Abraham’s people possess the land that was rightfully theirs. Zechariah 1:14-17

###### Even today, Israel is **treated** with contempt.[[16]](#footnote-16)

###### The only reason the Lord allows this scenario to play out is because He desires Israel to return to Him spiritually. As long as Israel is in a state of **unbelief**, they should expect the absence of peace in their land.

##### There is a **difference** between the kind of peaceful silence the world was experiencing at that time (vs. 11, YASHAB and SHAQAT) and the peace (SHALOM) Messiah will bring in.

###### **SHALOM** comes from the root word SHALEM.

###### In Exodus 21-22, SHALEM is translated as “*make it good,* *shall surely pay,* *make full restitution* or to *restore*.” The ancient Hebrew meaning of SHALEM was “*to make something* ***whole****.*” This did not mean practical restoration of things lost or stolen, but it had the sense of fulness and wholeness in mind, body and state.[[17]](#footnote-17)

###### Genesis 43:27-28 – *Then he asked them about their welfare, and said, “Is your old father well* (SHALOM)*, of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?” They said, “Your servant our father is* ***well*** (SHALOM)*; he is still alive.” They bowed down in homage.*

##### Messiah will bring in SHALOM (completeness, soundness, welfare, **peace**).

###### He will bring shalom between the **offices** of priest and king. Zechariah 6:13

###### Messiah will bring ***shalom*** to the land. Zechariah 8:12

###### Messiah will **speak** *shalom* to the nations. Zechariah 9:10

###### Messiah’s name will be ***prince*** *of shalom*. Isaiah 9:6-7

##### World peace will not come until the following have occurred: Israel possesses the land God deeded her, Babylon is **destroyed**, and the Prince of Peace is reigning on His throne in Jerusalem. Isaiah 2:4, 9:6-7; Zechariah 5; Revelation 17-18

##### World peace will only be achieved when God ushers in true **justice** through the reign of Jesus Christ.

#### Zechariah 1:12b – …*with which You have been indignant these seventy years*? God, not the Gentile nations, is in **control** of Israel’s times and seasons. God had said the time for Israel’s exile would be 70 years.

##### The angel of the Lord’s words reflected His compassion for His people Israel and His **indignation** at the injustice shown to Judah while the nations were at ease (“*at peace*”). Zechariah 1:16, Jeremiah 10:25, Psalm 83:2-5

##### The role of the angel of the Lord perfectly anticipates Jesus’s role as **intercessor** for His people.

#### Zechariah 1:13 – *The LORD answered the angel who was speaking with me with gracious words, comforting words*. The sovereign Lord of the universe responded to the angel of the Lord’s question with **kind**, comforting words. We are not told the substance of His message. Colossians 4:6

##### Psalm 94:19 – *When my anxious thoughts multiply within me, Your* ***consolations*** *delight my soul.*

##### Isaiah 35:4 – *Say to those with* ***anxious*** *heart, “Take courage, fear not. Behold, your God will come with vengeance; the recompense of God will come, but He will save you.*”

#### Zechariah 1:14a – *So the angel who was speaking with me said to me, “Proclaim, saying*… Just as with His first message, this message was not to be hidden; it was to be **proclaimed** to the people.

##### Zechariah’s task as a prophet was not simply to receive the message for himself; he was told to **relate** it to the people of Israel as well. Hebrews 1:1-2

##### This verse is in direct response to the **request** made by the angel of the Lord in verse 12.

#### Zechariah 1:14b – *‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, “I am exceedingly jealous for Jerusalem and Zion!*” God is **strongly** devoted to Israel, His personal possession. Isaiah 54:8, Hebrews 12:6‑7

##### The Lord’s gracious disposition goes beyond “God has a plan for you; He wants to bless you.” We must realize God jealously seeks His chosen **nation**; He will not share her with anyone or anything else.

###### Isaiah 54:17 – *No weapon that is formed against you will prosper; and every tongue that accuses you in judgment you will condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their* ***vindication*** *is from Me," declares the LORD.*

###### In His love and desire for Israel, God is willing to go to great lengths, even **war**, in his defense of His possession. Isaiah 54:15, Zechariah 2:8

###### When it seemed to the people God had forgotten His promises to Israel this was an important **reminder**.

##### Often in Scripture Zion is used synonymously with Jerusalem since the mountain on which Jerusalem sits is called Mount Zion. In this context, **Zion** is used more specifically.

###### Biblically, the earth is at the center of creation (the universe). Likewise, Israel is the central nation of the world, and Jerusalem is the central city in Israel. Zion is the mountain in Jerusalem where the **temple** was built. Micah 3:12

###### The term Zion is as a reminder of God’s **kingdom** that will be set up to rule over the nations. Micah 4:1

###### Mount Zion is where Messiah’s **throne** will ultimately be established. Psalm 2:6

###### It will be from Mount Zion that God will impart His knowledge and **glory** to the nations. Micah 4:2

###### Zion (daughters of Zion) is sometimes used to refer to God’s **people**. Zechariah 2:7, 2:10

#### Zechariah 1:15a – *“But I am very angry with the nations who are at ease…* While Jerusalem and Israel were in shambles, the nations were at ease. The problem was not that the nations were at peace. The problem was they were totally fine with the fact that Israel did not possess the land. They had done nothing but **oppress** Israel.

#### Zechariah 1:15b – *for while I was only a little angry, they furthered the disaster.”* Although God had been angry with the fathers, the continued evil actions of the nations against Israel was **unwarranted**. Zechariah 1:2

##### Israel’s exile was a tragedy because it was unnecessary. The **negative** response of the nations of the world made Israel’s calamity even worse.

##### The Lord had warned the nations (especially the Babylonians) they would be **judged** for the way they treated the Jews. Genesis 12:3; Jeremiah 51:24, 34‑35; Amos 6:1

#### Zechariah 1:16a – *Therefore thus says the LORD, “I will return to Jerusalem with compassion*… In His compassion for Israel because of the injustice of the Gentile nations, God’s **presence** was going to symbolically return to Jerusalem.

#### Zechariah 1:16b – *My house will be built in it,” declares the LORD of hosts…”* The LORD foretold the rebuilding of the temple. He promised it would be **completed**.

##### Israel’s **temples** in the Bible

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Temple** | **Timeframe** |
| 1 | 1st - Solomon’s | 958 BC – 586 BC |
| **2** | **2nd - Zerubbabel’s** | **516 BC – AD 70** |
| 3 | 3rd - Tribulation temple | AD ?? - End of Tribulation |
| **4** | **4th - Messiah’s** temple | **Millennium - Rebuilt Jerusalem** |

##### House or temple (BAYITH) appears **31** times in Zechariah.

##### The term BAYITH often refers to a **physical** building as seen in the following examples:

###### **God’s** temple: Zechariah 1:16, 3:7, 4:9, 7:3, 8:9, 11:13, 14:20, 14:21

###### A temple in **Shinar** for the Harlot of false religion: Zechariah 5:11

###### A **dwelling** for a person: Zechariah 6:10, 14:2

##### It can also refer to a family or people group. For instance, the house of Judah or the **house** of Israel: Zechariah 8:13, 15, 19; 10:3, 6; 12:4, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13; 13:1

##### It can also **refer** to a religious system: Zechariah 5:4, 7:3, 13:6

##### As with any biblical term, context is essential to meaning.

#### Zechariah 1:16c – …*declares the LORD of hosts, “and a measuring line will be stretched over Jerusalem.*” The LORD foretold the rebuilding of Jerusalem. This must have been an astounding prophecy, especially considering the city was in complete **ruins**.

##### About 200 years earlier, God **foretold** through the prophet Isaiah that He would raise up someone to deliver them from Babylon and Jerusalem would be built.

##### Isaiah 44:28 – “*It is I who says of Cyrus, ‘He is My shepherd! And he will* ***perform*** *all My desire.’ And he declares of Jerusalem, ‘She will be built,’ and of the temple, ‘Your foundation will be laid*.’”

##### Zechariah added to Isaiah’s prophecy that the temple would be finished under **Zerubbabel’s** watchful leadership. Zechariah 4:9-10

#### Zechariah 1:17 – *“Again, proclaim, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, “My cities will again overflow with* ***prosperity****, and the LORD will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem*.”’” Psalm 132:13

##### The Lord of hosts promised overflowing prosperity to the cities of Judah, with a **special** emphasis on Zion and Jerusalem. Zechariah 6:15

###### While the prophecy of verse 16 finds its fulfilment in Zechariah’s time, verse 17 is clearly yet **future**. Only after Israel spiritually returns to the Lord will this prophecy be fulfilled. Zechariah 13:9

###### If the near prophecy of verse 16 was fulfilled literally, we can be certain the far prophecy of verse 17 will be **literally** fulfilled in the future.

##### What did God mean when He said He would “*again* ***choose*** *Jerusalem?*” Zechariah 2:12, 8:8, 13:9

###### Seventy years prior, God had removed His people from their land. They lived in exile in a **foreign** land for 70 years.

###### However, even though Israel was unfaithful, the nation **continued** to be God’s chosen people all the while. Zechariah 3:2

###### God sovereignly chose the **nation** of Israel for the purpose of carrying out His redemptive plan for humanity and earthly restoration. 2 Chronicles 6:6

##### Therefore, we conclude that when God said He would “***again*** *choose Jerusalem*,” He was saying He will again work in and through Israel from Jerusalem. God will make sure Israel will possess her inheritance (the land).

## Zechariah 1:18-21 – Vision Two: Four horns and four craftsmen

### The following vision Zechariah saw was of four horns and four craftsmen. Four horns rose up to scatter and oppress Israel, but then four craftsmen rose to **terrify** the horns.

### Zechariah 1:18 – *Then I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, there were four horns*. Zechariah suddenly became aware of four **horns**.

#### Horns used in this way often represent earthly **empires**.

#### Verse 21 explains the horns were nations that sought to **destroy** Judah. Psalm 75:10; Daniel 7-8; Revelation 12-13, 17

### Zechariah 1:19a – *So I said to the angel who was speaking with me, “What are these?”* Zechariah knew the horns were **symbolic**, but he did not understand their meaning.

### Zechariah 1:19b – *And he answered me,* “*These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel and Jerusalem.*” The angel identified the horns as empires that **scattered** the people of Israel.

#### The horns portray the total domination of the people of Israel by the **powers** that attacked and conquered them.[[18]](#footnote-18)

#### Some believe these are nations in their **past**: Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, and Medo-Persia.

#### However, it is more likely they are the four empires of the Times of the Gentiles mentioned in **Daniel**.

##### Those who knew of Daniel’s **prophecy** would probably have associated these four horns with Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome.

##### It seems likely Zechariah was shown a vision of the **outcome** of the nations that oppressed Israel. Ezekiel 34:1

### Zechariah 1:20 – *Then the LORD showed me four* ***craftsmen****.*

#### The word *craftsmen* is CHARASH in Hebrew and refers to an engraver or artificer. It is used in other references as **blacksmith**, engraver, or stonemason. 2 Samuel 5:11; Isaiah 44:12, 54:16

#### Ezekiel 21:31 – *I will pour out My indignation on you; I will blow on you with the fire of My wrath, and I will give you into the hand of* ***brutal*** *men, skilled (CHARASH) in destruction*.

### Zechariah 1:21a – *I said, “What are these coming to do?” And he said, “These are the horns which have scattered Judah, so that no man lifts up his head*. The severe oppression of Israel caused the people to hang their heads in **despair**. Their situation seemed hopeless. Job 10:15

#### Even though they had been allowed to return to their land, they still lived under the **domination** of Persia.

#### The truth is, Jerusalem will be **trampled** underfoot until the end of the “*Times of the Gentiles.*” Luke 21:24

### Zechariah 1:21b – …*but these craftsmen have come to terrify them*… The Lord sent the *craftsmen* to cause the nations who opposed Israel to **shudder**. Throughout history God has made a way to protect His people, even when they have been in exile.

### Zechariah 1:21c – …*to throw down the horns of the nations who have lifted up their horns against the land of Judah in order to scatter it*.” The enemy nations will be dealt with appropriately. We are not given much information about these craftsmen except that they will be active in the **destruction** of the nations. Jeremiah 50:45-46

#### “*To throw down*” (YADAW) is one word in Hebrew meaning to cast out. Just like these nations caused Judah to be cast out and scattered, so these craftsmen would humble and **destroy** them.

#### Some suggest these craftsmen are **successors** to the horns. For instance, the first craftsman would be Medo-Persia casting out Babylon. If this is indeed the case, the final craftsman would be none other than Messiah Himself who will come and cast out the last of the four horns.

### This vision served to **encourage** Zechariah’s audience that though things seemed hopeless in the present because of the many injustices done to them by the nations in power, they could place their hope in the Lord who would ultimately destroy their enemies.

## Zechariah 2:1-13 – Vision Three: Measuring Jerusalem

### The third vision Zechariah saw gives very few details expect for the hope that Jerusalem would again be **measurable**.

### Zechariah 2:1 – *Then I lifted up my eyes and* ***looked****, and behold, there was a man with a measuring line in his hand.* No sooner had the previous vision ended, than Zechariah saw another vision. The angel speaking with Zechariah was no longer the angel of the Lord. He now saw a “***man***.” Ezekiel 40:3; 41; 42; Revelation 11:1-2

### Zechariah 2:2a – *So I said, “Where are you going?”* Interestingly, Zechariah was able to **interact** with the man in the vision.

### Zechariah 2:2b – *And he said to me, “To measure Jerusalem, to see how wide it is and how long it is.”* The man responded that he was going to **measure** Jerusalem.

#### Zechariah and the returned Jewish exiles were in **Jerusalem** at this time.

#### However, because the city had been leveled and abandoned for 70 years, it was in complete **ruins**. Zechariah 7:14, Ezekiel 33:28

### Zechariah 2:3-4a – *And behold, the angel who was speaking with me was going out, and another angel was coming out to meet him, and said to him, “****Run****, speak to that young man…*” As the angel who had originally spoke to Zechariah was leaving to go measure the city, another angel came out to meet him with an urgent message.

### Zechariah 2:4b – “…saying, ‘*Jerusalem will be inhabited without walls because of the multitude of men and cattle within it.*’” The urgent message was that in the future Jerusalem would be a flourishing **unwalled** city.

#### Though the date of fulfillment of this prophecy is not stated, this prediction of future prosperity for Jerusalem would likely have greatly encouraged the returnees to forge on in the **rebuilding** of the temple.

#### Such an **increase** in population as here predicted could not come about simply from the return of Jews from Babylon; it looked instead to a future day as indicated in verse five.[[19]](#footnote-19)

### Zechariah 2:5a – *‘For I,’ declares the LORD, ‘will be a wall of fire around her*…’ There will be no need for walls because God Himself will **protect** the city.

#### Walls were necessary around cities to provide protection against enemy **attacks**. The city of Jerusalem has been surrounded by walls since ancient times. 2 Kings 14:13, Psalm 122:7, Nehemiah 1:3

#### When Zechariah voiced this prophecy, it must have been difficult to imagine Jerusalem as a populated center of commerce, but it would have been even harder to imagine her not needing **walls**.

#### If God could protect a future, prosperous Jerusalem, He could certainly provide protection for the current dilapidated city. As they commenced the rebuilding of the temple, the people needed to trust in the protection of the Lord of **hosts**.

### Zechariah 2:5b – ‘…*and I will be the glory in her midst.’*” One day Israel will finally be a light unto the Gentiles because God Himself will **dwell** in Her midst. Isaiah 60:1-2, Jeremiah 31:33

#### What a delightful future hope for Judah. One day the very spot where Zechariah was standing would be filled with people and animals. In that day, God will be Israel’s wall of protection and “*the* ***glory*** *in her midst*.” Psalm 46:5

#### This wonderful concept can be applied to believers in the Church Age as well. As Christ abides in the believer by faith, God’s **glory** shines through our broken vessels for all to behold. 2 Corinthians 2:14, 4:6-7; Ephesians 3:17

### Zechariah 2:6-13 – Poem of God’s **wrath** upon the nations

#### Zechariah 2:6-9 – A **warning** to the exiles who refused to return

##### Zechariah 2:6 – “*Ho there! Flee from the land of the north,” declares the LORD, “for I have* ***dispersed*** *you as the four winds of the heavens,” declares the LORD*.

###### The land of the north likely referred to **Babylon**. Although Babylon was to the east of Jerusalem, you had to go north out of Israel to get there. Although this warning was directed at Zechariah’s generation, it may also have applied to previous generations. Jeremiah 6:22; 16:16

###### God was telling Israel to flee from the land of captivity. Although He had dispersed them, it was now time for them to **return** to the land of Israel.

##### Zechariah 2:7 – *“Ho, Zion! Escape, you who are living with the daughter of Babylon.”* Here Zechariah contrasted two religious **systems**: Zion and the daughter of Babylon.

###### The daughter of Babylon probably referred to the children of the **Chaldean** religious system which began in Babel. Isaiah 47, Psalm 137:8, Revelation 17:5

###### God wanted the people of Israel (Zion) to flee the idolatrous Babylonian religious system which had **spread** to the four corners of the earth.

##### Zechariah 2:8 – *For thus says the LORD of hosts, “After glory He has sent me against the nations which plunder you, for he who touches you, touches the* ***apple*** *of His eye*.

###### God, the Lord of heaven’s armies, is Israel’s **defender**. He will display His glory when He judges the nations who plundered Israel. Deuteronomy 32:9-10, Psalm 105:15, Jeremiah 2:3

###### As will be seen in chapters 12-14, the Lord will **judge** the nations before He comes to dwell in Zion.

##### Zechariah 2:9a – *For behold, I will wave My hand over them so that they will be* ***plunder*** *for their slaves*.

###### The nations may devise plans against the Lord, but God will ultimately “*shatter them like earthenware* (Psalm 2:9a)” and give them as an **inheritance** to His Son. Psalm 2

###### In a show of power, God will make these nations (*them*) serve Israel (*their slaves*). One day Israel will be the greatest **nation** on earth. Isaiah 14:2, Zephaniah 2:9

##### Zechariah 2:9b – *Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me.* A most important aspect of prophecy is knowing **when** it is fulfilled.

###### Prophecy in Scripture is always fulfilled literally, so when it happens, there is no **doubt** of its fulfillment. Exodus 6:7, Ezekiel 12:20, Zechariah 4:9, John 8:28

###### The phrase “*you will know*” occurs four times in Zechariah. At the time of the fulfillment of the prophecies, they would **know** it had come to pass because God had told them beforehand. Zechariah 2:9, 11, 4:9, 6:15

#### Zechariah 2:10-11 – Discouraged returnees

##### Zechariah 2:10a – “*Sing for joy and be glad, O daughter of Zion…*

###### The daughter of Zion (God’s people) needed to **rejoice** instead of bemoaning their current circumstances.

###### Ultimately God will triumph over the system of man. What an important prophecy for **Judah** to hold onto during a time of desperation. Zechariah 9:9

##### Zechariah 2:10b – “…*for behold I am coming, and I will****dwell*** *in your midst,” declares the Lord*.

###### Dwell (SHAKAN) conveys the idea of residing or staying **permanently**.

###### This is a **Messianic** prophecy. Zechariah 1:16 says that one day the Lord “*will return to Jerusalem with compassion*” and build His house in it.

##### Zechariah 2:11a – “*Many* ***nations*** *will join themselves to the LORD in that day and will become My people*.”

###### Zechariah used the phrase “*in that* ***day***” 19 times throughout this book. This term can refer either to the period defined by the context or to the specific period known as the Day of the Lord.

###### In this verse, “*in that day*” refers to the Day of the Lord when the nations will be subservient to Israel’s **rule**.

##### Zechariah 2:11b – “*Then I will dwell in your midst*…

###### God **dwelling** in Israel’s midst was what the tabernacle and temple symbolized. Exodus 25:8

###### One day Jerusalem will be revitalized so that **Christ** can dwell among His people Israel in person. From Jerusalem He will reign over the entire earth.

##### Zechariah 2:11c – …*and you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you.”* Messiah, God incarnate, will one day literally **dwell** among His people in Jerusalem without end. Zechariah 8:3, Ezekiel 48:8

#### Zechariah 2:12 – “*The LORD will possess Judah as His portion in the holy land and will again* ***choose*** *Jerusalem*.”

##### Although national Israel has been set aside because of her rejection of Jesus Christ as Messiah, God will fulfill His promise to her as stated in the **Davidic** Covenant. Matthew 12:14, Romans 11:25-29

##### In 2 Samuel 7:16 we read God’s promise to King David: “*Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me* ***forever****; your throne shall be established forever*.” 2 Samuel 7:13, Psalm 89:3-4

##### Luke 1:31-33 – *And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father* ***David****; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end*.”

#### Zechariah 2:13 – “*Be silent, all flesh, before the LORD; for He is aroused from His holy habitation.”* One day God will **silence** all the nations that have persecuted Israel for so long. Psalms 2:1-12, 83:1-15, Isaiah 62:1-4

## Zechariah 3:1-10 – Vision Four: Joshua the high priest

### Zechariah 3:1a – *Then he showed me Joshua the high priest*… Since Zechariah himself was a priest, he would have **recognized** Joshua.

### Zechariah 3:1b – …*standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to* ***accuse*** *him.* Here we see Satan accusing Joshua the high priest before the Lord. Job 1:6‑12

#### Even today **Satan** continues to accuse God’s people. Revelation 12:10 calls Satan “*the accuser of [the] brethren… who accuses them before our God day and night*.” 1 Peter 5:8

#### Thankfully, Jesus Christ, who died for our sins and rose again, sits at God the Father’s right hand **interceding** for us. Romans 8:1, 33-34; Hebrews 7:25

### Zechariah 3:2a – *The LORD said to Satan, “The LORD rebuke you, Satan!”* This preincarnate altercation between Christ and Satan shows the ongoing **battle** that has raged on throughout history. Ephesians 6:10-12

### Zechariah 3:2b – “…*the LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you!*” Satan’s accusation was directed against Joshua who symbolized Jerusalem. As a high priest, Joshua **represented** the people of Israel. Leviticus 16:15-16, 20-22

### Zechariah 3:2c – “*Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?*” Although God had often saved Israel out of the fire, the context here likely refers to Israel’s preservation through Nebuchadnezzar’s complete destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC.

### Zechariah 3:3 – *Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and standing before the angel.* Zechariah saw Joshua, the high priest, standing before the angel of the LORD literally dressed in **excrement**-bespattered garments. Joshua was filthy and he stunk. Isaiah 4:4[[20]](#footnote-20)

#### Filthy garments showed a faithless and **sinful** condition. The high priest's garments were stained as a picture of the lamentable state of Israel’s priesthood.

##### This would have made a strong point in the mind of the listener. How **shameful** for Joshua to be seen before God in filthy garments!

##### The people of Israel had not listened to the Lord or walked in His ways, but instead they had turned to idolatry. Before their exile to Babylon the priests had led the way in **rebellion**.

##### Would Israel **recognize** their current state as needing God's grace? Would they change their minds as they heard Zechariah's vision of Joshua the priest?

#### In this picture the priestly duty was being **reinstated**, not established. The people of Israel as seen here were in a rebellious and polluted state as God's people and thus needed God's restoration and not eternal salvation. The filthy garments symbolize the pollution of sin.[[21]](#footnote-21)

### Zechariah 3:4a – *He spoke and said to those who were standing before him, saying, “****Remove*** *the filthy garments from him*.”

#### Joshua could not stand before God in filthy garments, nor could he remove them himself. The angel of the Lord **mediated** on his behalf, instructing his attendants to remove them from him.

#### Wayward Israel needed to capture the essence of what is being illustrated. Even though the high priest stood accused and guilty before Yahweh, the angel of the Lord was for him, not **against** him. Israel could apply this to themselves.

#### They needed to understand their situation was not lost. They too could return to God by faith and have their filthy rags exchanged for **festal** garments. What a picture of Israel's state but also of God's offer of grace.

### Zechariah 3:4b – *Again he said to him, “See, I have taken your iniquity* ***away*** *from you and will clothe you with festal robes*.” Jeremiah 33:8, Revelation 21:2

#### Under the Mosaic Covenant, the high priest had to be **cleansed** before he could offer sacrifices for the people. He always had to bathe, put on the holy garments, and then offer sacrifices, first for his own sins, then for the people. Leviticus 16:1-6, 15

#### Here, in this vision, the angel of the Lord took away Joshua the high priest’s sin and clothed him in **holy** priestly garments. Obviously, in the vision, Joshua was returning to the Lord under the correct mindset and was immediately and fully restored. This depicted a spiritual return to the Lord not a physical return. Exodus 28:2

#### Isaiah 61:10 – *I will rejoice greatly in the Lord, my soul will exult in my God; for He has clothed me with garments of salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of* ***righteousness***.

#### One day **all** Israel will be cleansed of their iniquity when they trust in Christ as Messiah. From being in a state of shame, they will return to a joyous state of celebration. The angel of the Lord will do this on that day! Jeremiah 31:33-34, Micah 7:18-19, Romans 11:27

### Zechariah 3:5 – *Then I said, “Let them put a clean turban on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments, while the angel of the Lord was standing by.* Zechariah's excitement shows he captured the idea: full acceptance was being shown by the angel of the Lord. As a **priest**, Zechariah intervened on behalf of Joshua.

#### The word *clean* (TAHOR) here implies **purity** or holiness. This is what Israel could expect when she again returned to the Lord in faith.

#### The priestly garments included a **turban**. On the turban of the High Priest was fastened a plate of gold engraved with the words “*Holy to the Lord*.” Exodus 28:36-38, Leviticus 8:9

#### On the day when the Kingdom is established in Jerusalem, all things, even the mundane things, will have "*Holy to the Lord*" written on them. Zechariah 14:20-21

#### It was the angel of the Lord who presided over Joshua’s unrighteousness being **removed**. Even though he was the high priest, Joshua took no part in this whatsoever, since he was the polluted one being cleansed. Isaiah 43:11

#### Ultimately, it was God who clothed Joshua with these **festive** robes. These garments went beyond being simply passable, they were robes appropriate for service to the Lord. The Lord would do the same for any from Israel who would have returned to Him spiritually.

### Zechariah 3:6 – *And the angel of the Lord admonished Joshua, saying*… This admonishment came **after** the Lord had taken away Joshua’s iniquity, clothed him with festal robes, and put a clean turban on his head.

#### Unfortunately, today conventional **Christianity** teaches we must abandon our sin and change our ways before we can be cleansed. To be cleansed is to do produce good works by our efforts.

#### However, in God's economy, righteousness is credited. Cleansing is **gifted** undeservedly to those who come to Him by faith. Good works come after becoming true worshippers. Romans 10:3-4, Ephesians 2:8

#### Joshua was already high priest. He needed to be reminded that his cleansing came from God by grace. Joshua was provided festal robes. Robes of festivity not of religious ceremony. Grace produces **rejoicing** which in turn results in joyful service.

### Zechariah 3:7a – *Thus says the Lord of hosts, “If you will walk in My ways and if you will perform My* ***service***…” The Lord of hosts instructed Joshua concerning his priestly duties in the temple.

#### Having been given festal clothes, Joshua was ready for service on two **conditions**.

##### *If…you will walk…*the first condition was of a personal nature. First and foremost, Joshua was to have regard for his **walk** with the Lord, or the way he lived his life.

##### *If…you will perform…*the second condition was to be **faithful** to the work God gave him to do. 2 Corinthians 4:2

### Zechariah 3:7b – “…*then you will also govern My house and also have charge of My courts, and I will grant you free access among these who are standing here*.” The angel of the Lord said to give Joshua the responsibility of **governing** his temple (house), so long as he walked in His ways. Ezekiel 44:15-16

#### …*then you will also govern My house*… The word *govern* (DIN) carries with it the idea of **judging**.

##### “*My house*” refers to the **temple** that was being built at that time. The duties of the priests included deciding and judging between the clean and the unclean. Leviticus 10:8, 10; Deuteronomy 17:9; Ezekiel 44:23; Malachi 2:7[[22]](#footnote-22)

##### Ironically, when the Lord Jesus (*the angel of the Lord*) came, He confronted the hypocrisy of the chief priests. Because of their failure to “*walk in [His] ways*” they **lost** the privilege of governing His house. They were poor shepherds of His flock. Matthew 21:23‑27

#### …*and also have charge of My courts*… “*My courts*” would mean the temple courtyards. The priests had jurisdiction over the **courtyards** of the temple. In the time of Jesus they failed to keep them from becoming a den of thieves. Luke 19:45-46

#### …*and I will grant you free* ***access*** *among these who are standing here.* The priests had limited access into the Holy Place and only the high priest was allowed in the Holy of Holies once a year. Entrance into the temple was a tremendous privilege for the Jewish priesthood.

##### Scripturally, only priests who were ritually and morally **pure** could enter the temple to perform religious service. Exodus 40:30-33

##### God designed it so that only those who walked in His **ways** were allowed to govern in the temple and have charge of its courts.

### Zechariah 3:8a – “*Now listen, Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who are sitting in front of you—indeed they are men who are a* ***symbol***…”

#### “*Your friends*” likely refers to the entire **priesthood**. The priests who served in the temple corporately symbolized the perfect priest God would provide in the future. Hebrews 7:21-28, 8:1-5, 9:11-12

#### Joshua and his colleagues served in the earthly temple, but Christ (the Branch) who entered directly into the Holy of Holies of heaven, would one day serve in the **Millennial** temple as the Priest King. Psalm 110:1, 4; Zechariah 6:13

### Zechariah 3:8b – “…*for behold, I am going to bring in My servant the* ***Branch***.” This prophecy concerned God’s servant, the Branch, who will be superior to the Old Testament high priests. Hebrews 7:23-28

#### *My servant* is clearly a reference to **Messiah**, Jesus Christ. Isaiah 42:1, 52:13, 53:1-12; Ezekiel 34:23-24; Philippians 2:6-8

#### *The Branch* is the Man who will **build** the Millennial temple, which will be unlike any previous temple. Isaiah 11:1, 60:21; Jeremiah 23:5, 33:15; Ezekiel 40-48; Zechariah 6:12-13; Revelation 22:16

#### High Priest Joshua was to anticipate Messiah's **arrival**. What a privilege, but also what a great responsibility. The priests were to “hold the fort” until Jesus, the Branch, appeared. They were chosen to guard, protect, and manage the temple in anticipation of Messiah’s arrival.

### Zechariah 3:9a – “*For behold, the stone that I have set before Joshua; on one stone are seven eyes*.” Here is yet another designation for **Messiah**: *the stone*.

#### We know Christ to be the **cornerstone**. Genesis 49:24, Psalm 118:22, Isaiah 28:16, Matthew 21:42, Acts 4:11, 1 Peter 2:4-6

#### Zechariah 4:10 mentions a “***plumb*** *line in the hand of Zerubbabel [that symbolizes] the eyes of the Lord which range to and fro throughout the earth*.”

#### Zechariah described the stone as having seven eyes. This likely referred to the Messiah’s **omniscience**. These may be the seven eyes of the Lamb seen in Revelation 5:6.

#### In stark contrast, when Daniel described the characteristics of the **Antichrist**, he stated that the Antichrist has “*eyes like the eyes of a man* (Dan. 7:8).” Daniel 11:21, Zechariah 11:17

### Zechariah 3:9b – “*Behold, I will engrave an inscription on it,” declares the LORD of hosts, “and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one* ***day***.” While the work of the cross is implied here, and certainly the removal of Israel’s iniquity is based on Messiah’s victory on the cross, this verse does not refer to Messiah. Romans 3:25; Hebrews 10:10, 12, 14

#### “*In one day*” refers to a **literal** day when all Israel will place their faith in Jesus the Messiah. This will occur at the end of the seven years of tribulation in fulfillment of Daniel 9:24-25.

#### This will be a once-for-all event. There will be no need for a repetition or renewal. Israel will finally and completely have spiritually **returned** to the Lord in faith. Zechariah 12:10, 13:9

### Zechariah 3:10a – “*In that day… every one of you will invite his neighbor*… This is a **Messianic** prophecy as seen by the decree, “declares the LORD of hosts.”

### Zechariah 3:10b – …*to sit under his vine and under his fig tree.”* This picture conveys the image of **peace** and blessing. 1 Kings 4:25, Isaiah 36:16, Habakkuk 3:17

#### Micah 4:1 – *And it will come about in the last days that the mountain of the house of the Lord will be established as the* ***chief*** *of the mountains. It will be raised above the hills, and the peoples will stream to it*.

#### Micah 4:4 – *Each of them will sit under his vine and under his fig tree, with no one to make them* ***afraid****, for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken*.

#### Micah 4:7b – *And the Lord will* ***reign*** *over them in Mount Zion from now on and forever*.

### This vision of Joshua the high priest standing cleansed before the angel of the Lord seems to be God’s **endorsement** of Israel’s priesthood at the time of Zechariah’s writing.

### If the spiritual leadership (the priesthood) of Judah needed reassurance, we can be sure the **civil** leadership also needed bolstering. The next vision will address this very issue.

## Zechariah 4:1-14 – Vision Five: The Lampstand

### The following vision is directed at Zerubbabel the civil **governor** of Judah. Haggai 1:1

#### Zerubbabel was a descendant of King David and an **ancestor** of Jesus Christ. He was in line to be King, but God had promised that no one from the line of Jeconiah, also called “Jehoiachin,” would ever sit on the thrown of Israel. Therefore, Zerubbabel was simply a civil leader (governor) and not a king. Matthew 1:6, 12; Luke 3:27

#### Zerubbabel’s name probably meant “seed of Babylon,” but his Persian name was Sheshbazzar, suggesting he may have been in the service of the **king** (Ezra 1:8-5:14). This being so, it appears Zerubbabel left all the comforts of Babylon behind to become the governor of Judah.

### Zechariah 4:1 – *Then the angel who was speaking with me returned and* ***roused*** *me, as a man who is awakened from his sleep.*

#### The present vision occurred after the visions of chapters 2 and 3, which related to the **future** hope of Jerusalem.

#### Zechariah said, “*The angel* (2:3) …*returned and* ***roused*** *me, as a man who is awakened from his sleep.*” The previous visions seemingly left Zechariah completely exhausted.

### Zechariah 4:2 – *He said to me, “What do you see?” And I said, “I see, and behold, a* ***lampstand*** *all of gold with its bowl on the top of it, and its seven lamps on it with seven spouts belonging to each of the lamps which are on the top of it*;” Exodus 25:37

#### This verse serves as a summary of chapters 2-4. One day Israel will be what God meant for her to be from her inception: a kingdom of priests and a **holy** nation.

#### The lampstand symbolized a fully **restored** Israel. In the future, by means of the Holy Spirit, Israel will finally shine throughout the world as an eternal light of God’s holiness. (with an unending supply of oil). Exodus 19:6

#### Those who fail to make a clear biblical **distinction** between the Church and Israel teach this imagery stands for the Church.[[23]](#footnote-23)

##### It is true that lampstands are used as a figure of the Church in Revelation 1:12 & 20, and that the Church is compared to lights in Philippians 2:15, but the Church was not a matter of **prophecy** in the Old Testament.[[24]](#footnote-24)

##### Before Christ’s mention of the Church in Matthew 16:18, the Church was a completely **unknown** entity throughout the Old Testament. Ephesians 3:1‑13

### Zechariah 4:3-5 – “…*also two* ***olive*** *trees by it, one on the right side of the bowl and the other on its left side.” Then I said to the angel who was speaking with me saying, “What are these, my lord?” So the angel who was speaking with me answered and said to me, “Do you not know what these are?” And I said, “No, my lord.”*

#### Zechariah described two olive **trees** by the lampstand, one on the left and one on the right.

#### The angel **asked** Zechariah if he knew what the two olive trees stood for. Zechariah said he did not know.

### Zechariah 4:6a – *Then he said to me…* In verses 2-5 we see a build-up of suspense meant to increase Zechariah’s **curiosity** (and ours as well). Zechariah was to pay close attention to what the angel was about to tell him.

### Zechariah 4:6b – *“This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel saying…* God gave Zechariah a **specific** message to relate to Zerubbabel, the governor.

#### We know from the Ezra that Zerubbabel listened and **followed** God’s instructions. Ezra 5:2 says, “*Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak rose up and began to rebuild the house of God which is in Jerusalem; and the prophets of God were with them, supporting them*.”

#### Therefore, this message has a different tone than the message to Israel’s general populace. However, although Zerubbabel was **sincere**, he may have been tempted to bring about the needed results on his own.

### Zechariah 4:6c – ‘*Not by might nor by* ***power****, but by My Spirit,’ says the LORD of hosts*.”

#### As a chosen leader, Zerubbabel would have had natural talents and **abilities**. So, God’s message to him was that the temple would be built by the power of His Spirit, not by human effort or mere resolve.

#### God offered Zerubbabel an option that perhaps he had been too busy to consider. Maybe by now he was ready to give up. God’s message to him was, “How about **trusting** Me?” God encouraged him to depend on the power of His Holy Spirit. This is a reminder for us today of how God’s work should be accomplished.

#### In Haggai 1:13-14 the prophet said God had **stirred** up the spirit of the people and they began rebuilding the temple. This of course is a wonderful illustration of how God wants us to live. He wants us to depend totally on Him alone. Proverbs 3:5-6; John 15:4-5, Hebrews 11:6

##### 2 Corinthians 4:7 – *But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing* ***greatness*** *of the power will be of God and not from ourselves*.

##### Enabling strength for all believers comes from God, not from spiritual disciplines or self-determination. Self-effort always **fails** when it comes to controlling the flesh or accomplishing God’s will. 2 Corinthians 12:9-10, Ephesians 6:10

### Zechariah 4:7a – *‘What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain; and he will bring forth the top stone with shouts of “Grace, grace to it!”’”* Mountains can symbolize different things in Scripture. Zerubbabel saw his current situation and the **obstacles** set before him as a great mountain, an impossible task.

#### Yet nothing is too great for the man who has the Lord of hosts battling for him. A weak believer who is God’s instrument is **limitless** in power and unstoppable!

#### The task Zerubbabel was given was from first to last a **spiritual** work; it had to be accomplished by the omnipotent, unfailing, and unerring Spirit of almighty God.

### Zechariah 4:7b – …*‘and he will bring forth the top stone with shouts of “****Grace****, grace to it!”’”* The top stone is the last stone placed at the end of a building project to complete it.

#### Zerubbabel was going to see the temple finished, but not in the way he might have imagined. The temple would be finished by the grace and power of God, not by human power or wisdom. God **alone** would get all the glory. Ezra 6:14, Psalm 115:1

#### When the temple was finished, the people would not shout, “Zerubbabel, Zerubbabel!”; they would shout, “*Grace, grace*!” Grace is not grace if it includes even the smallest hint of human effort. Grace means God gets **all** the glory and in this case God would indeed get the glory. Romans 4:4, 11:6

#### The temple could not have been finished apart from God’s direct intervention. In this vision, Zechariah was shown that it would be the work of God’s Spirit. He used Zerubbabel as an **instrument** through whom he could bring glory to Himself.

#### One day all Israel will recognize the high cost needed to be paid for their redemption and they will **grieve** for having rejected and crucified their Messiah. The enormous price Christ paid demonstrates the extent of His grace. Zechariah 12:10, John 19:37, Acts 2:36-37, Romans 5:12, 1 Peter 1:18-20

### Zechariah 4:8-9a – *Also the word of the LORD came to me, saying, “The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands will* ***finish*** *it*.

#### Once the rebuilding started back up, it took four years and three months for this **promise** to be literally fulfilled. Ezra 6:15

#### Remarkably, the second temple was **finished** 70 years after the first one was destroyed. Haggai 2:23

### Zechariah 4:9b – *Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent* ***me*** *to you.* When the temple was finished, the people would know it was God who had done it. They would rejoice in response to God’s provision, giving Him all the credit and praise.

#### Who was the “*me*” in this verse that God would send to them (*you,* plural in Hebrew)? This is likely a reference to **Messiah** and his eventual arrival.

#### Just as miraculous as the temple being rebuilt, they could know that God would send Himself to them. Messiah would be Emmanuel (God with us). Messiah would be God **tabernacling** with mankind. Isaiah 7:14; John 1:14, 17-18

### Zechariah 4:10a – *For who has despised the day of small things?*

#### The second temple wasn’t as glorious as the first. The older generation who had seen Solomon’s temple was sorely **disappointed**. Sadly, they *despised the day of small things*. God often works through the modest and insignificant. This can be seen in the inception of the Church of Jesus Christ with a few feeble men.

#### When Solomon built the temple, he had 150,000 men, 3,000 superintendents, and no end of money at his disposal. Also, other nations provided him with raw materials. Therefore, Solomon was able to build a **magnificent**, renowned temple for the Lord.

#### Zerubbabel did not have any of these advantages, but he did have God **instructing** Him and the Holy Spirit empowering him. In time God’s temple stood once again.

### Zechariah 4:10b – “*But these seven will be* ***glad*** *when they see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel*…” Literally translated “plumb line” means “tin weight.” A plumb line is an instrument used in **construction**, much like a level. The omniscient Lord would be pleased when He saw the building project restarted by Zerubbabel.

#### The modest structure of the second temple is a reminder of the humble aspect of Messiah. Just as Messiah would appear as a humble servant, so the temple appeared as a **humble** structure in comparison to Solomon’s once magnificent temple.

#### God does not despise the “*day of small things*.” He **rejoiced** once the second temple was resumed, just as He will be delighted in the future when Israel is restored through the work of Messiah. Isaiah 53

### Zechariah 4:10b – “…*these are the eyes of the Lord which range to and fro throughout the earth*.” The “…*eyes of the Lord which range to and fro*…” speaks of God’s **involvement** and concern for the completion of the temple.

#### 2 Chronicles 16:9a states, “*For the* ***eyes*** *of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His*.”

#### God sees everything; nothing is hidden from Him. Proverbs 15:3 says, “*The eyes of the Lord are in every place,* ***watching*** *the evil and the good*.” Isaiah 40:27

### Zechariah 4:11 – *Then I answered and said to him, “What are these two olive trees on the right of the lampstand and on its left?”* The angel of the Lord had not **answered** Zechariah about the olive trees. So, he asked again.

### Zechariah 4:12-13 – *And I answered the second time and said to him, “What are the two olive* ***branches*** *which are beside the two golden pipes, which empty the golden oil from themselves?” So he answered me, saying, “Do you not know what these are?” And I said, “No, my lord*.” Interestingly the angel answered a question with a question.

### Zechariah 4:14 – *Then he said, “These are the two anointed ones who are standing by the Lord of the whole earth.”* Finally, the angel answered Zechariah, but he left their **identity** vague, at best.

#### *“Anointed ones”* literally reads “sons of oil.” *“The two olive* ***branches*** *which are beside the two golden pipes*” are two anointed ones who stand by or serve the Lord.

##### There are differing opinions concerning the identity of these two anointed ones. They may simply refer to Joshua and Zerubbabel or they may refer to the **offices** which both men represented, priesthood and royalty.

##### Typically, when priests and kings were appointed to service, they were anointed with **oil**.

##### We know that Messiah, the **Anointed** One, will rule as the only king and also the great high priest. He will be the legitimate uniting of the offices of priesthood and royalty in Israel.

#### *“Lord of the whole earth”* is a reference to Christ. This will be fulfilled when Messiah one day **rules** over the whole earth. Revelation 11:4

## Zechariah 5:1-4 – Vision Six: The flying scroll

### Zechariah 5:1 – *Then I lifted up my eyes again and looked, and behold, there was a flying scroll*. This was Zechariah’s 6th vision. In every vision, Zechariah “***looked***” to see what was happening. This time he saw a flying scroll.

### Zechariah 5:2 – *And he said to me, “What do you see?” And I answered, “I see a* ***flying*** *scroll; its length is twenty cubits and its width ten cubits.”* When the angel asked Zechariah what he saw, he described an enormous flying scroll; it was twice as long as it was wide. In measurements of today it would be 30’ by 15’ or 10 meters by 5 meters.

### Zechariah 5:3a – *Then he said to me, “This is the curse that is going forth over the face of the whole land*… This time the angel **interpreted** the meaning right away. The flying scroll represented a curse. Ezekiel 2:9-3:27, Jeremiah 36, Revelation 5, Isaiah 30:8

#### Under the Mosaic Covenant, the nation of Israel experienced blessings when they kept God’s laws and **disasters** when they did not. Exodus 19:5-8; Deuteronomy 28:1-2, 15

#### Just as the Ten Commandments were written on both **tablets**, the scroll had writing on both sides.

#### The writing on one side dealt with sins committed against God (particularly swearing, using God’s name in vain), while the writing on the other side dealt with sins committed against man (particularly, **stealing**). Exodus 32:15-16, 34:28; Deuteronomy 4:13

#### Making **false** promises and stealing had no place in Israel at this time of restoration. They needed this reminder to not make hollow promises or not taking what did not belong to them. According to this vision, their longevity and establishment in the land depended on honesty, integrity, and justice towards one another.

### Zechariah 5:3b – …*surely everyone who* ***steals*** *will be purged away according to the writing on one side…* This was an important message for each Israelite to hear. Stealing or even exacting exorbitant usury against one another was unacceptable. Nehemiah 5:1-13 describes Israel doing this soon after this vision was given. Malachi 3:6-9, Zechariah 8:17

### Zechariah 5:3c – …*and everyone who swears will be purged away according to the writing on the other side*. Swearing **falsely** by God’s name breaks the law and is clearly a dishonest way to live. To promise to pay or give and to not do so is a breach of this law. Jeremiah 5:2

### Zechariah 5:4 – *I will make it go forth,”* ***declares*** *the Lord of hosts, “and it will enter the house of the thief and the house of the one who swears falsely by My name; and it will spend the night within that house and consume it with its timber and stones*.” Malachi 3:5

#### At that time, the people had turned to lying and **stealing** so they could build their elaborate homes. God Himself declared He will be the one to send the curse on the house of those judged by the scroll. Their homes would be consumed. Amos 3:15

#### The phrase “*and it will spend the night*” could also be translated it shall **remain**. Some suggest this to be the better interpretation. Psalm 49:12, Proverbs 3:33

#### Those who worked so hard to build their beautiful homes (through **dishonesty**), while neglecting God’s house, would have no place to hide. Haggai 1:1-4 says, “*Is it time for you yourselves to live in your paneled houses while this house remains desolate?*” What an ominous vision for audacious and abusive Israelites. Habakkuk 2:9-11

## Zechariah 5:5-11 – Vision Seven: The Ephah

### While the previous verses dealt with individual sins affecting the nation of Israel, this vision spotlights the destiny of sin as an **entity**. This section (5:5-11) predicts the revelation, return, and centralization of organized sin in the end times.

### Zechariah 5:5 – *Then the* ***angel*** *who was speaking with me went out and said to me, “Lift up now your eyes and see what this is going forth.”* Following the vision of the scroll, Zechariah was encouraged to look up again.

### Zechariah 5:6a – *I said, “What is it?” And he said, “This is the ephah going forth.”* The ephah was the standard unit for measuring the volume of dry grains such as barley or wheat. It equaled about one bushel. This was a symbol of **commerce** or trade. Ezekiel 45:9-11, Amos 8:5, Isaiah 5:10

### Zechariah 5:6b – *Again he said, “This is their* ***appearance*** *in all the land*…”

#### The Berean study Bible translates this phrase in this way: *“This is their* ***iniquity*** *in all the land.”* The basket represented the sins of the people throughout the land.

#### Israel’s sin was not just an individual issue but rather a **national** problem. Had they become guilty of using dishonest measurements as a people? Had they bought into the age-old system of organized sin?

### Zechariah 5:7 – *And behold, a lead cover was lifted up.” He continued, “And this is a woman sitting inside the ephah.”* Verse 8 will show that the ephah represented all the **wickedness** in the land, but this verse depicts the contents as a woman.

#### On top of the ephah was placed a heavy **cover**.

#### Inside the basket was a **woman**.

### Zechariah 5:8a – *Then he said, “This is Wickedness!”*

#### The phrase, “*This is Wickedness*!” identifies the woman in the basket as the **representation** or personification of iniquity. In Hebrew, the feminine form of a noun is often used to describe abstract concepts. See Proverbs 2:16 and 5:3-4.

#### The concept of wickedness includes **idolatry**, immorality, and every other form of evil. Isaiah 65:1‑7, 66:17

#### The woman Wickedness inside the ephah most likely represents **evil** commerce and the dishonesty that so often surround economics.

#### It is possible that the lead **cover** symbolizes the ongoing ministry of the Holy Spirit in restraining evil.[[25]](#footnote-25)

### Zechariah 5:8b – *And he threw her down into the middle of the ephah and cast the lead weight on its opening.* When the lid was opened, the woman Wickedness tried to get out, but the angel pushed her back down and **closed** the heavy lid.

#### Until the present time the Holy Spirit has played an important role of **restraining** the appearance of the man of lawlessness. In a similar way sin has been kept from fully expressing itself. After the rapture this restrain will be removed. 2 Thessalonians 2:6-8

#### After the Church Age is over wickedness will not be held back. She will do as she pleases, wherever she **pleases**. This will come to an abrupt stop with the appearing of Christ at the Second Advent.

### Zechariah 5:9 – *Then I lifted up my eyes and looked, and there two* ***women*** *were coming out with the wind in their wings; and they had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heavens*.

#### When Zechariah looked up, there were two women with **wings** coming towards him.

#### They had wings like a stork, and they took the woman in the basket and **flew** away with her.

#### These two flying **women** should not be confused with angels. The text nowhere says they are angels. They are simply figures in the vision that carry evil away. They have stork-like wings. Storks are considered to be unclean animals according to the Law. Leviticus 11:13‑19

### Zechariah 5:10 – *I said to the angel who was speaking with me, “Where are they taking the ephah*?” This time, Zechariah didn’t ask who or what, but rather asked **where** they were taking it. The ephah was to be removed from the land of Israel, but where was it be taken?

### Zechariah 5:11a – *Then he said to me, “To build a temple for her in the land of Shinar;* Wickedness will be carried away from the land of Israel to **Shinar**.

#### The reference to the land of Shinar refers to Babylonia. This was the land where humanity first united in universal **rebellion** against God. Genesis 10:10, 11:2, 11

#### Genesis 11:2 – *It came about as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar and* ***settled*** *there*.

#### Genesis 11:4 – *They said, “Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a* ***name****, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.*”

#### Throughout Scripture, Babylon stands for confusion in spiritual matters, including idolatry and spiritual **uncleanness**. Revelation 17:3-5

### Zechariah 5:11b – …*and when it is prepared, she will be set there on her own pedestal.* Once the temple is prepared for Wickedness, she will have a fixed resting place, as an **object** of worship. Imagine, the world will build a temple for evil and then worship it.

#### The fulfillment of this vision must still be future. Although Babylon had already folded into the Persian empire Jeremiah foretold a **future** cataclysmic destruction of Babylon that has never yet occurred. Jeremiah 50-51[[26]](#footnote-26)

##### Jeremiah 51:62 – …*and say, ‘You, O LORD, have promised concerning this place to cut it off, so that there will be nothing dwelling in it, whether man or beast, but it will be a perpetual* ***desolation***.’

##### In the future, the city of Babylon will be made a perpetual desolation with nothing dwelling in it. This has never yet happened to **Babylon**.[[27]](#footnote-27)

##### When Medo-Persia overthrew Babylon, the city was never **affected**. Years later, Alexander the Great stayed in Babylon and reportedly wanted to rebuild the Ancient Tower of Babel.[[28]](#footnote-28)

#### The Lord is allowing evil to run its course. Just as in the days of Nimrod, the people will once again **unite** under a common purpose to “*make a name for [themselves]*” and instead of scattering, they will flock together and build wickedness a temple and a *pedestal*.[[29]](#footnote-29) Revelation 17 and 18 give detailed information on her final outcome.

#### Wickedness will have her own **temple** where she can be worshipped. Her power to unite the people will be great for two primary areas:

##### There will be one forced **religion** for all. Revelation 13:12-15

##### There will be one forced **governmental** commercial system for all. Revelation 13:16‑17

#### Wickedness will become **centralized** as she sits on her pedestal in her house in Babylon (Shinar). She will continue her influence on the nations until Babylon is destroyed at the end of the Tribulation. Revelation 17-18

#### We will see the fulfillment of this in greater **detail** in Zechariah’s second burden.

## Zechariah 6:1-8 – Vision Eight: Four chariots

### This vision is about God’s judgment on Gentile nations in relation to their evil **treatment** of Israel. It clearly shows how the Lord Almighty is more powerful than all the rulers of the world. One day soon He will avenge Israel. Psalm 33:10-11, Isaiah 31:1, 66:15

### Zechariah 6:1a – *Now I lifted up my eyes again and looked, and behold, four chariots were coming forth*… Chariots were typically used in battle. These chariots were going out in a war-like fashion to **execute** judgment. Psalm 46:9

#### Chariots remind us of **power** and authority. They give the idea that an army is strong and well-equipped. Psalm 20:7, Isaiah 66:15, Habakkuk 3:8, Haggai 2:22

#### Although some suggest these four chariots symbolize the four empires seen in Daniel, this seems **unlikely** as we follow on in the text.

### Zechariah 6:1b – …*were coming forth from between the two mountains…* It is possible that the two unnamed mountains were Mount Zion and the Mount of Olives, but this is pure **speculation**. Joel 3:2-12, Zechariah 14:4

### Zechariah 6:1c – …*and the mountains were bronze mountains*. Although we do not know the identity of these two mountains, Zechariah described them as being bronze. They were either made of bronze or they were bronze in color. Bronze in Scripture is often associated with God’s **judgement** of sin. Numbers 21:9, Revelation 1:15

#### These *chariots* were likely sent forth to **attack**.

#### Chariots were not typically used for reconnaissance. That is the job of a single rider and single horses which provide the needed stealth. Chariots on the contrary are meant to **intimidate**.

### Zechariah 6:2-3 – *With the first chariot were red* ***horses****, with the second chariot black horses, with the third chariot white horses, and with the fourth chariot strong dappled horses*…

#### As with the earlier vision, Zechariah saw various colored horses. Sadly, the meanings of the various **colors** are not explained to us in the passage.

#### In Revelation six, the horses mentioned are in relation to the **seal** judgments. There the context does give an idea as to the meaning of the colors.

##### The red horse in Revelation seems to symbolize **bloodshed** and anarchy.

##### The black horse symbolizes global **shortages** and economic depression.

##### The ashen or pale green horse is associated with sickness and **disease**.

##### A white horse in Revelation symbolizes a distinguished **commander**. In chapter six it refers to the Antichrist and in chapter nineteen to Jesus.

#### Although there are similarities between the horses here in Zechariah and the horses in Revelation, we should not draw **conclusions** or spend a lot of time trying to figure out correlations or significance.

### Zechariah 6:4-5 – *Then I spoke and said to the angel who was speaking with me, “What are these, my lord?”* *The angel replied to me, “These are the four spirits of heaven, going forth after standing before the Lord of all the* ***earth***…”

#### The word spirits (RUACH) can be translated *breath, wind, or spirit*. It is unclear whether these spirits describe people or angels, but either way they are messengers of the **sovereign** Lord of all the earth, who sends them out from His presence to execute His will. Psalm 104:4, Hebrews 1:7

#### *“****Four*** *spirits”* (winds) seems to refer to divine judgment and a stirring of the anger and power of God. Daniel 7:2, Revelation 7:1

#### “*The Lord of all the earth*” refers to the sovereignty of God over creation. Joshua used this term when he led Israel across the Jordan to **conquer** the land of Canaan and Micah used it when he prophesied about Israel conquering the nations before the Millennium.

##### Joshua 3:13 – *It shall come about when the soles of the feet of the priests who carry the ark of the Lord,* ***the Lord of all the earth****, rest in the waters of the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan will be cut off, and the waters which are flowing down from above will stand in one heap*.” Joshua 3:11

##### Micah 4:13 – “*Arise and thresh, daughter of Zion, For your horn I will make iron and your hoofs I will make bronze, that you may pulverize many peoples, that you may devote to the Lord their unjust gain and their wealth to* ***the Lord of all the earth***.”

### Zechariah 6:6a – …*with one of which the black horses are going forth to the north country; and the white ones go forth after them, while the* ***dappled*** *ones go forth to the south country*.

#### Directions in Scripture are almost always in relation to Jerusalem. According to God’s word, the city of Jerusalem is at the **center** of the earth. Ezekiel 38:12, Ezekiel 5:5

#### Invading **armies** almost always attacked from the north or south. To the west of Jerusalem is the Mediterranean Sea. To the east is an impassable mountainous and desert region.

#### The black and white horses and chariots go north. This is the direction from which most of Israel’s enemy **invaders** descended on the Promised Land. Jeremiah 1:14, 4:6, 6:22; Ezekiel 1:4

#### In those times, **Babylon** had invaded Israel from the north but only Egypt had attacked from the south. Ezekiel 39:2

### Zechariah 6:7 – “*When the strong ones went out, they were eager to go to patrol the earth." And He said, "Go, patrol the earth.” So they patrolled the earth*. In this context the patrol is sent to cover the whole **earth**. The truth is, the *Lord of all the earth* will execute judgment on all Israel’s enemies. No enemy will escape God’s judgement.

### Zechariah 6:8 – *Then He cried out to me and spoke to me saying, “See, those who are going to the land of the north have appeased My wrath in the land of the* ***north***.”

#### As the vision plays out, the Lord **responds** to Zechariah’s question in verse four: *“What are these, my lord?”* God cries out to Zechariah that His wrath against the north will be appeased. Verses six and eight could refer to Babylon, but since Babylon was no longer a nation when this vision was given, it was likely a much broader attack.

#### In the end times, a rebuilt Babylon will be reserved for judgment and final, complete destruction, but these chariots are shown judging the whole earth. We should understand the judgment to be **universal**.[[30]](#footnote-30) Jeremiah 49:36; Ezekiel 37:9; Zechariah 2:6, 5:5-11; Revelation 7:1 17‑18

#### While the wrath of God is appeased in the north, Messiah will at one point fight from the **south**.

##### Zechariah 9:14 – *Then the LORD will appear over them, and His arrow will go forth like* ***lightning****; and the Lord GOD will blow the trumpet and will march in the storm winds of the south.*

##### Isaiah 63:1 – *Who is this who comes from* ***Edom****, with garments of glowing colors from Bozrah, this One who is majestic in His apparel, marching in the greatness of His strength? “It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save*.”

##### Isaiah 63:2-3 – *Why is Your apparel red, and Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press*? “*I have trodden the wine trough alone, and from the peoples there was no man with Me. I also trod them in My anger and trampled them in My wrath; and their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments, and I* ***stained*** *all My raiment*.

##### Isaiah 63:4-5 – “*For the day of vengeance was in My heart, and My year of* ***redemption*** *has come. I looked, and there was no one to help, and I was astonished and there was no one to uphold; so My own arm brought salvation to Me, and My wrath upheld Me*.

##### Isaiah 63:6 – “*I trod down the* ***peoples*** *in My anger and made them drunk in My wrath, and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth*.”

### This final vision presents several difficulties in interpretation; however, the overall message is God will send forth and conquer. God will have **vengeance** on the nations who have oppressed Israel.

#### Zechariah’s vision assures us that God is in **control** of the future and will judge the Gentile nations during “*the day of the Lord*.”

#### Following the **destruction** of Israel’s enemies, we will see Messiah usher in the Millennial Kingdom.

## Zechariah 6:9-15 – A crown fit for a King

### Introduction

#### In the vision in chapter three we saw the priestly line (Joshua) being reinstated and in chapter four we looked at the royal line represented by Zerubbabel being encouraged. Here Zechariah is told to have a **crown** made and to hold a ceremony to crown a priest.

#### A priest was never to be crowned. A king was never allowed to serve as priest. These two offices were always **distinct** in Israel. Only the Levites served as priests. Only those from the tribe of Judah were allowed to be kings.

#### This crown symbolically points ahead to Messiah who will serve in the capacity of priest and king. The two offices will **unite** in Him.

#### The eight nighttime visions have ended, but the coronation of Joshua is closely connected with these revelations which **extend** in scope from Zechariah’s day to the full establishment of Israel in blessing.[[31]](#footnote-31)

### Zechariah 6:9-10 – *The word of the Lord also came to me, saying, “Take an offering from the exiles, from Heldai, Tobijah and Jedaiah; and you go the same day and enter the house of* ***Josiah*** *the son of Zephaniah, where they have arrived from Babylon.*

#### Zechariah was to receive a gift from a group of exiles who had arrived from Babylon. The Lord **informed** Zechariah of a group of men (by name) and told him where they had arrived. This was a prophecy.

#### We will see this prophecy fulfilled that same day. In Scripture, the fulfilment of the prophecy is consistently **literal**. It was exactly as God said it would be. Zechariah did not have to imagine what the prophecy meant to know what he was supposed to go and do.

#### Zechariah was instructed to receive an offering (not demand it) from these **exiles**. Apparently, these men were prepared by God and wanted to make this contribution.

#### While under normal circumstances it was not Zechariah’s job to receive offerings, God sent him to **collect** this special offering and instructed him what to do with it.

### Zechariah 6:11 – *“Take silver and gold, make an* ***ornate*** *crown, and set it on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest.* *Crown* (ATARAH) here is plural. However, in verse 14 *crown* is singular. This ornate *crown* was to be made of several crowns. Revelation 19:12

#### This was a **strange** command since crowns were not for the priest in Israel. No king could legitimately serve in the office of priest and no priest could legitimately serve in the office of king. Kings were to be from the tribe of Judah while priests could only be from the tribe of Levi. Genesis 49:10

#### Jesus was from the tribe of Judah. He could serve as a priest only because He was from a different or higher order of priesthood. His priesthood was according to the order of **Melchizedek**. Genesis 14:18, Psalm 110:1-7, Hebrews 5:10

#### In Israel’s history to mix the **offices** of priest and king was to suffer horrible consequences.

##### In 1 Samuel 13 King Saul tried to take on priestly duties. Though he was told not to, he did it anyway, and the consequence was that his kingdom was **taken** from him that very day.

##### Similarly, King Uzziah entered the temple of God to burn incense on the altar. Burning incense on the altar was something only the priests were allowed to do. Instantly, **leprosy** broke out on his forehead. 2 Chronicles 26:18-20

#### Joshua the high priest served as a “type” of the Priest who would come to be crowned as “King.” Since it was God who communicated these visions to the prophet Zechariah, we can be assured this prophecy pointed to the coming **Messiah**, God’s anointed servant, who would be the Priest-King.

##### Even now, Christ is already serving in the capacity of priest. He is seated behind the veil in heaven on the Father’s **throne** making intercession for us.

##### However, Jesus Christ is not yet crowned and **ruling** as king. John 18:36, Revelation 1:12-18

##### He will one day **return** to earth to rule as king during the Millennial Kingdom Age. Zechariah 14:17

### Zechariah 6:12a – “*Then say to him*… When Zechariah **crowned** Joshua with the crown, he was to say the following to him:

#### *“Thus says the Lord of hosts, ‘Behold, a man whose name is* ***Branch****, for He will branch out from where He is; and He will build the temple of the Lord*.

#### *‘Yes, it is He who will build the temple of the Lord, and He who will bear the honor and sit and rule on His throne. Thus, He will be a* ***priest*** *on His throne, and the counsel of peace will be between the two offices*.’”

#### Zechariah prophesied that a man whose name was Branch would be the **Messiah**. Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5, 33:14-18; Zechariah 3:8

#### The Aramaic Targum, the Jerusalem Talmud, and a Midrash all regarded verse twelve as **messianic**.[[32]](#footnote-32)

### Zechariah 6:12b – …*for He will branch out from where He is…* In Hebrew *branch* means sprout or growth. A literal translation of this might be “A **sprout** will shoot up.” This statement speaks of Messiah’s humble beginning at His First Advent. Isaiah 53:2, John 19:5

### Zechariah 6:12c – …*and He will build the temple of the LORD.* At His second coming, Messiah will build the **Millennial** temple.

#### The Messiah will branch out and become a temple constructor. He will orchestrate the **construction** of the Millennial temple, and from there He will reign as king and minister as priest.

#### The dimensions given for the fourth temple in Ezekiel 40-46 are literal. They cannot be understood unless it is an actual **physical** temple with physical measurements.

##### In Ezekiel 40:5 we are given the exact measurements of the **wall**.

##### We are given the measurements of the **court** in Ezekiel 40:47.

##### And we are given the measurements of the **sanctuary** in Ezekiel 41:4.

#### Zechariah presented this temple as **unique**.

##### Thirty-one times throughout the book, Zechariah used the Hebrew word **BAYIT** for temple or house.

##### In this passage, however, he used the word HEKAL, meaning temple or palace. It is often translated **palace** in the Old Testament (1 Kings 21:1, 2 Kings 20:18, Psalm 45:8, 15, 144:12, Proverbs 30:28, Isaiah 13:22, Isaiah 39:7, Hosea 8:14, Amos 8:3, Nahum 2:6), although in Haggai 2:18 it is translated temple.

##### In Zechariah 6:12-15, Zechariah used the word HEKAL to refer to the temple the **Branch** would build. By this vocabulary he distinguished the future temple from the present temple being built by Zerubbabel. The future temple would be a temple and a palace. Malachi 3:1, Zechariah 8:9

##### **Ezekiel** also described the Millennial temple using the word HEKAL. Ezekiel 41-42

##### This temple will be built after the Tribulation when the Millennium begins. Since Scripture tells us there will be no **physical** temple in the Eternal State, this temple will only be standing during the Millennium. Revelation 21:22

### Zechariah 6:13a – *Yes, it is He who will build the temple* HEKAL *of the LORD, and He who will bear the honor*… Messiah (Branch) will build the temple and He will bear the **honor**.

#### While Zerubbabel was instrumental in building the second temple, he did not receive the honor, **God** did. Zechariah 4:6-7

#### When **Jesus** builds the Millennial temple, He will receive all the honor for the building, as well as for who He is, king over all the earth.

### Zechariah 6:13b – …*and sit and rule on His throne.* Christ Jesus will build the temple HEKAL and set up His **throne** in it. This will not be a conventional Jewish temple. This will be both a palace and a temple.

#### This speaks of two separate **roles**. He *sits* and He *rules*. He will sit as priest because He finished His redemptive work and at the same time He will rule forever as king of kings from His royal throne. Revelation 3:20

#### The text clearly indicates this is not a heavenly throne. In the heavenly throne scenes in the Bible, Messiah is sitting at the right hand of God’s throne. Here we see Messiah sitting and ruling on **His** own earthly throne. Psalm 110:1-4

##### In Revelation 3:21 we see the two thrones: *I will grant to him to sit down with Me on* ***My throne****, as I also overcame and sat down with My* ***Father*** *on* ***His throne***.

##### Architecturally, temples and thrones fit **together** well. A temple is a sacred palace; it houses God’s presence. In Ezekiel 43:7 the Lord identifies the eschatological temple as “*the place of* ***my*** *throne.*”[[33]](#footnote-33)

#### The Branch’s kingdom will be widespread. Furthermore, He will build God’s temple. Zerubbabel, not Joshua, was God’s choice to build the restored temple (Zech. 4:9-10), but Messiah, whom Joshua prefigured, would **build** the future temple for Yahweh.[[34]](#footnote-34) Isaiah 2:2-4, 56:6-7; Ezekiel 40-43; Micah 4:1-7; Haggai 2:6-9

#### Cleary, Zechariah was saying Jesus will one day build a temple in Jerusalem. This temple will be fit for the **greatest** monarchy the world has ever seen.

##### He will reign with **justice** and fairness. Jeremiah 23:5

##### He will reign with **power**. Psalm 2

##### His ministers are glorified church **saints**. Revelation 20:6

##### His **subjects** will love Him with all their heart. Jeremiah 31:33, 32:39

##### The **Shekinah** glory will return to the temple. Ezekiel 40-46

### Zechariah 6:13c – *Thus, He will be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace will be between the two offices.* Not only will He rule as king from His throne, but from His throne, He will also serve as priest. These two roles will function in perfect harmony to bring peace.

#### Upon the merging of the two **offices**, Christ will remove the tension between the priesthood and royalty that is often observed in the Old Testament. 1 Samuel 22:6-23, 2 Kings 11:1-3

#### Jesus Christ will bring physical **world** peace.

#### He will bring judicial peace **with** God. Isaiah 9:7

#### He will bring **peace** of God in hearts.

### Zechariah 6:14 – *Now the crown will become a* ***reminder*** *in the temple* (HEKAL) *of the LORD to Helem, Tobijah, Jedaiah and Hen the son of Zephaniah*.

#### The crown was to be displayed *in the temple of the LORD*. It would serve as a constant reminder to Israel that God is **faithful** to His word. What He says He will do.

#### We might imagine a sign below the crown with the words: “God said to Zechariah, ‘[*This*] *crown will become a reminder... then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me* [Messiah] *to you* [plural]*.’”*

#### God would also be faithful to preserve the crown until it is to be displayed in the Millennial temple. Finally, when the crown is in the future Millennial temple, it will also be a **memorial** for the four men who gave to create it.

#### By faith these men gave a lot of gold and silver to Zechariah to make a crown that would have had no immediate or obvious **value**. It did not contribute to the most urgent project of building Zerubbabel’s temple. They gave by faith, trusting Zechariah’s prophecy about the future purpose of the crown would indeed come to pass one day.

#### Although, these men’s names are eternally recorded in Scripture, their real **joy** will be when Messiah has it on display - *in the temple of the LORD* in the Millennial temple. At that time, all will see the fulfillment of this prophecy. Isaiah 12:3-4

### Zechariah 6:15a – *Those who are far off will* ***come*** *and build the temple of the LORD.*

#### Those who are far off refers to the **scattered** people of Israel who will someday unite and participate in the construction of the Millennial temple. Jeremiah 31:10

#### In the Millennium, one of the first things people will do is come together to Jerusalem to **inaugurate** the Kingdom and contribute to the building of the Millennial temple. Zechariah 2:11, 8:22; Isaiah 2:2-4, 56:6-7, 60:1-7

### Zechariah 6:15b – *Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me* [Messiah] *to you* [plural]*.* God assured Zechariah that in the Kingdom when the Branch reigns he will have it on display - *in the temple of the LORD*. At that time Zechariah (and all Israel) will **know** God sent Messiah to them.

#### After receiving this message from the Lord, Zechariah would have had to go to Josiah’s house to **find** the wealthy exiles God said arrived from Babylon. He would have had to ask them for the offering, and they would have had to willingly give it to him. After he built the crown, Joshua would have had to be willing to wear it.

#### Did Zechariah find everything the way God said it would be? Did he find the exiles? Did they willingly give? Did Joshua allow Zechariah to put the crown on his head? If all these details **happened** as God foretold, it would be proof God was telling the truth about the future Messiah wearing a crown in the Millennial temple.

### Zechariah 6:15c – *And it will take place if you completely* ***obey*** *the LORD your God*. Acts 2:39

#### Although they built the crown, the **complete** fulfillment of this prophecy did not come to pass in Zechariah’s time. This prophecy will only be completely fulfilled in the day when all Israel is saved at the end of the Tribulation and Messiah has arrived. Romans 11:25-26

#### Hebrews 8:8-10 – “*For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their minds, and I will write them on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be My* ***people***.

#### Hebrews 8:11-12 – “*And they shall not* ***teach*** *everyone his fellow citizen, and everyone his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for all will know Me, From the least to the greatest of them. “For I will be merciful to their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more*.” Jeremiah 31:31

# Zechariah 7-8 – Four Admonitions

## Zechariah 7:1-7 – Admonition 1: “*Was it actually for Me that you fasted*?”

### Introduction: After the eight visions, Zechariah continued with the **theme** of the book: “*Return to Me*.” Zechariah 1:1-3

#### Israel’s understanding of returning was about returning to better times. They were focused on historical blessings instead of on the **giver** of the blessings. When God said, “*Return to Me*,” they misconstrued it as returning to the “glory” days. Jeremiah 7:4

#### The people, especially the older generation, missed Solomon’s temple, the **glory** days of Jerusalem, and the way things used to be. Ezra 3:12; Zechariah 4:9-10

#### Their reason for seeking God was so His blessings would return, not because they were desirous to return to **Him**.

#### They had taken up national fasts to remember the first temple, the destruction of Jerusalem, and other important events and had faithfully **mourned** for 70 years.

#### Now the town of **Bethel** sent a group of people to Jerusalem to ask the priests how much longer they should continue their fasts. The next two chapters deal with clarifying this misunderstanding. First, God showed them the error of their thinking. Then, He showed them where (or on whom) their faith should rest.

### Zechariah 7:1 – *In the fourth year of King Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah on the fourth day of the ninth month, which is Chislev.* Fourteen **months** had passed between Zechariah’s first message and this third one. See Zechariah 1:1

### Zechariah 7:2 – *Now the town of Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regemmelech and their men to seek the favor of the LORD…* The concerned town of Bethel sent a delegation to seek the **favor** of the Lord, possibly in response to Zechariah’s message.

#### Bethel means house of God; it was about 12 miles north of Jerusalem. At the time of writing, Bethel was part of **Judah**, not Samaria. Ezra 2:28

#### Regemmelech and Sharezer are Assyrian names. Were Regemmelech and Sharezer and their men sent to merely “**appease**” God or was this a sincere request?

### Zechariah 7:3 – …*speaking to the priests who belong to the house of the LORD of hosts, and to the prophets, saying, “Shall I weep in the fifth month and* ***abstain*** *as I have done these many years?*”

#### Perhaps these men were **sincere** in their belief that fasting and weeping for what happened to Israel was pleasing to God. Maybe they were seeking to free themselves from a vow they made in the past.

#### This was apparently something they religiously **practiced** every year, each time the anniversary came up. Whatever the case, Zechariah treated it as a legitimate request and received a word from the Lord concerning the matter.

### Zechariah 7:4-5 – *Then the word of the Lord of hosts came to me, saying, “Say to all the people of the land and to the priests, ‘When you* ***fasted*** *and mourned in the fifth and seventh months these seventy years*…’

#### The Lord gave Zechariah a message for “*all the people of the land*,” including the priests. **Everyone** needed to hear the following clarification and admonition from the Lord.

#### For seven decades they had religiously carried out the following **fasts**:

##### The fast of the **fifth** month. This was to memorialize the month when Solomon’s temple was **burned** by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC. 2 Kings 25:8

##### The fast of the **seventh** month commemorated the slaying of the Babylonian appointed governor, **Gedaliah**, which resulted in the people fleeing to Egypt. 2 Kings 25:25

##### The fasts of the **fourth** and **tenth** months were to remember the **demise** of Jerusalem. Jeremiah 39:2, 2 Kings 25:1-2

#### These were not fasts commanded by God in the Law. These were self-imposed fasts held by the people throughout the years of Babylonian captivity. The question being brought before Zechariah seems sincere, but God’s answer revealed they had a **problem**.

#### God used the following four messages to show these religious men the **error in their thinking**. He pleaded with the current generation of post-exile Jews to change their thinking and to *return to Him*.

#### God answered their question with a **question** of His own, “*was it actually for Me that you fasted?*” The Lord Jesus often used this technique to make people think. Luke 18:9‑14

#### God was concerned about **why** they fasted, not who fasted, when they fasted, where they fasted, or how often they fasted. God wanted to know the reason for their fasts. Were they simply practicing these fasts for religious purposes?

#### God wanted them to check the **motivation** of their hearts. “*Was it actually for Me that you fasted?”* He asked. Were they practicing these fasts for Him or for some other reason?

#### In the New Testament, Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for placing their **traditions** above the word of God. Mark 7:9-13

#### When Zechariah first challenged Israel to return to the Lord, it was not for the purpose of enjoying better days and times of **prosperity**.

##### God was interested in Israel’s heart, not in their religious activities. He was looking for an **inward** change; a change in their thinking based on His revelation to them.

##### For Israel to return to God, they needed to change who they were **trusting** in. Instead of trusting in religious traditions, they needed to again trust in God alone.

#### The reason Israel went into captivity was because they **rejected** God; they totally disregarded the One who redeemed them out of Egypt. This was why all those calamities occurred to them in first place. Exodus 6:7, 19:4-6; Deuteronomy 4:7-8, 10:12; Isaiah 30:15

#### God wanted them to *return to* ***Him***.

### Zechariah 7:6 – *When you eat and drink, do you not eat for* ***yourselves****, and do you not drink for yourselves?* In a similar fashion to their fasting (ceasing from any food), eating and drinking was also done without considering God. They did both for self, one for self-preservation and the other for personal enjoyment.

#### If our relationship with God is strained or non-existent, whether we eat or refrain from eating makes little **difference** to Him.

#### God wanted them to *return to* ***Him***. He wanted them to do everything thinking of Him. Zechariah 14:20-21

### Zechariah 7:7 – *Are not these the words which the LORD* ***proclaimed*** *by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and prosperous along with its cities around it, and the Negev and the foothills were inhabited?* This was not something new, but maybe this generation had not yet heard it.

#### God had given this same message to previous generations through prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Amos. This generation was on their way to **repeating** the actions of the previous generations. The circumstances might have been a little different, but the message was exactly the same because their thinking was exactly the same.

#### The reason they went into exile in the first place, the reason the glory days were over, was their own **fault** for not trusting the Lord. Through the prophets, God had warned this would happen, but Israel did not listen. Amos is a beautiful example of God’s warning.

##### Amos 4:6 – “*But I gave you also cleanness of teeth in all your cities and lack of bread in all your places, yet you have not* ***returned*** *to Me,” declares the LORD.*

##### Amos 4:7 – “*Furthermore, I* ***withheld*** *the rain from you while there were still three months until harvest. Then I would send rain on one city and on another city, I would not send rain; One part would be rained on, while the part not rained on would dry up.*

##### Amos 4:8 – “*So two or three cities would* ***stagger*** *to another city to drink water but would not be satisfied; yet you have not returned to Me,” declares the LORD.*

##### Amos 4:9 – *“I smote you with scorching wind and mildew; And the caterpillar was* ***devouring*** *your many gardens and vineyards, fig trees and olive trees; yet you have not returned to Me,” declares the LORD.*

##### Amos 4:10 – *“I sent a* ***plague*** *among you after the manner of Egypt; I slew your young men by the sword along with your captured horses, and I made the stench of your camp rise up in your nostrils; yet you have not returned to Me,” declares the LORD.*

##### Amos 4:11 – *“I* ***overthrew*** *you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and you were like a firebrand snatched from a blaze; Yet you have not returned to Me,” declares the LORD.*

#### God’s question demonstrates the way the people thought. They lamented over the **consequences** of turning from God for decades, but they never considered that it was their disobedience that caused the consequences in the first place.

#### It did not enter their minds that the real crisis was their **estrangement** from God. They were mourning their past losses, but they were not mourning the fact that they were far from God spiritually. This really didn’t bother them. What bothered them was keeping the memory of their losses alive.

## Zechariah 7:8-14 – Admonition 2: “Dispense true justice.”

### Zechariah 7:8-9 – *Then the word of the LORD came to Zechariah saying, “Thus has the LORD of hosts said, ‘Dispense true justice and practice kindness and compassion each to his brother*…’ Through Zechariah’s prophecy, God took Israel back to the **basics** of the Law.

#### Israel had willingly entered into the **Mosaic** Covenant. It was their decision; they agreed to obey God in exchange for His blessings. Exodus 19:3-8

##### Exodus 19:5-6 – “*Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a* ***holy*** *nation.” These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel*.

##### Exodus 19:7-8a – *So Moses came and called the elders of the people and set before them all these words which the Lord had commanded him. All the people* ***answered*** *together and said, “All that the Lord has spoken we will do!*”

#### If Israel had kept their end of the Mosaic Covenant, God would have blessed them. But they did not. Therefore, as promised, God sent **curses** on them and their land. Deuteronomy 11:26-27

##### God knew they could never fully obey, so He made provision for the **atonement** of their sins through the priesthood and the tabernacle. Exodus 30:10, Leviticus 1:1-4, Hebrews 9:7

##### The intent of the Mosaic Law was ultimately to point Israel (and all the world) to their need for **Messiah**. Romans 3:19-20

#### This verse is not teaching the modern idea of “**social** justice.” The Mosaic Law was given to protect the oppressed but not to force “equality” on society.

##### Were they dispensing justice in their dealings with each other? Were they showing brotherly **kindness** and compassion?

##### In Galatians 5:14 the apostle Paul summarized the intent of the Law: “*the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, ‘You shall* ***love*** *your neighbor as yourself*.’” Luke 10:26-27

### Zechariah 7:10a – ‘…*and do not oppress the widow or the orphan, the stranger or the poor*…’ James said the marks of **true** religion are to “*visit orphans and widows in their distress* (James 1:27).”

#### The people of Israel were guilty of neglecting and oppressing the **defenseless**.

#### A stranger (foreigner) was a legal, non-Jew living in the land. **Ruth** the Moabitess is an example of a stranger in the land.

### Zechariah 7:10b – ‘…*and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another.’* Sadly, they contrived ways of taking **advantage** of each other for personal profit. Proverbs 4:23

### Zechariah 7:11 – “*But they refused to pay attention and turned a stubborn shoulder and stopped their ears from hearing.*” Two metaphors are given to **illustrate** Israel’s refusal to listen to God:

#### *Turned a stubborn shoulder –* This would have been like a stubborn ox who **refused** the yoke. The Israelites would have readily understood the meaning of this metaphor. Nehemiah 9:29

#### ***Stopped*** *their ears from hearing* – This reminds us of a child who plugs their ears to keep from hearing. Deuteronomy 8:20, Isaiah 33:15, Isaiah 6:10, Jeremiah 7:26

#### In all this, God had been patient. Even though the people “*turned a stubborn shoulder*,” the messengers of the Lord continued to **plead** with them. Israel’s indifference to God’s word is what caused the 70-year exile.

### Zechariah 7:12a – “*They made their hearts like* ***flint*** *so that they could not hear the law and the words which the LORD of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets…*” Acts 6:8-15

#### Flint is a hard stone used for cutting and piercing. Making “*their hearts like flint*” would be synonymous to being heartless and **callous**. Jeremiah 22:21, Matthew 13:3-9

#### The people of Israel had hardened their hearts and become deaf to God’s word. It was not God who removed their ability to hear; they **chose** to not hear.

#### Although it was the Holy Spirit who prompted all the prophets to speak, Zechariah was the first prophet to **mention** that it was the Holy Spirit who was leading them to write.

#### Even though the Jews **esteemed** the Spirit of God, they refused to listen to Him through the prophets He sent their way. They often opposed the word of God. When Stephen mentioned this fact to them in the New Testament, they stoned him. Acts 7:51-60

#### For such ongoing disobedience, there could be but one result: **discipline** from the Lord. The magnitude of the punishment inflicted showed the enormity of their crime. 2 Chronicles 36:16

### Zechariah 7:12b – “…*therefore great wrath came from the LORD of hosts.*” From the time Moses first gave the Law, God had **warned** the people of wrath if they did not keep His commandments.

#### Deuteronomy 11:26-28 – *See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you listen to the commandments of the Lord your God, which I am commanding you today; and the curse, if you do not listen to the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside…by* ***following*** *other gods which you have not known*.

#### God’s wrath did not come upon Israel solely because they occasionally broke His commands. He had set up the sacrificial system to take care of their sins. The larger issue was their **relationship** with Him. God’s wrath came on them because they did not believe Him and instead turned to follow false gods. Deuteronomy 11:1

#### In Deuteronomy 1:32-36 we see the consequence of **unbelief** in Israel’s Exodus Generation. Because they failed to trust their faithful and all-powerful Redeemer, they did not get to enter the Promised Land. They went back to the wilderness to live out their lives until the rebellious and unbelieving in Israel died off. Hebrews 3:18-19

#### God went to extreme **measures** to turn Israel’s hearts back to Himself.

### Zechariah 7:13 – *“And just as He called and they would not listen, so they called and I would not listen,” says the LORD of hosts…* As a part of their discipline, God **reversed** the situation. Countless times God had called out to them, and they would not listen, now they got to see what it was like to be ignored. Isaiah 28:12, Proverbs 28:9, Isaiah 1:15

#### Whenever the people thought they were getting along fine without God, they readily **ignored** Him, but when times were hard, they would call out to Him for help.

#### When they did finally call out to God, was it because they realized they needed Him as a **person** or simply because they wanted to be delivered from a bad situation? Micah 3:4

### Zechariah 7:14a – “…*but I* ***scattered*** *them with a storm wind among all the nations whom they have not known.”* When they refused to listen to God, He ended up dispersing them among the nations. God wanted their ultimate good and He used the fear of the unknown in the places they were dispersed to get their attention.

#### *Storm Wind…* It was as though a **windstorm** had blown them out of the Promised Land. Since they wanted to follow foreign gods, God scattered them among the nations so they could experience firsthand what the foreign gods were like. Perhaps in exile they would have a wakeup call and seek His face? Deuteronomy 28:36-37, 64-68; 1 Samuel 8:5; Hosea 13:3

#### Most of Israel’s customs and feasts revolved around the land, Jerusalem, and the temple. God had given these to **remind** them of Him. Would they remember Him in exile? Would they again trust in Him? Or would they simply mourn for the loss of blessings?

### Zechariah 7:14b – “*Thus the land is desolated behind them so that no one went back and forth, for they made the pleasant land desolate.*” God had given Israel a wonderful land. But Israel’s sin turned the pleasant land into a **desolate** land. Psalm 106:24; Jeremiah 3:19; Daniel 11:16, 41

#### When God removed them from the land, the land finally received the long-neglected rest **mandated** in the Law of Moses. Deuteronomy 28:41- 42, 45-52

#### **Discipline** is always designed for restoration, to draw us near to God. God’s desire for the Israelites was that in their vulnerable state, scattered among various foreign nations, they would come to their senses and seek Him with all their hearts. Far too often they remained hard to the Lord. Psalm 119:67, 71, 75; Hebrews 12:11

#### The point being made in the vision is clear. The reason they were exiled, the reason Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed, was because the people had hardened their hearts, closed their ears, and turned away from God. They had not been **scattered** because they had failed to keep a certain self-appointed fast.

#### In essence, Zechariah’s message to Israel was that their religious activities were **pointless** if not accompanied with a heart that truly loved God. Therefore, God’s appeal: *Return to me!*

## Zechariah 8:1-17 – Admonition 3: “*Let your hands be strong*.” (Seven promises)

### The message of Zechariah does not dwell only on the negative, showing Israel her dismal condition. God makes several promises to give a new perspective that could change their thinking and inspire **hope**. *Return to Me!*

### Promise #1: Zechariah 8:1-3a – The Lord will return to **Zion** and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem.

#### Zechariah 8:1-2 – *Then the word of the LORD of hosts came, saying, “Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘I am exceedingly* ***jealous*** *for Zion, yes, with great wrath I am jealous for her*.’” Zechariah 1:14-16

##### Almost half of the occurrences of the Lord of **hosts** in the book of Zechariah occur in this chapter. Here God made more than eight promises regarding the future He has prepared for Jerusalem. He referred to Jerusalem as Zion, since that is the mountain which holds the foundations of Jerusalem.

##### In Scripture Zion can have several **meanings** depending on the context.

###### It is often used interchangeably with the city of **Jerusalem**. 2 Samuel 5:7, Psalm 87:2-3, Isaiah 40:9

###### It can refer to the people of **Israel**. Isaiah 52:1, 60:14

###### In the book of Hebrews, Zion is used figuratively of the heavenly city of **New** Jerusalem. Hebrews 12:22

###### Zion can refer to the **mountain** on which Christ will reign. Psalm 2:6, 132:13

##### In the context of this promise, Zion refers to God’s **people**, Israel. Zechariah 1:14

#### Zechariah 8:3a – “*Thus says the LORD, ‘I will return to Zion and will dwell in the midst of* ***Jerusalem****.*’” Jerusalem is the only city God will make to be His habitation. This will come about during the Millennial Kingdom when Israel is a believing nation. God the Son, as the Messiah, will dwell among his people.

### Promise #2: Zechariah 8:3b – ‘*Then Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth…*’ When God comes to dwell among the people, they will call Jerusalem the *City of* ***Truth***. Because of its great sin, God had allowed Jerusalem to be destroyed, but here He promised it would one day be called “the City of Truth.”

### Promise #3: Zechariah 8:3c – ‘…*and the mountain of the LORD of hosts will be called the Holy Mountain*.’” This promise is in stark contrast to what Revelation 11:8 says about Jerusalem during the **Tribulation**: “…*their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which mystically is called Sodom and Egypt*…”

#### Even today, the Temple Mount remains outside of Jewish control. Israelis cannot access the Temple Mount freely as it remains a place of great **conflict** under Muslim control.

#### Today Jewish worshippers gather for prayer and **mourning** at the base of the temple foundation. They hope to one day be allowed to worship again on the top of the Temple Mount where their temple once stood.

#### Someday when Messiah dwells in her midst, Jerusalem will stand for all that is **right** and true. At that time, Zion will be called a Holy Mountain just as God has promised. Psalm 2:6, 48; Revelation 14:1

### Promise #4: Zechariah 8:4-5 – “*Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘Old men and old women will again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each man with his staff in his hand because of age. And the streets of the city will be filled with boys and girls* ***playing*** *in its streets.’*”

#### Jerusalem will have complete peace and **safety**. The elderly and the young (the most vulnerable people groups) will be safe and not afraid.

#### When Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem, the young and the old were left lying **dead** on the ground. The older generation would remember seeing this. God promised to turn this around. Lamentations 2:21

### Promise #5: Zechariah 8:6-11 – The Jews from around the world will be **regathered** to Jerusalem.

#### Zechariah 8:6 – “*Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘If it is too difficult in the sight of the remnant of this people in those days, will it also be too* ***difficult*** *in My sight?’ declares the LORD of hosts*.”

##### When this is about to come to pass, if Israel doubts restoration and rebuilding is possible, will God also fret and wonder if rebuilding is possible? Of course, such a thought is absurd. Just because someone **doubts**, does not mean God suddenly is incapable.

##### Restoration may seem impossible, but nothing is impossible with God. God will **always** do what He says He will do. Numbers 23:19 says, “*God is not a man, that He would lie, Nor a son of man, that He would change His mind; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?*” Genesis 18:14

#### Zechariah 8:7-8b – “*Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘Behold, I am going to save My people from the land of the east and from the land of the west…’”* Obviously east and west implies more than just Babylon. This is a **worldwide** rescue! This will come about when Israel calls out to Jesus Messiah.

#### Zechariah 8:8b – ‘…*and I will bring them back and they will live in the midst of Jerusalem*…’ Initially, this is a physical return that sets the stage for a spiritual return through the chastisement of the Tribulation days (Matthew 24). A **remnant** of believing Israel will eventually come forth to possess the Promised Land and enjoy the Kingdom.

##### Ezekiel 36:24-26 – *For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land. Then…I will* ***cleanse*** *you from all your filthiness… Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh*.

##### Hosea 3:4-5 – *For the sons of Israel will remain for many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar and without ephod or household idols. Afterward the sons of Israel will return and seek the Lord their God and David their king; and they will come* ***trembling*** *to the Lord and to His goodness in the last days*.

##### God **will** restore Israel to the Land. See Deuteronomy 30:4-5; Isaiah 11:11-12; Jeremiah 23:3-8, 24:5-6, 30:18, 31:31-34, 32:37-40, 33:6-9; Ezekiel 28:25-26, 34:11-12, 37:21-25, 39:28; Isaiah 60:18-21; Hosea 3:4-5; Joel 2:18-29; Amos 9:14-15; Micah 2:12, 4:6-7; Zephaniah 3:19-20; and Zechariah 8:7-8, 13:8-9.

#### Zechariah 8:8c – ‘…*and they shall be My people, and I will be their God in truth and righteousness.*’ The remnant of Israel that comes out of the Tribulation will all **believe**.

##### After the Tribulation, when the Millennial Kingdom begins, God will inaugurate the New Covenant with **believing** Israel. Jeremiah 31:31-34, Zechariah 12:10

##### This statement was not fulfilled in Zechariah’s day because Israel was not returning to “*their God in* ***truth*** *and righteousness*.” Through this entire book, God’s appeal to Israel, “*Return to Me,*” is being preached to a people who had returned physically but who were still far from the Lord.

#### Zechariah 8:9 – “*Thus says the Lord of hosts, ‘Let your hands be* ***strong****, you who are listening in these days to these words from the mouth of the prophets, those who spoke in the day that the foundation of the house of the Lord of hosts was laid, to the end that the temple might be built*.’

##### Through the mouth of the prophets God promised to regather Israel to their land so they could rebuild the temple. They could trust God’s word and move forward by **faith**, and that is what they did as Ezra recorded.

##### Ezra 6:14 – *And the elders of the Jews were successful in building through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they finished building according to the* ***command*** *of the God of Israel and the decree of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia*.

#### Zechariah 8:10 – ‘*For before those days there was no* ***wage*** *for man or any wage for animal; and for him who went out or came in there was no peace because of his enemies, and I set all men one against another*.’

##### While they were in exile for 70 years before they returned to the land, God **orchestrated** these difficult economic and social conditions around Israel and Jerusalem. No group could successfully organize themselves in the Land since God was against any effort to do so.

##### God did this to keep the non-Jewish residents off balance and at **odds** with one another in anticipation of Him blessing Israel when she returned to repossess the land and rebuild the Jewish temple.

#### Zechariah 8:11 – ‘*But now I will not treat the remnant of this people as in the* ***former*** *days,’ declares the Lord of hosts*.” Now, however, God was going to immediately bring in days of reprieve.

##### This is not to be **mistaken** for how things will be in the final restoration of Israel in the Millennial Kingdom.

##### Even though currently things were not perfect, God assured them that when Israel is finally restored in faith there will be great days of **unprecedented** prosperity and hope. This becomes clear in the next verse.

### Promise #6: Zechariah 8:12 – The land will be **blessed** again.

#### Zechariah 8:12a – ‘*For there will be peace for the seed: the vine will yield its fruit; the land will yield its produce and the heavens will give their dew*…’ These statements are all New Covenant and Millennial **Kingdom** related promises. God promised to plant seeds of peace and prosperity that would result in physical blessing.

#### Zechariah 8:12b – ‘…*and I will cause the remnant of this people to* ***inherit*** *all these things*.’ Since God was not promising this for the present generation it is needful to understand this as an eschatological statement.

##### God never promised that **every** Israelite would be saved, but He did promise to always preserve a remnant. Romans 9:27-29

##### He promised a remnant would be saved out of Israel who would go in alive to possess the **Millennial** Kingdom and inherit all the promises associated with the New Covenant. Isaiah 59:20-21

### Promise #7: Zechariah 8:13-15 – Israel will become a blessing to the **nations**.

#### Zechariah 8:13a – ‘*It will come about that just as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save you that you may become a* ***blessing***.’

##### Due to Israel’s continual rebellion, God scattered them among the Gentile nations. He used the Gentile nations to oppress Israel, but He prophesied (**promised**) to save a remnant of Israel to become a blessing to the nations in time. Romans 11:8-9

##### Romans 11:12-13 – *Now if their transgression is* ***riches*** *for the world and their failure is riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be! But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry*,

##### Romans 11:14-15 – …*if somehow, I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them. For if their rejection is the* ***reconciliation*** *of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead*?

#### Zechariah 8:13b – ‘*Do not* ***fear****; let your hands be strong*.’ *“Fear not*” appears 365 times in the Bible. It appears twice in these eight promises. Zechariah 8:15

##### God’s promise of future restoration was meant to encourage and strengthen the people to finish building the temple. They were not to let fear **stop** them from doing their work. The remedy for fear is to remember who our God is and trust His promises.

##### Long before, God gave the prophet Isaiah these words for His people Israel, “*Do not fear, for I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely, I will help you, surely, I will* ***uphold*** *you with My righteous right hand*.” Isaiah 41:10

##### As recorded in Ezra, in God’s strength the returnees found the courage to finalize Zerubbabel’s temple in spite of all their fears and surrounding **enemies** through the encouraging messages of Zechariah and Haggai. Ezra 6:13-15, 8:35-36: Zechariah 4:6

#### Zechariah 8:14-15a – “*For thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘Just as I purposed to do harm to you when your fathers* ***provoked*** *Me to wrath,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘and I have not relented*…’”

##### In the days of the exile and even until the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom, God was not **relenting** on bringing calamity on Israel, while at the same time maintaining a remnant and blessing them.

##### This apparent **contradiction** is hard for many to understand but Romans 11:28-29 explains it well.

#### Zechariah 8:15b – ‘…*so I have again* ***purposed*** *in* ***these*** *days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Do not fear!’* We should not mistake this statement for the fulfillment of the New Covenant.

##### This was meant to be understood as an **immediate** fulfillment since it says, “*in these days*.” This was yet another encouragement to the returning remnant who were rebuilding the temple and reestablishing their lives in the land.

##### The same God who does not relent when He brings calamity does not relent when He brings **blessings**. God does not give a curse with a blessing. Proverbs 10:22

#### Zechariah 8:16-17 – ‘*These are the things which you should do: speak the truth to one another; judge with truth and judgment for peace in your gates. Also let none of you devise evil in your heart against* ***another****, and do not love perjury; for all these are what I hate,’ declares the Lord*.”

##### Although God’s chosen people had suffered and been scattered among the nations due to their rebellion, God promised He would one day regather them in Jerusalem and Christ would indeed reign over them. Jerusalem would once again be a **prosperous** city.

##### In the previous chapter the fathers of the current generation had stubbornly rebelled against God. They did not “*dispense true justice*” as they were commanded to in the Law. Instead, they hatefully devised **evil** in their “*hearts against one another*.” What a shameful assessment. Zechariah 7:9-12

##### In this chapter God not only made many promises to them concerning their future, but He also said He was going to bless them in the present. Their **conduct** needed to be commensurate with the blessings God promised them. It seems they trusted and acted as God commanded to some degree.

##### These commands reflect the age-old mandate to love our **neighbor** as ourselves. In that one command we find the fulfillment of the Mosaic Covenant. Matthew 22:36-40, Galatians 5:14, 1 John 4:20

## Zechariah 8:18-23 – Admonition 4: “*So love truth and peace*.”

### Zechariah 8:18-19 – *Then the word of the Lord of hosts came to me, saying, “Thus says the Lord of hosts, ‘The fast of the fourth, the fast of the fifth, the fast of the seventh and the fast of the tenth months will become joy,* ***gladness****, and cheerful feasts for the house of Judah; so love truth and peace*.’”

#### For 70 years these four yearly fasts had commemorated the terrible **consequences** of Israel’s sin. Now on the contrary, God promised these fasts would be turned into festivals of celebration. This promise looked forward to the Millennial Kingdom when Christ’s reign will be characterized by truth and peace.

#### Isaiah 35:10 – *And the ransomed of the Lord will return and come with joyful shouting to Zion, with everlasting joy upon their heads. They will find* ***gladness*** *and joy, and sorrow and sighing will flee away*. Isaiah 51:11, 65:19

#### The nations of the world seek peace at the expense of truth. But apart from truth, there can be no peace. During the Millennial Kingdom, when **truth** and peace preside, joy and gladness will abound.

### Zechariah 8:20 – “*Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘It will yet be that* ***peoples*** *will come, even the inhabitants of many cities*.’ The city that was in ruins will be glorified and people from nations and cities around the world will come pouring into it. Isaiah 45:14, Micah 4:2

### Zechariah 8:21-22 – ‘*The inhabitants of one will go to another, saying, “Let us go at once to entreat the* ***favor*** *of the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts; I will also go.” So many peoples and mighty nations will come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the Lord.’* Zechariah 14:16-18

#### During the Millennial Kingdom the people of one town will invite the inhabitants of another town to go to Jerusalem with them. They will want to go to ask the Lord for His **favor**.

#### What an amazing day that will be when the people of the earth want to **bless** the name of the Lord and seek His grace. What a contrast to our world today.

#### Multitudes, even great and powerful nations, will make long pilgrimages to seek help from and to worship the Lord of the **universe** enthroned in the temple at Jerusalem.

### Zechariah 8:23 – “*Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘In those days ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew, saying, “Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.*’” A Jewish person who travels abroad will be embraced by foreigners and **begged** to be brought at once to Jerusalem seek the favor of the Lord of hosts.

#### Antisemitism will be non-existent. Instead of being despised, Jews will be seen as a blessing and as a people who have a special inside track with God Himself. Finally, Israel will live up to the heights of who they really are, God’s chosen people. At last, they will fully **represent** their God, and Jerusalem will be a fountain of blessings to the nations.

#### Finally, Israel will live up to the heights of who they really are, God’s chosen people. At last, they will fully **represent** their God, and Jerusalem will be a fountain of blessings to the nations.

#### Summary thoughts

##### During the Millennial Kingdom, the **center** of the world will be Jerusalem because Jesus Christ will abide there. Deuteronomy 28:13, Isaiah 49:22-23

##### The Gentile nations will urgently desire to go to Jerusalem to **seek** the Lord’s favor.

##### God’s blessing on the Jews will be undeniable. People of all nations will recognize the God of the Jews and seek His favor through the **access** available to the Jews.

##### This was God’s purpose for the nation of Israel from the very beginning. They were to be a light unto the Gentiles. They were to be a vessel of blessing **pointing** the way to God.

##### Since the focus of the world will be on Jerusalem during the Millennium because Christ is enthroned there, it should not surprise us that when Satan is released from the bottomless pit, he will immediately make plans to **attack** Jerusalem. Revelation 20:9

# Zechariah 9-11 – The First Burden

## Introduction

### Many skeptics have tried to discredit the **authenticity** of chapters 9-14 because of the different style of writing. However, the change in circumstances between the first chapters and these later chapters could easily explain this discrepancy.

### In these last chapters of the book, Zechariah focused on two **burdensome** messages. These messages contained some very weighty matters that spoke of great suffering for the nation Israel before God would bring in the blessings associated with the New Covenant and the Millennial Kingdom.

### Zechariah 9-11 foretells the **coming** of Messiah and His offer of the Kingdom as well as Israel’s suffering under the Greeks and Romans.

#### In Zechariah 9, the author foretold how Israel would not only reject Messiah’s offer but would also **pierce** Him in rejection.

##### Matthew 4:17 relates how Jesus began His ministry on earth: “*From that time Jesus began to preach and say, “Repent, for the* ***kingdom*** *of heaven is at hand*.” Sadly, as a nation, Israel rejected this offer. Romans 9:30-33

##### Nevertheless, out of their rejection, God created a new **entity** called the Church, which includes the salvation of the Gentiles. Matthew 16:8; Ephesians 3:1-10

##### Today any Jewish person who believes is **included** in the Church. Unfortunately, the vast majority continues to reject their Messiah, Jesus Christ. Ephesians 2:11-22

#### Zechariah chapters 9 and 10 tell about Israel’s subjugation under **Greece**.

#### Zechariah chapter 11 tells about **Rome’s** domination of Israel.

### Zechariah 12-14 foretells how God will fulfill His promises concerning the New **Covenant**. At that time in Israel’s history the nation will have returned to the Lord.

## Zechariah 9:1-8 – The nations oppress Israel

### Zechariah 9:1a – *The* ***burden*** *of the word of the LORD*…

#### In verses 1-8, Zechariah prophesied concerning the **Greek** Empire and how God would carve out a place of blessing for Israel in the land.

#### Generally, a burden is an urgent **concern** God puts on somebody’s heart. 1 Corinthians 9:16, Jeremiah 20:9

#### The word *burden* (MASSA) in connection with prophecy should be understood as an upcoming catastrophic judgment relayed by God to a prophet to be urgently **broadcasted**. Zechariah 12:1, Malachi 1:1, Isaiah 13:1

#### In this section we will read about the following cities, all of which were conquered by the invasion of the **Greek** Empire under Alexander the Great.

##### Hadrach, Hamath, and Damascus were cities of **Syria**.

##### Tyre and Sidon were major cities of **Phoenicia.**

##### Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and Ashdod were important cities of **Philistia**.

#### It is beyond amazing that so many years before this transpired Zechariah accurately predicted the downfall of these cities (nations). This, along with so many other **fulfilled** prophecies, makes the Bible the most unique book on all the earth and completely worthy of our trust. Ezekiel 27

### Zechariah 9:1b – …*is against the land of Hadrach with Damascus as its resting place…* The city of Hadrach no longer exists but it has been identified as **Hattarika**, a city in Syria mentioned several times in cuneiform inscriptions.[[35]](#footnote-35)

#### God used Alexander the Great as His **instrument** of judgment. Zechariah’s burden describes this accurately.

#### The cities ominously mentioned in this passage trace Alexander’s **march** from Syria to Egypt between 333 and 331 BC.

### Zechariah 9:1c – *(for the eyes of men, especially of all the tribes of Israel, are toward the LORD).* Everyone was watching to see what all **God** would allow Alexander the Great to do. Would he repeat what Nebuchadnezzar had done to Jerusalem? Israel’s eyes were on the Lord to see what He would allow.

#### This verse has also been **translated**: *“For the LORD has an eye on mankind and on all the tribes of Israel* (ESV), but it is best translated the way NASB gives it. Zechariah 1:8

#### We know the Lord indeed sees all. He considers everything and executes judgment and blessing accordingly. What is interesting is that with the advance of the Greeks Israel simply **watched** and the Lord protected them in an extraordinary way. Proverbs 15:3

### Zechariah 9:2a – *And* ***Hamath*** *also, which borders on it*… Amos 6:2, 2 Kings 25:18-21

#### Hamath is the third city of Syria mentioned here. Years before, in the land of Hamath, the captain of Nebuchadnezzar’s guard had killed many of Judah’s **officers**. 2 Kings 25:18-21

#### After Alexander’s attack on Syria, Syria never again **regained** its original prominence.

### Zechariah 9:2b – *Tyre and Sidon, though they are very wise.* Next, Alexander moved to the Lebanese cities of Tyre and Sidon. These cities were said to be wise, but they would not **escape** God’s judgment of the Greek invaders. Ezekiel 28:3-5, 12-17; Proverbs 3:7

### Zechariah 9:3 – *For Tyre built herself a fortress and piled up silver like dust, and gold like the mire of the streets*. The people of Tyre trusted in their **economic** superiority. Joshua 19:29, James 5:3

#### Tyre was an important commercial city on the Mediterranean Sea. It had a great port that was thought to be **impossible** to conquer. Isaiah 23

#### Tyre was built on an island and highly **fortified**. It had a surrounding wall of 150 feet (46 meters) high.[[36]](#footnote-36)

### Zechariah 9:4 – *Behold, the Lord will dispossess her and cast her wealth into the sea; And she will be* ***consumed*** *with fire.* Tyre and her wealth would eventually be plundered. Amos 1:9-10; Isaiah 23; Ezekiel 26:4-12; 27:27

#### The Assyrians laid siege against Tyre for five years but could never conquer it. Nebuchadnezzar tried for 13 years to conquer Tyre but was also **unsuccessful**. Isaiah 23:4, Ezekiel 29:18

#### Finally, Alexander the Great conquered Tyre by laying siege for seven months, then using the rubble from the old city to make a causeway out to the island city. It was a **spectacular** achievement of both military and engineering strategy.[[37]](#footnote-37)

### Zechariah 9:5a – *Ashkelon will see it and be* ***afraid****.* When Ashkelon saw what occurred to Tyre and its inhabitants, they would fear. Historically, Ashkelon had been the cause of fear for Israel. Now Ashkelon herself would shudder. Joshua 13:3, 1 Samuel 6:17, Ezekiel 25:15‑17

### Zechariah 9:5b – ***Gaza*** *too will writhe in great pain*… Gaza (ancient Philistia) had inflicted pain on Israel, now she would suffer pain. In an epic takeover using catapults and undermining the walls, Alexander defeated Gaza after only a few months.

### Zechariah 9:5c – *Also Ekron, for her expectation has been confounded.* Ekron, a city of Philistia, was part of this **ominous** prophecy. Ekron would lose all hope.

### Zechariah 9:5d – *Moreover, the king will perish from Gaza* *and Ashkelon will not be inhabited.* This describes the aftermath of Alexander’s conquering of the area of Gaza.

#### He left it completely demoralized and **subjugated**. He was marching and nothing would stand in his way.

#### None of this had happened when God gave Zechariah this vision, but years later it transpired in history exactly the way God predicted. This shows the greatness of God’s **omniscience** and the trustworthiness of His message.

### Zechariah 9:6 – *And a mongrel race will dwell in Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.* **Foreigners** would occupy the city of Ashdod causing the Philistines’ self-confidence to crumble. Proverbs 16:18, Jeremiah 25:20, Amos 1:6-8, Zephaniah 2:4-7, Zechariah 9:7

### Zechariah 9:7 – *And I will* ***remove*** *their blood from their mouth and their detestable things from between their teeth. Then they also will be a remnant for our God, and be like a clan in Judah, and Ekron like a Jebusite*.

#### *“I will remove their blood from their mouth and their detestable things from between their teeth*.” The **detestable** idolatry of the Philistines as described here would abruptly cease.

#### Similar to the Jebusites of long ago, the remnant of the Philistines would become absorbed into **Israel**. 2 Samuel 5:6-9

### Zechariah 9:8a – *But I will camp around My house because of an army, because of him who passes by and returns…* Amazingly, in all Alexander the Great’s **conquests** of surrounding nations, he did not destroy Jerusalem and the temple.

#### This prophecy of Zechariah was fulfilled about 200 years after it was given (circa 333 BC) when Alexander miraculously **refrained** from attacking and destroying Jerusalem. Even though Alexander passed by Israel more than once, he never harmed it.

#### According to the historian Josephus, after Alexander took Gaza, he made his way quickly to Jerusalem. When the high priest heard this, he ordered that the people should cry out to **God** and ask for protection.[[38]](#footnote-38)

#### At that time the high priest had a dream where he was told to take courage, adorn the city, and open the gates, and that the people should appear in **white** garments and that all the priests should wear their priestly garments.[[39]](#footnote-39)

#### “The high priest prepared accordingly and waited for Alexander. When Alexander saw everybody in white and the high priest in purple, he approached by himself and **fell** before the high priest.

#### “Later on, when asked why he had adored the priest, Alexander said, “I did not adore him, but that God who has honored him with that high-priesthood; for I saw this very person in a **dream**, in this very habit…

#### “…and remembering my vision and the exhortation which I had in my dream, I believe that I bring this army under **divine** conduct, and shall therewith conquer Darius, and destroy the power of the Persians, and that all things will succeed according to what is in my own mind.”[[40]](#footnote-40)

### Zechariah 9:8b – *And no oppressor will pass over them* ***anymore****, for now I have seen with My eyes*. Zechariah 9:1, Jeremiah 16:17, Isaiah 60:18, Ezekiel 28:24

#### It is amazing how three hundred years before Jesus came, God used this **Macedonian** king to judge Israel’s neighbors.

#### As a result of Alexander the Great’s conquests, **Greek** became a universal language. These circumstances set the stage for Messiah’s arrival and the quick expansion of the Church throughout the then known world.

## Zechariah 9:9-10 – The arrival of the Messiah

### Zechariah 9:9a – *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in* ***triumph****, O daughter of Jerusalem*! This was fulfilled during **Palm** Sunday about 2000 years ago, nearly 500 years after Zechariah penned these words. Zephaniah 3:15

#### This becomes a **transitional** verse in this burden. It projects to the time when Messiah would arrive on the scene. By this time the Greeks were a thing of the past and Rome was the dominant figure.

#### This is perhaps the most well-known verse in Zechariah. According to this verse there would be two reasons for rejoicing. They would both have to do with Messiah, even though there would be a long **gap** between them.

##### First, their **king** was coming. Zechariah 9:9

##### Second, He would set up His **kingdom**. Zechariah 9:10

##### What the prophets and Israel did not understand or foresee was that the **Church** Age lay between verse 9 and verse 10. 1 Peter 1:11-12

### Zechariah 9:9b – *Behold, your king is coming to you…* From other prophecies, Israel knew God would raise up a king who would deliver them from their enemies and usher in world peace. This king would be from the line of **David**. 2 Samuel 7:8-16; 1 Chronicles 17:7-14

### Zechariah 9:9c – *He is just and endowed with* ***salvation****…* The Messiah would be a just king and able to deliver. The nature of the coming king is expressed powerfully here. True justice will pour forth to all when He reigns not because he has justice but because “*He is just.*”

#### However, the Kingdom was not established at Christ’s first coming, even though at certain times the Jews wanted to enthrone Him by **force**. John 6:15

#### What the people did not understand at His first advent was that for Him to reign as king they needed to ***return*** *to Him* in faith. Zechariah 1:3, Jeremiah 24:7, Malachi 3:7, 2 Chronicles 7:14

#### Ultimately, Christ will reign until He has **vanquished** all His enemies. Psalm 110:1-4, Jeremiah 23:5, Ezekiel 34:23-31, 1 Corinthians 15:22-28

### Zechariah 9:9d – *Humble and mounted on a donkey*… Jesus did not come as an earthly king on a prancing steed, instead He came as a humble servant, mounted on a **donkey**. Matthew 21:1-11, Mark 11:1-11, Luke 19:28-44, John 12:12-19

### Zechariah 9:9e – *Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey…*A donkey’s colt was a **purebred** donkey, one born of a female donkey rather than one born of a mule. This made it qualified to be a royal mount.[[41]](#footnote-41) Genesis 49:10-11

### Zechariah 9:10 – *I will cut off the chariot from* ***Ephraim*** *and the horse from Jerusalem; and the bow of war will be cut off. And He will speak peace to the nations; and His dominion will be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth*.

#### Ephraim represents the land of the northern tribes of Israel. Since Israel didn’t use chariots, this refers to the removal of Gentile domination. To bring in peace, Jesus will return as a **conqueror**. Psalm 72:8, Zechariah 1:8-17

#### Isaiah 2:4 – *And He will judge between the nations and will render decisions for many peoples; And they will hammer their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up* ***sword*** *against nation, and never again will they learn war*.

#### This prophecy of peace from Zechariah 9:10 would bring great hope to a people who had seldom **experienced** peace as a nation. But they would have to wait for Messiah to arrive for it to be a reality.

#### The United Nations has tried to accomplish peace by taking on a **Messianic** role. Ironically, there have been more than 150 wars since the formation of the United Nations in 1945. This is far from bringing peace.

#### When Christ returns to the earth, He will bring **world** peace in justice and truth. He will reign from sea to sea. This will be fulfilled during the Millennial Kingdom, which is after the Tribulation and before the Eternal State. Revelation 20:4-6

#### Because the time between Christ’s first and second advents was a **mystery** to the Old Testament prophets, many first century Jews believed there would be two messiahs. 1 Peter 1:10-11

#### Today, thanks to the writings of the New Testament authors and the revelation of the mystery of the Church Age, we understand the one Messiah would have two **presentations**: one as a servant who suffered (Isaiah 61:1-2a) and the other as a king who wages war and is victorious (Isaiah 61:2b).

#### Isaiah 9:6-7 refers to the two advents (**comings**) of Christ.

##### Isaiah 9:6a – *For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us…* This refers to Christ’s **first** advent.

##### Isaiah 9:6b – *And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace*. This was **offered** when Christ presented Himself as their king, humbly riding on a donkey.

##### Isaiah 9:7 – *There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this*. This will finally be **fulfilled** at Christ’s second coming.

## Zechariah 9:11-12 – Israel’s return to the land

### Zechariah 9:11 – *As for you also, because of the blood of My covenant with you, I have set your* ***prisoners*** *free from the waterless pit*.

#### God delivered Israel, not because of their personal goodness. He delivered them because He remembered the blood of the covenant, He made with **Abraham** so many years before. Genesis 15

#### When Israel was in exile, it was as though they were confined to a **waterless** pit. This reminds us of Joseph when his brothers threw him into a dry pit. His situation seemed hopeless, but God intervened. Genesis 37:24, Jeremiah 38:6

### Zechariah 9:12 – ***Return*** *to the stronghold, O prisoners who have the hope; this very day I am declaring that I will restore double to you*.

#### When the Babylonians forcefully **removed** Israel from her land, Israel lost all rights to her inheritance. This was a call for scattered Israel to return from exile, back to the place of God’s safety. Anyone still in exile who had any hope at all was invited to return home.

#### God Himself promised He would repay two blessings for each difficulty they had experienced. He would restore to them twice as much as they had lost. This was God’s promise to free the people from captivity and return them to the land, where He would **protect** them (“*Return to the stronghold*”). Psalm 18:2

## Zechariah 9:13-17 – Temporary victories against the Greeks

### Zechariah 9:13-14 – *For I will bend Judah as My bow, I will fill the bow with Ephraim. And I will stir up your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O* ***Greece****; and I will make you like a warrior’s sword. Then the Lord will appear over them, and His arrow will go forth like lightning; and the Lord God will blow the trumpet and will march in the storm winds of the south*.

#### The Lord promised that though the sons of Greece would come against Israel, He would **deliver** them. Following Alexander's death, Jerusalem and Judea fell under Ptolemaic control under Ptolemy I.

#### Because of the mention of Greece in this verse, we take this to refer to Israel’s struggles against the Greek Empire during the time of the **Maccabees**.

#### This likely refers to the Maccabean revolution that took place from 167 to 160 BC when the tyrannical King **Antiochus** Epiphanes IV was in power.

#### This does not describe the battles Christ will fight against a far greater enemy, the combined **armies** of the whole world, under the Antichrist at the Second Advent.

### Zechariah 9:15 – *The Lord of hosts will* ***defend*** *them. And they will devour and trample on the sling stones; and they will drink and be boisterous as with wine; and they will be filled like a sacrificial basin, drenched like the corners of the altar*.

#### The Maccabees were able to carve out a one-hundred-year **Empire** that stood its ground against the forces of the Greek Empire. Since it was the *LORD of hosts* who was fighting for Israel, the Maccabean revolt was successful. God protected them against superior forces.

#### This prophecy said they’d defeat their enemy with stones, which are not superior weapons. Obviously, God fought on their behalf. Prophetically, the Maccabees were **fierce** fighters, shouting as if drunken. They would be drenched in the blood of their enemies.

### Zechariah 9:16 – *And the Lord their God will save them in that day as the flock of His people; for they are as the stones of a crown, sparkling in His land*. The image of the people here changes from being an army to a flock. God will go from being a warrior defending them to a **shepherd** who delivers them. (This imagery will be important in the next chapter.)

#### Though on the surface one might believe the Maccabean king-priests saved Israel, we see clearly here it was God who was at work **preserving** His nation. This harkens back to verses 11-12 where God said He would return them and set them free.

#### As one might cherish the jewels of a king’s crown, God was going to lift His **banner** over His land and protect the remnant of Israel.

### Zechariah 9:17 – *For what comeliness and* ***beauty*** *will be theirs! Grain will make the young men flourish, and new wine the virgins*. These verses speak of the prosperity Israel enjoyed sandwiched between two great factions of the Greek Empire: Ptolemaic and Seleucid.

#### Under God’s special hand of **protection**, the land of Israel would be very prosperous during those days.

#### Though they were surrounded by enemies, God promised there would be an abundance of grain and new wine, strengthening the young people of Israel and causing them to **thrive** in the land. Israel would again be prosperous, leading to the days of the First Advent of Christ.

## Zechariah 10:1-12 – The un-shepherded flock

### Introduction

#### The following chapter describes Israel as a flock without a shepherd. God will rescue the **scattered** sheep from among all the distant nations of the world.

#### This will be accomplished by the good shepherd, **Messiah**, when He returns in battle array in the end times.

#### He will be the cornerstone and a tent-peg (stability) and a **warrior** (a bow of battle) who will bring together the remnant of God’s people from around the globe.

### Zechariah 10:1 – *Ask rain from the Lord at the time of the spring rain—The Lord who makes the storm clouds; and He will give them* ***showers*** *of rain, vegetation in the field to each man*.

#### Whenever there was a **drought** in Israel, it was because the people of Israel did not keep the Mosaic Covenant.

#### Why ask God for rain? Because He is the one who **made** the clouds and who promised to send rain if Israel walked in His ways. Job 36:27‑28, Psalm 135:7, Jeremiah 14:22

### Zechariah 10:2a – *For the teraphim speak iniquity, and the diviners see lying visions and tell false dreams; they comfort in vain…*

#### The teraphim can refer to many different types of **idols**. They were generally household gods used for divination, probably shaped like human beings. Judges 17:4-5, 1 Samuel 19:13, 16

#### Zechariah said their household gods gave worthless and deceitful advice, the diviners and fortune-tellers saw visions that predicted only lies, and the interpreters of dreams spouted messages that gave no comfort whatsoever. Their gods had no **power** over the rain or the elements. Deuteronomy 18:14; Jeremiah 6:13-14, 23:32, 27:9, 29:8

### Zechariah 10:2b – *Therefore, the people* ***wander*** *like sheep*. As long as these people were clinging to idolatry, they would be wandering like lost sheep. They were, in fact harassed. Zechariah 11:7, Numbers 27:17, Ezekiel 34:5, Jeremiah 50:6

#### Because no one cared for the flock, Israel wandered like **vulnerable** sheep. They were lost and without a shepherd. Numbers 27:17, Jeremiah 50:6, Ezekiel 34:5, Zechariah 11:7, John 10:10-13

#### Why seek God when you can get your palm read? It provided instant gratification. Why consult God when you have a god that gives you what you want-even if it is not good? The people were consulting **demons** and being guided by their lies. They were wandering aimlessly.

#### Israel had endless religious leaders but no **real** shepherds. There was no one who really cared for the flock. Zechariah 10:3

#### **Sheep** hazardously wander without purpose when they have no shepherd. A shepherd protects and provides still water. A shepherd leads the flock to good pasture and keep them safe at all costs, even the peril of His own life. Psalm 23

#### Just like sheep without a shepherd are ready to be devoured, so too the nation was open season for tragedy. From early in their history, the people were commanded to listen to their godly priests. Sadly, they **failed**. Exodus 28:30, Leviticus 8:8, Ezra 2:63

### Zechariah 10:3 – “*My* ***anger*** *is kindled against the shepherds, and I will punish the male goats; for the Lord of hosts has visited His flock, the house of Judah, and will make them like His majestic horse in battle*.” Ezekiel 34:17

#### In His omniscience, God saw what was happening to His flock. He likened the shepherds to male **goats**, emblems of immorality, exploitation, and dominance. Ezekiel 34:17; Matthew 25:32‑33

#### The Lord of heaven’s armies promised to punish Israel’s shepherds and in His great mercy **transform** this lost flock of sheep into an army of war horses.

### Zechariah 10:4 – “*From them will come the* ***cornerstone****, from them the tent peg, from them the bow of battle, from them every ruler, all of them together*.”

#### Because the Lord was displeased with the shepherds, the abusive leaders of Israel, He promised to raise up a cornerstone, a tent peg, and a battle bow. These were references to **Messiah**, Jesus Christ. Psalm 118:22-23, Isaiah 28:16, Matthew 21:42, Acts 4:11, 1 Peter 2:4-5

#### A tent peg provides stability. It keeps a tent from blowing away in the fierce gales of life. The tent peg referred to the **security** Jesus Christ would bring. Isaiah 22:23-24

#### A battle bow describes a powerful weapon. Something that can inflict death in one mighty blow. Jesus Christ will bring **victory** against those who harm His defenseless flock. Psalm 2:9; 23:1, 4

### Zechariah 10:5 – “*They will be as mighty men,* ***treading*** *down the enemy in the mire of the streets in battle; and they will fight, for the Lord will be with them; and the riders on horses will be put to shame*.”

#### On the day of the Lord, Jesus Christ will fight on behalf of His people, and He will be victorious as the great **ruler** of all rulers. Revelation 19:16

#### Though the people of Israel had suffered greatly under the weight of their enemies, in the future God will send the Messiah to **rescue** them. Under His banner, Israel will fight as a mighty army. Their enemies will be defeated and humiliated.

### Zechariah 10:6 – “*I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them back, because I have had compassion on them; and they will be as though I had not rejected them, for I am the Lord their God, and I will* ***answer*** *them*.

#### In the day the cornerstone fights for Israel, it will be as though their exile in Babylon and the days of Jacob’s trouble never happened. God will answer their call and usher in times of great rejoicing and **blessing**.

#### Despite all their rejection of Him in the past, God will show incredible **compassion** to His people Israel. The theme of this book will have come true to the fullest degree. Zechariah 1:3 will be fulfilled, “*Return to Me,” declares the Lord of armies, “that I may return to you,” says the Lord of armies*.

### Zechariah 10:7 – “*Ephraim will be like a mighty man, and their heart will be glad as if from wine; indeed, their children will see it and be glad, their heart will* ***rejoice*** *in the Lord*.”

#### During the Millennial Kingdom, all the tribes of Israel (Ephraim) will **prosper** beyond their wildest imaginations.

#### They will **multiply** again. The young and the old alike will focus their praise and rejoicing on the Lord.

### Zechariah 10:8-9 – “*I will whistle for them to gather them together, for I have redeemed them; and they will be as* ***numerous*** *as they were before. When I scatter them among the peoples, they will remember Me in far countries, and they with their children will live and come back*.”

#### Just as shepherds sometimes whistled to regather their scattered sheep, God will sound a signal for Israel to **regather** them, and they will respond, because they will have been redeemed by the might and power of Messiah. From the remnant that survives, Israel will grow and flourish as numerous as ever before.

#### Though God scattered them like dust among the distant nations, they will remember Him. The remnant and their **children** will survive, and together they will return home.

### Zechariah 10:10 – “*I will bring them back from the land of Egypt and gather them from Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon until no* ***room*** *can be found for them*.” Isaiah 11:11

#### The number of Jews who will return when the Good Shepherd regathers them will be so numerous they will **overflow** to fill Gilead and Lebanon, areas in the extreme north of ancient Israel.

#### Once again, they will live in the land and multiply as in **ancient** times.

### Zechariah 10:11-12 – “*And they will pass through the sea of* ***distress****, and He will strike the waves in the sea, so that all the depths of the Nile will dry up; and the pride of Assyria will be brought down, and the scepter of Egypt will depart. And I will strengthen them in the Lord, and in His name, they will walk,” declares the Lord*.

#### This probably refers to Matthew 24:15-22 where the Lord will miraculously save Israel even in the **darkest** hours of the Tribulation.

#### This was likely a reminder that God is greater than their enemies and they would be **delivered**. If needed, He would strike the sea or dry up the Nile to rescue them from destruction. He would rescue Israel from their most formidable enemies such as Assyria and Egypt, who had historically oppressed them and caused them great suffering.

#### As the cornerstone, the ten peg, and the battle bow, Jesus Christ will again strengthen the nation of Israel, and they will walk in the power and **integrity** of God’s holy name. God has declared this.

## Zechariah 11:1-14 – The Roman Devastation

### Introduction

#### Zechariah’s burden continues. Verses 1-3 are written as a **poem** of lament and a cry against impending destruction.

#### This dirge seeks to poetically describe the **invasion** of Roman armies from the north through the mountain passes of Lebanon and Israel (67-70 AD) before delving into the prophecies of verses 4-14.

#### Although Rome is not mentioned by name in this passage, because of where this falls in relation to Christ’s rejection, we understand this to be **implied**.

#### In this passage, Israel is a flock without a shepherd. This chapter describes how things were in Israel when Messiah came to them in the **incarnation**. When the Good Shepherd arrived, they sold Him out (Zech. 11:12-13) with the generous salary of 30 shekels of silver.

#### Ultimately, the Roman general, Titus, would destroy the temple (70 AD). Not only had the religious leaders **abused** the power given them by using the temple and the people for profit, but they also failed to accept the day of their visitation. God would remove the temple, and with it their glory. Jeremiah 25:34-38

##### Matthew 23:37 – “*Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who* ***kills*** *the prophets and stones those who have been sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling*.

##### Matthew 23:38-39 – *Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me* ***until*** *you say, ‘BLESSED IS THE ONE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!*’”

### Zechariah 11:1-2 – *Open your doors, O Lebanon, that a fire may feed on your cedars. Wail, O cypress, for the cedar has fallen, because the glorious trees have been destroyed; wail, O oaks of Bashan, for the impenetrable forest has come down.* Lebanon was known for its **cedar** trees. Ezra 3:7, Isaiah 2:12-13, Jeremiah 22:23

#### This dirge beckons to Lebanon to open her **gates** and let the fire enter and burn down her cedars. According to this prophecy, Lebanon would be destroyed.

#### The cypress (juniper) trees were invited to mourn for the stately and formidable fallen cedars of Lebanon. The oak trees of Bashan were invited to lament the fall of Lebanon as well. The advances of Rome would be like the felling of even the deepest forest. Nothing would stand in the way of their **advance**.

### Zechariah 11:3 – *There is a sound of the shepherds’ wail, for their glory is ruined; there is a sound of the young lions’ roar, for the* ***pride*** *of the Jordan is ruined*.

#### So, the song continues with the grief-stricken **cries** of the shepherds because their lush pastures have become destroyed. It is interesting that they do not mourn the loss of their sheep.

#### The young lions roar because their haunts are ravished, and their cover is exposed. This means that even the forests of the Jordan valley would lie in **ruins**. Jeremiah 50:44

#### Based on the lyrics of this overture, Zechariah’s burden now continues with ominous warnings of the doom of God’s un-shepherded flock, Israel. The times preceding and following the appearance of the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ, were difficult in relation to the **oppression** and dominance of the Roman Empire.

### Zechariah 11:4 – *Thus says the Lord my God, “Pasture the flock doomed to slaughter*.” Even though Israel was doomed to eventually be slaughtered and scattered, the Lord beckoned to the leaders of Israel to **pastor** the flock. Had they truly cared, things may have been different for Israel at that time, but it was each shepherd looking out for his own good.

### Zechariah 11:5 – “*Those who buy them slay them and go unpunished, and each of those who sell them says, ‘Blessed be the Lord, for I have become rich!’ And their own shepherds have no pity on them*.” Though God commanded them to shepherd the flock, they showed no pity. Instead, they oppressed and **exploited** their own people for personal gain.

### Zechariah 11:6 – “*For I will no longer have pity on the inhabitants of the land,” declares the Lord; “but behold, I will cause the men to fall, each into another’s power and into the power of his king; and they will strike the land, and I will not* ***deliver*** *them from their power*.”

#### The Lord therefore promised to likewise show no pity, promising instead that they would fall under the power of another nation (Rome in this case). God would use this invading juggernaut to strike the land. He would not **intervene** to protect the flock.

#### During the times of Christ and in the early years of the Church Age, Israel was ruled by wealthy Hellenistic Jews who took advantage of their own people. This passage **aligns** well with Zechariah 13:7-9

#### When Zechariah said, *“For I will no longer have pity on the inhabitants of the land,”* he was saying that just as they had no pity, God would show them no remorse or compassion. They would be oppressed by **Rome** and that was God’s verdict. John 19:12, 15

## Zechariah 11:7-14 – The Good Shepherd rejected

### Zechariah 11:7 – *So I pastured the flock doomed to slaughter, hence the afflicted of the flock. And I took for myself two* ***staffs****: the one I called Favor and the other I called Union; so I pastured the flock*.

#### This sort of **acting** out of God’s word was a method God had the prophets use at time. Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel all used visual aids to convey God’s message.

#### Because Israel’s leaders refused to shepherd the nation, God personally **shepherded** the flock. Even though He said it was doomed to be slaughtered, He still sought to pastor Israel.

#### To shepherd Israel God took up **two** staffs, instead of one. One of the staffs He called Favor and the other He called Union. We will learn more about these staffs in the verses to follow.

#### Why did He take up two **staffs**? Typically, middle eastern shepherds carried one rod to beat away beasts and a crocked staff to retrieve sheep from a cliff or a tangled place. Psalm 23:4

##### Favor represented God’s **grace** toward Israel. Deuteronomy 7:7

##### Union referred to God’s desire to **unite** the divided nation. Ezekiel 37:15-28

### Zechariah 11:8 – *Then I* ***annihilated*** *the three shepherds in one month, for my soul was impatient with them, and their soul also was weary of me*.

#### We do not know who the three shepherds were in this verse, but God very quickly annihilated, or **disbanded**, them. God was impatient and frustrated with them because they did not shepherd the flock and they (the shepherds) were also frustrated and weary with God.

#### Historically, there were three primary **groups** of people who pastured Israel: prophets, priests, and kings. It may be that this is what is referred to here because since the time of Rome till now none of these offices have continued to function.

### Zechariah 11:9 – *Then I said, “I will not pasture you. What is to die, let it* ***die****, and what is to be annihilated, let it be annihilated; and let those who are left eat one another’s flesh*.”

#### God had come to the point of utter frustration with Israel’s leadership and with Israel as a nation. He was determined to let nature take its **course**. Those who would die would die.

#### Also, those who would be annihilated would be annihilated. The people would even revert to **cannibalism**. This may describe the years of AD 68-70 since this is recorded to have happened during the Roman siege of Jerusalem.

### Zechariah 11:10 – *I took my staff Favor and cut it in pieces, to* ***break*** *my covenant which I had made with all the peoples*.

#### Because the Lord had promised to destroy the shepherds of Israel and let nature run its course, He purposed not to shepherd them. So, He took His staff of Favor, which would have come from the **Abrahamic** Covenant, and cut it to pieces.

#### Although this implied the breaking of His covenant, God did not actually break the Covenant, He simply took away the favor or grace **aspect** they would have enjoyed under His shepherding hand. He did this without annulling His covenant with them.

### Zechariah 11:11 – *So, it was broken on that day, and thus the* ***afflicted*** *of the flock who were watching me realized that it was the word of the Lord*.

#### When God took away His favor from Israel, those who were present at that time realized that God’s word had indeed come to pass. They could see the **negative** effects of God’s judgment that fell on the wayward flock of Israel.

#### Regarding Israel…God’s promise has not been broken, only **postponed**. Postponement is not abandonment with our God. That is what Zechariah 14 will clearly bring out.[[42]](#footnote-42)

### Zechariah 11:12 – *I said to them, “If it is good in your sight, give me my wages; but if not, never mind!” So they weighed out* ***thirty*** *shekels of silver as my wages*.

#### As His shepherding days were coming to an end, God asked them to go ahead and pay up what they owed Him for the years of His favor and shepherding, but instead they weighed out a **pittance** of 30 shekels of silver as His wage. Matthew 26:14-16

#### God told Zechariah to act this out in the temple. It symbolized what actually occurred 500 years later when the religious leaders paid **Judas** to betray Jesus.

#### They **rejected** the Shepherd, Jesus Christ, who God had graciously brought onto the scene and sold Him for a mere 30 shekels of silver. It therefore stands to reason God was frustrated and determined to break the staff of Favor.[[43]](#footnote-43)

#### God thus allowed Israel to suffer dispersion among the nations. Only now is Israel finally **returning** to the land (1948-today).

### Zechariah 11:13 – *Then the Lord said to me, “Throw it to the potter, that* ***magnificent*** *price at which I was valued by them.” So, I took the thirty shekels of silver and threw them to the potter in the house of the Lord*.

#### Prophetically God told Zechariah to take the “amazing price” of 30 silver coins and cast it to the potter. The centuries of God’s pastoring favor that had been on them was considered **valueless** by the nation at that time (vs. 8 “*and their soul also was weary of me*”). Isaiah 53:3, Acts 4:11

#### This was fulfilled when **Judas** returned the money to the chief priests and they in turn used it to buy a piece of land from the potter to use as a burial site for strangers. Matthew 27:3-7, Matthew 27:9-10

#### While the chief priests were willing to pay a measly 30 pieces of silver for betraying the sinless Messiah, God for His part **sacrificed** the life of His only Son to pay for every sin.

#### The chief priests arranged their payment in **secret** while God paid our sin debt in plain view of the whole world. The chief priests maintained their political careers (for a time) but God maintained His perfect righteousness (for time without end). Romans 3:24-26

### Zechariah 11:14 – *Then I cut in pieces my second staff* ***Union****, to break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel*. During the time of Christ, Israel was constituted of returnees of both Judah and Israel.

#### In AD 70, when the temple was destroyed by the **Romans**, the people of Israel were scattered about. Since Rome conquered and destroyed Jerusalem, right up until these last days, Israel has not been enjoying the blessing and unity that comes from the shepherding hand of God.

#### If Messiah would have been placed as their **king**, Israel would have reunited as one nation under God. The tribes of the north (Israel) and the tribes of the south (Judah and Benjamin) would have been a unified whole long ago. 1 Kings 12, Jeremiah 31:31

#### In Zechariah 10:6-8, Zechariah predicted that one day Messiah would come and **reunite** Israel (both ancient kingdoms). This will happen in the Millennium. Judah and Israel will only be united when the Messiah is their Shepherd and brings them back together.

#### Christ came in the name of the Father and yet He was not received. If someone should come in his or her own name, the people would likely **receive** them. This is exactly what will happen when the Antichrist arrives on the scene. John 5:43

## Zechariah 11:15-17 – The Antichrist

### Zechariah 11:15-16 – *The Lord said to me, “Take again for yourself the* ***equipment*** *of a foolish shepherd. For behold, I am going to raise up a shepherd in the land who will not care for the perishing, seek the scattered, heal the broken, or sustain the one standing, but will devour the flesh of the fat sheep and tear off their hoofs*.

#### “*The Lord said to me,*” describes a new thought. This verse most likely describes the coming **Antichrist**, a “*shepherd …who will not care…*”

#### God told Zechariah to take to himself *the equipment of a foolish shepherd*. What might this describe? It would definitely not be a “staff” of unity or favor. It would likely be something that would cause **neglect** or hurt in the flock. This is the opposite of the protection God had given Israel.

#### The coming shepherd would not shepherd the hurting, care for the lost, nurse the broken or bolster the weak. Instead, he would **devour** their flesh, feed on their fat, and ravenously tear off their hoofs. Daniel 11:36, 2 Thessalonians 2:4

##### During the Tribulation, the Antichrist will place his throne in the temple of God. This will mark the “**abomination** of desolation” which Daniel spoke about. This will happen at the midpoint of the Tribulation. Daniel 11:37, Revelation 13:4-8

##### Evidently the nation will have had a time of peace and safety since this speaks of them as having “**fat**.” Israel will experience about three and a half years of relative peace before Antichrist breaks his treaty with them and turns on them.

##### Tearing off the hoofs of the sheep probably represents the false shepherd as extremely **greedy** and even blood thirsty. This “shepherd” will not spare the flock.

### Zechariah 11:17 – “*Woe to the* ***worthless*** *shepherd who leaves the flock! A sword will be on his arm and on his right eye! His arm will be totally withered, and his right eye will be blind*.”

#### This chapter ends with a lament about this coming worthless and foolish shepherd. This describes how God will ultimately deal with the Antichrist, that worthless, promise-breaking, abusive, and vile shepherd. When a flock rejects its true shepherd and follows a fraud they suffer **grievous** consequences. John 10:12

#### God prophesied that a sword would hack his (Antichrist’s) arm and pierce his right eye. His arm would become utterly useless, and his right eye would be blinded. The arm represents power, the eye intelligence. Ultimately, God will remove both the Antichrist’s power and his **intelligence**. Revelation 13:3

##### 2 Thessalonians 2:8 – “*And then that* ***lawless*** *one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming*.”

##### Revelation 13:3 – “*And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his* ***fatal*** *wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast*.”

##### Revelation 13:14 – “*And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the* ***wound*** *of the sword and has come to life*.”

# Zechariah 12-14 – The Second Burden

## Zechariah 12:1-14 – The overthrow of Jerusalem

### Introduction:

#### We are about to enter Zechariah’s second burden. After describing the future vile actions of the Antichrist toward Israel in chapter 11:15-17, chapter 12 begins to address the city of **Jerusalem**.

#### Due to the non-shepherd leaders in Israel, God raised up an instrument to judge them, as we just saw in the previous chapter. The next few verses describe the **takeover** of Jerusalem by Rome in 63 BC.[[44]](#footnote-44) This is not to be confused with the final destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 by Rome.

#### It was during the years **between** the takeover of Jerusalem and the destruction of Jerusalem that the Good Shepherd (the Messiah) was going to come to offer to shepherd Israel (*the sheep doomed to slaughter*).

##### The Good Shepherd would be met with opposition and ultimately **refused** by the Jewish leaders. Later in AD 70 the Jewish temple and Jerusalem would be leveled to the ground.

##### The Romans would continue to control the land of Israel. Finally, in the 4th century they would declare the empire “**Christian**” under Emperor Constantine.

##### With no temple, no shepherds, and no religious practices, Israel as a nation would be like scattered and defeated sheep. They would no longer be a nation, at least not until 1948 when the nation Israel was reborn. From then onward Jewish people from around the world have started returning to their **homeland**.

#### While the first burden contained prophecies concerning the Gentile nations, this second burden focuses primarily on the nation of **Israel**, including all the tribes.

#### While this burden describes the destruction of Jerusalem, it does not describe the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of **Titus**, the Roman general. In this final destruction it will be the Antichrist who brings about desolation and destruction.

#### These chapters clearly reveal future events in the life of Israel. God will use these events to bring about a spiritual **awakening** in spite of Israel’s long-term rejection of their Messiah.

##### The frequent occurrence of the term “*Day of the Lord*” in this passage helps us know to place these events in the end times **chronology**.

##### These chapters also provide details about the upcoming war of all wars called the Battle of **Armageddon**. That battle will constitute the destruction of the Gentile nations. These events correlate with Zechariah’s 1st and 8th visions from earlier in this study.

##### The “Shepherd” who was rejected (sold for 30 pieces of silver) in the first burden will return to rescue Israel in this burden. The king on the donkey in the First Advent will come racing onto the scene on a white **stallion** at the Second Advent. Revelation 19:11‑16

##### These chapters show that Israel’s **repentance** is necessary for Messiah’s return. The false prophets in these chapters relate to the 7th vision (Zechariah 5:5-11). This section also shows what life will be like during Millennium.

### Zechariah 12:1 – *The burden of the word of the Lord concerning Israel. Thus declares the Lord who* ***stretches*** *out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him*… Genesis 1:1, 2:7; Isaiah 42:5; Job 38:3-6

#### This burden came from Creator God; the one who created heaven and earth and who gives life to all mankind. As creator and owner, He has full **rights** over His creation.

#### God is about to describe **perilous** days yet to come for Jerusalem.

### Zechariah 12:2 – “*Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that causes* ***reeling*** *to all the peoples around; and when the siege is against Jerusalem, it will also be against Judah*.”

#### Imagine a cup filled with wine in the hands of a **drunken** sailor. He reels about almost dropping it every few steps. God is going to make Jerusalem just such a vessel.

#### In the latter days when the Antichrist rules on this earth, Jerusalem will fall under siege. The central **focus** of the nations of the world will revolve around Jerusalem!

#### The God of all creation will make the nations reel like drunkards because when they send their armies to besiege Jerusalem and Judah, Jerusalem will be like a powerful **wine** to them.

### Zechariah 12:3 – *It will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy* ***stone*** *for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it*.

#### The prophecy of this verse is not hard to imagine since even now hardly a day passes that Jerusalem is not in the **headlines** of news broadcasts around the world. In the end times, Israel will become a heavy stone for people everywhere. Anyone who interferes with Israel will come away very frustrated and battered. Joel 3:2

#### During the Tribulation, in the time of the foolish shepherd, **all** the nations of the earth will gather against Jerusalem and Israel. Zechariah 14:2, Psalm 75:8, Jeremiah 25:15-16

#### The timeframe of this burden correlates with the following circumstances. Joel 3:9-16

##### Israel will have been **regathered** in the land. Ezekiel 37:12, Isaiah 11:11-42

##### Ancient cities will have been **rebuilt** and reinhabited. Ezekiel 36:1-5, 8-10

##### Nations will gather in and around Jerusalem and Israel to form one mighty **army** to fight against Israel and the Lord Jesus Christ. Revelation 16:16, 19:18-21

#### All of history is building up to this **climactic** event of confrontation between Christ and evil. Psalm 2; Isaiah 8:9-10, 17:12-14; Ezekiel 38-39; Daniel 9:24-27, 11:36-45; Joel 3:9‑17; Zechariah 14:2; Revelation 16:14-16, 19:17-19

### Zechariah 12:4 – *In that day,” declares the Lord, “I will strike every horse with bewilderment and his rider with* ***madness****. But I will watch over the house of Judah, while I strike every horse of the peoples with blindness*.”

#### At that time, when the nations will be gathered against Jerusalem, God will enter the **conflict**, causing great disorientation and mayhem among the gathered armies.

#### When God **intervenes** their instruments of their warfare (horses, weapons) will go haywire (their tanks will not shoot right, their jeeps will not go right, their radars will not work, etc.).

### Zechariah 12:5 – “*Then the clans of Judah will say in their hearts, ‘A strong* ***support*** *for us are the inhabitants of Jerusalem through the Lord of hosts, their God*.’” When God shows up and confuses their enemies, Israel (*the clans of Judah*) will take heart. They will realize God is coming to their aid.

### Zechariah 12:6 – “*In that day I will make the clans of Judah like a firepot among pieces of wood and a flaming torch among sheaves, so they will* ***consume*** *on the right hand and on the left all the surrounding peoples, while the inhabitants of Jerusalem again dwell on their own sites in Jerusalem*.”

#### At that instant, God will make the fighters of Judah like a burning torch in a haystack. Quickly the clans of Judah will fight with amazing **success**. This will be because in that day the Lord Jesus Christ will fight for Israel and Jerusalem. Judah’s clans will destroy the encircling armies.

#### Against all odds, the remnant of Israel in Jerusalem will be safe inside the city. Those who were in hiding will come out to **retake** Jerusalem and dwell with the Lord again. Ezekiel 34:13, 36:24, 37:14, 21; Leviticus 25:23

### Zechariah 12:7 – *The Lord also will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem will not be magnified above Judah*. On the day of Christ’s appearing, He will rescue of the tribe of Judah **before** He rescues Jerusalem.

#### He will do this so the inhabitants of Jerusalem and even David’s personal **royal** line (of Judah) will not have more honor than the greater tribe of Judah.

#### God will defend the tents of Judah before He protects the capital so that both Jerusalem’s residents and David’s royal line will witness the **victory** of the Lord wrought through the tribe of Judah. At long last, Jacob’s prophecy concerning Judah will ring true.

##### Genesis 48:8 – “*As for you, Judah, your brothers shall praise you; your hand shall be on the* ***neck*** *of your enemies; your father’s sons shall bow down to you*.

##### Genesis 48:9 – “*Judah is a lion’s cub; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He* ***crouches****, he lies down as a lion, and as a lion, who dares to stir him up?*

##### Genesis 48:10 – “*The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until Shiloh comes, and to* ***him*** *shall be the obedience of the peoples*.”

### Zechariah 12:8 – “*In that day the Lord will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the angel of the Lord before them*.” When Christ returns to bring in His kingdom from heaven, He will **defend** the remnant of inhabitants in Jerusalem.

#### At that time, as Israel fights together with the Lord, the **weakest** person will fight like David fought when he defeated Goliath. 1 Samuel 18:7

#### And the descendants of David will fight powerfully like **God** fights. They will fight like the angel of the Lord.

### Zechariah 12:9 – “*And in that day I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem*.” At that time, the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, will destroy every nation that has come against Jerusalem. There will be a world-wide **purging** of the enemies of God. Only the righteous will come in to enjoy the kingdom of God from heaven.

### Zechariah 12:10 – “*I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will* ***mourn*** *for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn*.” John 19:34-37

#### At that time, when Christ conquers His enemies, He will again set up David’s throne over Jerusalem. The nation Israel will receive a **spirit** of grace and supplication. Of course, these are New Covenant promises that will come to fruition. Jeremiah 33:31-34

#### This will cause Israel to look on the one they pierced, Jesus the Christ, and **mourn** for Him. Even though He is alive and well, they will weep bitterly for Him as one would cry for an only child or firstborn son who dies. Why?

#### They will weep because, finally, after so many centuries, Israel will realize how they foolishly **sold** out their true Shepherd for a few silver coins. They will realize so many of their people needlessly died waiting for a Shepherd who had already come and whom they for so long rejected.

##### Five hundred years before Jesus went to the cross, Zechariah foretold that the Jews would **pierce** Him, but he was not the only one. In Psalm 22:16, hundreds of years before the crucifixion, David prophesied about the Messiah when he wrote these words: “*they pierced my hands and my feet.*”

##### In a statement 700 years in advance of the cross, Isaiah 53:5 **prophesied**, “*But He was pierced for our offenses, He was crushed for our wrongdoings; The punishment for our well-being was laid upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed*.”.

#### Today Zechariah’s prophecy concerning Israel mourning over Jesus is yet to be **fulfilled**.

#### Throughout his book, Zechariah repeatedly mentions God’s **faithfulness** and Israel’s rejection.

##### To Zechariah’s generation, God said, “***Return*** *to me, that I may return to you.*” To each subsequent generation of Israel, He continues to say, “*Return to me, that I may return to you*.” Zechariah 1:3

##### Jesus, God incarnate, came to redeem Israel, but Israel **rejected** Him. They put the Lord of glory to death. Acts 2:23, 36; 3:14-15; 5:30; 1 Corinthians 2:8

##### Today, the Church is God’s instrument to **call** Israel to Himself through jealousy. Romans 11:1, 11-14

##### During war, amid their greatest of woes ever, their blinders will be removed, and they will **realize** who Jesus really was, the Messiah, the Lamb of God who came to remove the sins of the world.

##### In a moment, in a flash, they will all see the same Jesus, the same man who was pierced, coming in the clouds. Every eye in Jerusalem will see Him. Jesus the Messiah will **return**. Revelation 1:7

### Zechariah 12:11 – *In that day there will be great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the plain of Megiddo*. Instead of rejoicing over the victory against their enemies, there will be a time of **unprecedented** mourning in Jerusalem. All Israel will realize they have been guilty of rejection of the true Shepherd.

### Zechariah 12:12a – *The land will mourn, every family by itself; the family of the house of David by itself and their wives by themselves*… This describes an individual **revival** taking place on a national level. Matthew 24:30

### Zechariah 12:12b – …*the family of the house of David…* David represents the **royal** family of Israel. The aristocracy will mourn for Jesus Christ. In any nation, a king’s example is powerful. 2 Samuel 7:16

### Zechariah 12:12c – …*the family of the house of Nathan…* Nathan represents the **prophets** of Israel. They will mournfully worship their King. 2 Samuel 7:17, 12:7

### Zechariah 12:13a – …*the family of the house of Levi…* Levi represents the **priests**. Even the priesthood will mourn.

### Zechariah 12:13b – …*the family of the house of Shimeites by itself…* The Shimeites represent non-priestly Israelites of the tribe of **Levi** who will mourn by themselves.

### Zechariah 12:13c – …*and their wives by themselves*… The **wives** of all the above will weep.

### Zechariah 12:14 – …*all the families that remain,* ***every*** *family by itself and their wives by themselves.* There will be individual mourning on a massive, national scale. Romans 11:25-26, Jeremiah 5:31, Jeremiah 30:7

## Zechariah 13:1-5 – What will happen next?

### Zechariah 13:1 – “*In that day a* ***fountain*** *will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity*.” So, what will happen once the Lord has returned, and Israel has returned to her rightful shepherd? Jerusalem will no longer be a heavy stone and a cup of reeling.

#### By means of the Davidic throne, Jerusalem will become a fountain of blessings. **Cleansing** and forgiveness will overflow from Jerusalem. Christ will preside on the throne of David and will rule with justice and mercy. Jeremiah 2:13, Romans 11:26-27

#### God’s life-giving water will now **flow** from Jerusalem. This cleansing of wickedness from the land reminds us of the flying scroll in Zechariah’s 6th vision and the purpose of the 69th week (seven years of the tribulation) found in the book of Daniel. Psalm 46:4, Ezekiel 47:1-12, Zechariah 14:8

#### Daniel 9:24 says, “***Seventy*** *weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the wrongdoing, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for guilt, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy Place*.”

### Zechariah 13:2 – “*It will come about in that day,” declares the Lord of hosts, “that I will cut off the names of the* ***idols*** *from the land, and they will no longer be remembered; and I will also remove the prophets and the unclean spirit from the land*.”

#### God promised that when Christ rules, He will remove the remembrance of all false **deities** from the land of Israel.

#### When it says God will remove the prophets, it refers specifically to **false** prophets. God will blot out the memory of all demonic influences and remove all lying and deceptive diviners.

### Zechariah 13:3 – “*And if anyone still prophesies, then his father and mother who gave birth to him will say to him, ‘You shall not live, for you have spoken* ***falsely*** *in the name of the Lord’; and his father and mother who gave birth to him will pierce him through when he prophesies*.”

#### During the Tribulation there will be many false messiahs, false prophets, and deceptions of all types, including the false prophet who works hand in hand with the **Antichrist**.

#### Matthew 24:24-26 – *For false christs and false prophets will arise and will provide great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you in* ***advance****. So, if they say to you, ‘Behold, He is in the wilderness,’ do not go out; or, ‘Behold, He is in the inner rooms,’ do not believe them*.

#### 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10 – …*the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of* ***Satan****, with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not accept the love of the truth so as to be saved*…

#### If anyone coming out of the Tribulation still claims to be a prophet, then his own parents will have the **responsibility** of shutting him up, even to the point of injuring him. Deuteronomy 13:1-5

### Zechariah 13:4-5 – “*Also it will come about in that day that the prophets will each be* ***ashamed*** *of his vision when he prophesies, and they will not put on a hairy robe in order to deceive; but he will say, ‘I am not a prophet; I am a tiller of the ground, for a man sold me as a slave in my youth*.’”

#### Since there will be no need for prophecy at that time, anyone who may have once thought they were a prophet or who may even have prophesied one time will from that point onward declare he is not a prophet. He will instead claim to be a **farmer**, a mere worker of the land.

#### Anyone who once dabbled in the occult and falsely prophesied will realize they were sold out as a slave to deception. That is why they will say, “*a man sold me as a slave in my youth.”* After the Tribulation, the **severity** of the deception they experienced by false prophets will stop them from even considering the idea of being a prophet.

### Zechariah 13:6 – “*And one will say to him, ‘What are these* ***wounds*** *between your arms?’ Then he will say, ‘Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends*.’”

#### “*Between his arms*” is a Hebrew idiom that could mean anywhere on a person’s back, chest, arms, or hands. *Friends*, also called *lovers* elsewhere in Scripture, was a term sometimes used in the Old Testament for people who practiced **idolatry**. Jeremiah 22:22, Ezekiel 16:37, Hosea 2:7

#### False prophets and cults sometimes cut themselves to increase their effectiveness or to identify themselves with a particular god. After the Tribulation, these scars will seem **shameful**. 1 Kings 18:28; Jeremiah 41:5; 48:37

#### A former false prophet (or one-time cult member) might still be easily recognized by **occultic** marks on his body. After the tribulation, anyone with identifiable marks (tattoos or scars from the occult) will never boast about them.

## Zechariah 13:7-9 – The Good Shepherd Poem

### Introduction: There is a dramatic **shift** in focus between the prose in verses 1-6 and the poetry in verses 7-9. After describing false prophets, we come to a poem about the Good Shepherd.

#### Contrary to modern speculations, when God gave His Son, the Messiah, it was as the sin **bearer** for humanity. Christ Jesus did not come to merely show us a better way to live. He came to die for us. Isaiah 53:12, John 3:16, Romans 5:8

#### God allowed ancient Israel to convince Rome to crucify an innocent man: Jesus Christ. The payment for the sins of mankind was not a secret arrangement between an illuminated few. The crucifixion was **displayed** before the whole world because that is for whom Christ died. Christ died for all. 2 Corinthians 5:14

### Zechariah 13:7 – “*Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the man, My Associate,” declares the Lord of hosts. “Strike the Shepherd that the sheep may be scattered; and I will turn My hand against the little ones*.” God **necessitated** the penalty of death to be paid by the Messiah for our forgiveness. Isaiah 53:4-5, 10; Matthew 26:30-31

#### “*My Associate*” literally means “the man of my union.” The Messiah was both 100% divine and 100% human. In all of scripture, the term *My* ***Associate*** is used extensively in Leviticus (companion, neighbor, or friend), but only once outside of Leviticus, and that is right here in Zechariah. Leviticus 5:21, 18:20, 19:15, 17; 24:19; 25:14, 15

#### When Israel rejected the Son, the Associate of the Father, they rejected the Father!

#### The Lord Jesus was allowed by the Father to be smitten, and the sheep, His few meek and lowly followers, were scattered. God’s hand allowed this process. Jesus Christ was not merely the innocent victim of a crime, He was the Lamb of God who was **deliberately** put forth to be slaughtered as a substitute sacrifice for our sins.

##### Not only did God require the Messiah’s death but He also promised to **initiate** the resurrection three days later.

##### In Mark 14:27-28 Jesus **quoted** Zechariah’s statement about being struck down, but then He concluded He would be raised again on the third day. This clearly ties Zechariah’s message to the Gospel account.

### Zechariah 13:8 – “*It will come about in all the land,” declares the Lord, “That two parts in it will be cut off and perish; but the third will be left in it*.” The subject of this verse changes from what happened to the Shepherd who was slain to what will **happen** to Israel just prior to the Second Coming of the Shepherd who was slain. It switches from victim to victor.

#### About two thirds of Israel will perish during the dark hours of the seven-year Tribulation. This will happen by the decree of the Lord. Just as God poured out His wrath on His own Son, the Shepherd, in verse seven, He will also pour out His **wrath** on the flock who rejected him in verses eight and nine. Ezekiel 28:38

#### Hitler is known for having killed six million Jews. That was an estimated one third of Israel. There never has been, nor will there ever be, any **comparison** with what will happen during the Tribulation. Matthew 24:15

### Zechariah 13:9 – “*And I will bring the third part through the fire,* ***refine*** *them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will answer them; I will say, ‘They are My people,’ and they will say, ‘The Lord is my God*.’” 1 Peter 1:6-7

#### During the dark days of the Tribulation, the remaining one third of Israel will be put into the crucible and refined under the heat of God’s severe **discipline**.

##### In the days of Zechariah, a **refiner** would take raw gold or silver and place it in a ceramic container. Inside the container was the ore—not just the precious metal, but also impurities such as zinc, lead, and salt.[[45]](#footnote-45)

##### The ceramic container was put into a fiery kiln for five days. During those five days, all the impurities would separate to the outside edges of the container. Nothing would be left in the middle of the vessel but the **pure** silver or gold.[[46]](#footnote-46)

#### After God has tested Israel, they will call on His name. God will then say to them, “*You are my people*.” And they will respond with, “*The Lord is my God*.” The remaining one third will be **saved**. Romans 11:26

#### Israel will finally be God’s **people** among the nations. The prophecy of full restoration will have come to fruition and Israel will claim Jesus Christ as her Messiah. Isaiah 42:6, Hosea 2:19-23, Joel 2:32, Matthew 23:37-39, Romans 10:13, Acts 13:47

##### Amos 9:13 – “*Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “When the plowman will overtake the reaper, and the one who treads grapes will overtake him who sows the seed; When the mountains will drip* ***grape*** *juice, and all the hills will come apart*.

##### Amos 9:14 – “*I will also restore the fortunes of My people Israel, and they will* ***rebuild*** *the desolated cities and live in them; They will also plant vineyards and drink their wine and make gardens and eat their fruit*.

##### Amos 9:15 – “*I will also plant them on their land, and they will not be* ***uprooted*** *again from their land which I have given them,” says the LORD your God*.

## Zechariah 14:1-7 – Jerusalem’s Deliverance

### Zechariah 14:1 – *Behold, a day is coming for the Lord when the* ***spoil*** *taken from you will be divided among you.* This will happen sometime between the end of the Tribulation and the beginning of the Millennium. The Lord will return the spoils (wealth) to Israel that were previously taken by the nations, like what He did in the exodus from Egypt. Zechariah 14:14

#### The statement, “*a day is coming for the Lord”* is the Day of the Lord. Currently humanity is having its day, but a time will come when God openly **intervenes** in the affairs of mankind, first for judgment, then for blessing. This period is called the Day of the Lord.

#### In its broadest sense, the Day of the Lord refers to a time after the **Rapture** beginning with the start of the Tribulation and continuing until the end of the 1000-year reign of Christ (Millennial Kingdom).

#### However, even though the Day of the Lord refers to the entire time just mentioned, each context helps determine what **portion** of the Day of the Lord is referred to. The Day of the Lord can refer to any of the following:

##### The **Tribulation**

##### The **Second** Coming

##### The **Millennium**

#### The following scriptures **detail** aspects of the Day of the Lord: Isaiah 11:10; 12:1, 4; 24:1‑4, 19-21; 25:9; 26:20-21; 27:13; Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 9:27; Joel 1:15; Amos 5:18; Zephaniah 1:15; Zechariah 14:1-9; Revelation 3:10; 14:7

### Zechariah 14:2 – *For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to* ***battle****, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished, and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city*.

#### This battle is referred to in Scripture as the battle of **Armageddon**, the war to end all wars. Revelation 16:16

#### At the end of the Tribulation and just prior to Christ’s Second Advent, the Lord will bring all the nations together against Jerusalem (Joel 3:2). Although the nations will think they are acting of their own accord, it will be God who **gathers** them. He will gather them to execute judgment on them. Ezekiel 5:5; Zechariah 12:3

#### When this war happens, the city of Jerusalem will be captured, homes ransacked, and women raped. Half the population will be taken into captivity, but the rest will miraculously **survive** within the city.

### Zechariah 14:3 – *Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle.* When everything seems to be lost, the Lord will come in great power to **fight** against the nations. Psalm 121:4, Exodus 4:2

#### "*Then*" shows us this is a sequence of events. This will be following the gathering of the **nations** together.

#### At His second coming, Messiah will come as the Lion of Judah. He will come as a conquering warrior and **supernaturally** overwhelm the nations who have gathered in battle array against Jerusalem. Revelation 19:11-16, 19:17-21

#### Matthew 24:30 – *And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with* ***power*** *and great glory*. Matthew 16:27, 26:64; Luke 21:27; Revelation 1:7

#### Matthew 24:31 – *And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET BLAST, and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His* ***elect*** *from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other*.

### Zechariah 14:4 – *In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be* ***split*** *in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south*. 2 Samuel 15:30, Matthew 24:3, Acts 1:9-12

#### Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives to the east are **actual** places. Just as Jesus physically left, He will also physically return to earth. His return will not be figurative or spiritual, it will be tangible. Job 19:25, Acts 1:9-12

#### The instant Jesus’ feet touch the Mount of Olives, it will split. This will open a path for beleaguered Jewish refugees to **flee** from Jerusalem and it will create a riverbed for the living waters which will flow from Jerusalem eastward. Zechariah 13:1, 14:8; Psalm 46:4; Ezekiel 47:1-12; Revelation 22:1

### Zechariah 14:5 – *You will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the Lord, my God, will* ***come****, and all the holy ones with Him!*

#### Those Israelites still left in Jerusalem will be able to quickly flee to safety. They will go forth through the **valley** the Lord creates when He sets foot on the Mount of Olives. It is uncertain where Azel is, but it will be related to the valley (escape route) that is created.[[47]](#footnote-47) Micah 1:1-11

#### When Christ returns at the Second Advent, He will return with an army of **angels** (*all the holy ones*). Matthew 25:31, Jude 14, Revelation 19:14

### Zechariah 14:6-7 – *In that day there will be no light; the* ***luminaries*** *will dwindle. For it will be a unique day which is known to the Lord, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light*.

#### The Second Advent will be the most ***unique*** *day* in history. It will neither be fully day nor fully dark. And yet toward evening, “*there will be light*.” Joel 2:1‑12, Matthew 24:29, 2 Peter 1:19

#### Joel 2:30-31 – “*I will* ***display*** *wonders in the sky and on the earth, blood, fire, and columns of smoke. The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes*.”

#### Joel 2:32 – “*And it will come about that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be those who* ***escape****, just as the LORD has said, even among the survivors whom the LORD calls*.”

## Zechariah 14:8-11 – The Millennial Kingdom

### Zechariah 14:8 – *And in that day living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter*. These living waters are **literal** waters that flow both east and west from Jerusalem. Isaiah 33:21-23; 60:19, 20

#### The Mediterranean Sea is referred to as the *western sea*. The *easter sea* is the Dead Sea, which will no longer be **dead**. Ezekiel 47:1-12

#### During Christ’s 1,000-year **reign**, these waters will flow all year round. This will be a new and unique phenomenon. This will correspond with the beginning of the Millennial Reign of Christ. Days of unprecedented renewal and blessing will begin to come from the Lord. Joel 2:18-27

### Zechariah 14:9 – *And the Lord will be king over all the* ***earth****; in that day the Lord will be the only one, and His name the only one*. Concerning Christ’s appearance at the Second Advent, Revelation 19:16 says, “*And on His robe and on His thigh, He has a name written: ‘KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS*.’”

#### Christ Jesus is prophet, priest, and king. In His first coming He primarily functioned in His role of prophet, revealing God to the world (John 1:14, 17-18). At this present time, He is primarily functioning in the role of priest on our behalf (Romans 8:34). At Christ’s second coming He will function in the role of **king** over all the earth. Revelation 3:21

#### There is a **difference** between the Millennial Kingdom and the Eternal State.

##### During the Millennial Kingdom, Christ will sit on David’s **earthly** throne in Jerusalem, and during most of that time Satan will be bound. This has not yet happened. Psalm 2:6‑9, Revelation 20:3

##### Christ’s kingdom will be an earthly restoration of what **Adam** lost in the Garden of Eden.

### Zechariah 14:10 – *All the land will be changed into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; but Jerusalem will* ***rise*** *and remain on its site from Benjamin’s Gate as far as the place of the First Gate to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king’s wine presses*.

#### These are **literal** places within Jerusalem and to the north and south of the city. When Christ returns, Jerusalem will be raised up to its original heights.

#### The land to the north and south of the city will become a vast **plain**. It will undoubtedly make the land of Israel more useful than ever before.

### Zechariah 14:11 – *People will live in it, and there will no longer be a curse, for Jerusalem will dwell in* ***security****.* Not only will there be topographical changes, but Jerusalem will experience unprecedented blessings. It will again be repopulated, and its inhabitants will live in peace and safety. Isaiah 11:1-16, 12:1-6; Zechariah 8:4-5

#### At that time Christ will inaugurate the New **Covenant** and the curse will be lifted from Jerusalem. This will usher in a time of unprecedented blessing for the whole earth. Acts 3:21; Romans 11:12, 15

#### Not every person on earth will die during the Tribulation. Those individuals from among the nations who **believed** during the Tribulation will be brought in to repopulate the earth and enjoy the blessings of the kingdom. The nations of the earth will multiply and flourish once again. Matthew 25:31-40

## Zechariah 14:12-15 – Judgment on Nations

### Zechariah 14:12 – *Now this will be the* ***plague*** *with which the Lord will strike all the peoples who have gone to war against Jerusalem; their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet, and their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongue will rot in their mouth*.

#### On the day when the Lord returns, He will find the nations of the world assembled in **battle** array against Israel. Revelation 19:19

#### When the nations will have come against Israel in the battle of Armageddon, the Lord will strike them in such a way as to cause them to **disintegrate**. Their bodies will simply rot (melt) down to nothing. Revelation 14:19-20; 19:17-18

### Zechariah 14:13 – *It will come about in that day that a great* ***panic*** *from the Lord will fall on them; and they will seize one another’s hand, and the hand of one will be lifted against the hand of another*.

#### The LORD will make the nations go into an all-out panic and **killing** frenzy. They will start attacking and destroying each other. God knows how to create derision and turn enemies on each other. Chaos will ensue.

#### This will come about from the hand of the Lord against those who have **arrayed** themselves against Israel and Jerusalem.

##### Psalm 2:1-2 – *Why are the* ***nations*** *restless and the peoples plotting in vain? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers conspire together against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying*,

##### Psalm 2:3-4 – “*Let’s tear their shackles apart and throw their ropes away from us! He who sits in the heavens* ***laughs****, the Lord scoffs at them. Then He will speak to them in His anger and terrify them in His fury*…”

### Zechariah 14:14 – *Judah also will fight at Jerusalem; and the* ***wealth*** *of all the surrounding nations will be gathered, gold and silver and garments in great abundance*. Once again, in the narrative of Zechariah we see Judah taking a primary role in the final war of all wars. God plans to exalt the tribe of Judah as a military force.

#### **Warriors** from the tribe of Judah will be the first to arrive on that day and together with the Lord, they will valiantly fight for the freedom of Jerusalem. Zechariah 12:4-7

#### At that time, the wealth of the surrounding nations will be brought to Jerusalem as **spoils** of war. There will not only be silver and gold but there will also be much clothing confiscated from the nations that fight against God’s people on that day.

### Zechariah 14:15 – *So also like this plague will be the plague on the horse, the mule, the camel, the donkey and all the cattle that will be in those camps*. This plague refers to the plague of verse 12, where the bodies of the soldiers will disintegrate. This disintegration will also happen to every **animal** within the camps of the enemy.

#### This **slaughter** is likely what is spoken of in Revelation 19:15 where it says, “*From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty*.” They will rot in their shoes. They will be completely decimated by Christ’s fury.

#### Isaiah 11:4 describes this devastation as follows: “*But with righteousness He will judge the poor, and decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He will* ***slay*** *the wicked*.”

## Zechariah 14:16-19 – Kingdom Celebration

### Zechariah 14:16 – *Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to* ***celebrate*** *the Feast of Booths*.

#### When the Millennium begins, the remnant nations will make a yearly **pilgrimage** to Jerusalem. Together with Israel, they will celebrate the Feast of Booths.

##### The Feast of Booths was an important yearly feast in Israel. It was a time of grateful rejoicing for the Lord’s **provision**. Leviticus 23:39-44, Nehemiah 8:17

##### Likewise, the celebration of the Feast of Booths during the Millennium will be a time of **rejoicing** and remembrance. Israel will have the Mosaic Law written on their hearts as per the terms of the New Covenant. It will be second nature for all Jews to naturally comply with God’s word. Jeremiah 31:33, Romans 11:26-27

#### There is no mistaking the identity of this King. He is none other than, Jesus **Christ**, the Lord of hosts. He will be the focus of worship during the Millennial Kingdom. Clearly, He is deity since He will be worshiped. Psalm 24:10, Jeremiah 48:15

#### During Christ’s kingdom, Satan will be **confined** to the bottomless pit. He will be incarcerated for most of the Millennial reign of Christ. Revelation 20:7‑10

### Zechariah 14:17 – *And it will be that whichever of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, there will be no rain on them*. During the Millennial Kingdom, if any family of the earth (nation) refuses to go up yearly for the Feast of Booths to worship in Jerusalem, God will withhold **rain** from their land.

### Zechariah 14:18 – *If the family of Egypt does not go up or enter, then no rain will fall on them; it will be the plague with which the Lord smites the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths*. Here is the mention of specific nation, Egypt. If Egypt refuses to go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths, they will be smitten with a plague of **drought**.

### Zechariah 14:19 – *This will be the punishment of Egypt, and the* ***punishment*** *of all the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths*.

#### Again, we have a third reminder of the same warning against the **refusal** to celebrate the Feast of Booths. If they do not comply with this required feast there will be no rain for that nation.

#### Even though the Millennial Kingdom period will be a time of unprecedented blessing, it will also have curses for those who **rebel**.

## Zechariah 14:20-21 – Holiness everywhere

### Zechariah 14:20 – *In that day there will be inscribed on the bells of the horses, “****HOLY*** *TO THE LORD.” And the cooking pots in the Lord’s house will be like the bowls before the altar*.

#### During the Millennial Kingdom, Jerusalem will be a holy city (v.21). It will be set apart for the Lord in every way. Even **mundane** things like cooking pots and horse bells will be inscribed with “*HOLY TO THE LORD*.”

#### During the Age of Law, only the turban of the high priest held the inscription “*Holy to the Lord* (Exodus 28:36),” but during the 1000-year reign of Christ, even the most commonplace things will be considered set apart for the worship of the Lord. The point is **worship** of the Lord will be an integral all-inclusive part of everyday life.

#### All aspects of life will be **permeated** by the holiness of the LORD. The people of Israel will then be the holy nation that God has always envisioned her to be. Exodus 19:6[[48]](#footnote-48)

#### This will be a new **administration** where Christ will be king of the nations and the people of Israel will be His dearest subjugates. On that day, Jerusalem will be His capital city, Zion will be the mountain of His throne, the Church will be as His beautiful queen, and angels His personal ministers.

### Zechariah 14:21 – *Every cooking pot in Jerusalem and in Judah will be holy to the Lord of hosts; and all who* ***sacrifice*** *will come and take of them and boil in them. And there will no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts in that day*.

#### As we observe from this verse, sacrifices will continue in the Millennial Kingdom, but they will likely be **memorial** sacrifices. Ezekiel chapters 40-48 describe the Millennial Temple and the sacrifices that will be made during this time period.

#### The house of the Lord refers to the Millennial **Temple**. There will be no desecration of the temple by the heathen. Deuteronomy 23:3-4

#### Revelation 11:15 – “*The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign* ***forever*** *and ever*.” Zechariah 14:9

# APPENDIX

## The Day of the Lord

### The Day of the Lord is a major eschatological **theme** in Scripture. It is a common topic in both the Old and New Testaments. Of the 19 uses of ‘*in that day*’ in the book of Zechariah, 16 of are in chapters 12-14. Here we list those passages we believe refer to the *Day of the Lord* in the order of their appearance.

#### In the *Day of the Lord* many **nations** will be united to the Lord. Zechariah 2:11 “*Many nations will join themselves to the LORD in that day and will become My people*…” Zechariah 13:9

#### In the *Day of the Lord* there will be **prosperity** and safety.

##### Zechariah 3:10 “…*every one of you will invite his neighbor to* ***sit*** *under his vine and under his fig tree*…” Micah 4:4, Jeremiah 31:5, 32:15

##### Zechariah 9:16-17 …*God will* ***save*** *them in that day as the flock of His people*… Zechariah 12:8

### The *Day of the Lord* will be to **protect** Jerusalem. The Lord of hosts goes to battle against the nations.

#### Zechariah 12:3 *…I will make Jerusalem a heavy* ***stone*** *for all the peoples…* Joel 3:2, 9-15, Revelation 19, Obadiah 1:15

#### Zechariah 12:4 *…I will strike every horse with bewilderment and his rider with* ***madness****. But I will watch over the house of Judah…* Zechariah 14:15, Ezekiel 39:20

#### Zechariah 12:6 *…I will make the* ***clans*** *of Judah…they will consume on the right hand and on the left all the surrounding peoples…* Micah 4:13, Psalm 149:6-9

#### Zechariah 12:8 *…the LORD will* ***defend*** *the inhabitants of Jerusalem…*

#### Zechariah 12:9 *…I will set about to* ***destroy*** *all the nations that come against Jerusalem.* Haggai 2:22

#### Zechariah 12:11 *…there will be great* ***mourning*** *in Jerusalem…* Matthew 24:30

### The *Day of the Lord* will be for the **restoration** of Israel.

#### Zechariah 13:1 …*a* ***fountain*** *will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity*. Ezekiel 47:1

#### Zechariah 13:2 …*I will cut off the* ***names*** *of the idols from the land …I will also remove the prophets and the unclean spirit from the land*… Zephaniah 2:11

#### Zechariah 13:4 …*the prophets will each be* ***ashamed*** *of his vision when he prophesies*… Micah 3:6

### The *Day of the Lord* will mark the coming of **Messiah** in power and glory.

#### Zechariah 14:4 …*His feet will* ***stand*** *on the Mount of Olives*… Acts 1:11

#### Zechariah 14:6 …*there will be no* ***light****; the luminaries will dwindle*. Matthew 24:29

### The *Day of the Lord* will bring peace and prosperity for the **whole** world.

#### The living waters will flow into **dead** sea so that during the Millennium there will be fishing there. Zechariah 14:8 *…living waters will flow out of Jerusalem…* Isaiah 35:7, 41:18, Joel 3:17‑21

#### Zechariah 14:9 *…the* ***LORD*** *will be the only one, and His name the only one.* Deuteronomy 6:4, Habakkuk 2:14,

#### Zechariah 14:13 *…a great* ***panic*** *from the LORD will fall on them…* (the gathered armies of the world.) Mark 13:8

### The Day of the Lord will bring integral worship to the Lord.

#### Zechariah 14:20 …*there will be inscribed on the bells of the horses, “****HOLY*** *TO THE LORD*.” Revelation 20:6

#### Zechariah 14:21 …*there will no longer be a* ***Canaanite*** *in the house of the LORD of hosts in that day*. Zephaniah 3:17

### The *Day of the Lord* is like a **Jewish** day. Genesis 1:5 says, “*God called the light “day,” and the darkness He called “night.” And there was evening and there was morning, one day*.”

#### The Jewish day begins at **sundown**. The Day of the Lord begins with the darkness of the 7-year Tribulation period. Zephaniah 1:14-18

#### The Second Coming is like the break of **dawn** of the Jewish day. Zechariah 14:1-4

#### The Millennial Kingdom is likened to **daytime** aspect of the Jewish day. 1 Thessalonians 5:2, 2 Peter 3:10

#### Sundown marks the end of a Jewish day. Sundown will be when the **lackluster** battle of Gog and Magog happens. This occurs shortly after Satan is freed from the pit. The *Day of the Lord* ends with this battle. Revelation 20:7-10

### The *Day of the Lord* begins sometime **after** the rapture. Specifically, it begins when Israel signs a peace treaty with the Antichrist. That event marks the start of the Tribulation period. Daniel 9:27, 1 Thessalonians 1:10, 5:9, 2 Thessalonians 2:3

## The nature of the Day

### A primary element in the Day of the Lord is **judgment**. It begins and ends with war.

#### In the day of the Lord, God **pours** out His wrath starting on Israel.

#### God will pour out His wrath on the nations according to how they have **treated** Israel.

### There is a strong association of **fire** with the start and finish of the Day of the Lord. Ezekiel 38:22; Joel 2:3, 2:30; 2 Thessalonians 1:7; Revelation 8:5-7, 9:18, 14:18, 16:8, 17:16, 18:8, 20:9

### The Day of the Lord is referring to the period of time when God **begins** working with Israel as a nation and continues with Israel’s ultimate restoration.

## Events contained within the Day of the Lord

### The formation of a federation of **nations** into the matured beast empire. Daniel 2:7

### The rise of the **Antichrist**. Daniel 9:27, Revelation 13:1-10

### The formation of a one-world **religion**. Revelation 13:11-18

### The **seal** judgments. Revelation 6

### The **sealing** of the 144,000 Jewish men. Revelation 7, Matthew 24:14

### The **trumpet** judgments. Revelation 8-11

### The **Abomination** of Desolation. Matthew 24:15

### The **two** witnesses. Revelation 11

### The **persecution** of Israel. Revelation 12

### The **bowl** judgments. Revelation 16

### The rise and fall of **Babylon**. Revelation 17-18

### The battle of **Armageddon**. Ezekiel 38-39, Revelation 16:16, 19:17-21

### The **purging** of the heavens and earth with fire. 2 Peter 3:10-13

### The regathering of **Israel** into the land. Ezekiel 37:1-44, Matthew 24:31

### The restoration of Israel to the **land**. Amos 9:15

### The **Second** Coming. Matthew 24:29-30

### The resurrection of Old Testament and Tribulation **saints**. John 6:39-40, Revelation 20:4

### The Beast and the False Prophet **cast** into the lake of fire. Revelation 19:11-21

### The Sheep and **Goats** Judgment. Matthew 25

### The binding of **Satan** for 1000 years. Revelation 20:2-3

### The **Millennium**. Revelation 20

### The final **rebellion** of Satan. Revelation 20

### The **final** battle of Gog and Magog. Revelation 20

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24. Feinberg, Charles *The Minor Prophets* [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Woods, Andy: Audio Series on Zechariah (SermonAudio.com) [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. John F. Walvoord. “The prophecies of Jeremiah are notable because they were delivered at the peak of Babylon’s power when it seemed most unlikely that the great nation would fall. Babylon is pictured as being punished because of its cruel treatment of Israel (50:17, 18; 51:24, 49). Practically all of the predictions of Jeremiah seem to relate to the fall of Babylon by the attack of the Medes and the Persians. Only occasionally does there seem to be a reference to a future ultimate destruction as in Jeremiah 51:62-64. The prophecies of Jeremiah predicting the fall of Babylon at the hands of the Medes and the Persians were graphically fulfilled approximately sixty-five years later, as recorded in Daniel 5.” [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. John F. Walvoord. “The predictions of Isaiah have to do with Babylon’s ultimate destruction in the Day of the Lord. The near and the far view are often mingled as in chapter 13. The destruction of Babylon is pictured in Isaiah 13:1-11 as part of God’s program to punish the entire world (cp. 13:11). The historic conquering of Babylon by the Medes and the Persians is mentioned specifically in Isaiah 13:17-19 The prophet seems to refer to the far view, that is, the destruction of Babylon in relation to the second coming of Christ. Isaiah 13:20-22.” [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-stories/the-tower-of-babel.htmlf [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Charles Feinberg - Wickedness, furthermore, will not find it difficult to adjust itself there, for Babylon is her own place. It is to abide where it originated and where it has always belonged. The cycle of wickedness, as it were, is complete. Godlessness in every form has finally come home. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Dr. Constable’s Notes on Zechariah 2022 Edition [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Merril F. Unger, Zechariah: Prophet of Messiah's Glory: p. 109. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. The Aramaic Targum is an ancient interpretive paraphrase of the Hebrew Bible, the Jerusalem Talmud is one of the collections of Jewish civil and ceremonial law and legend, and a Midrash is a commentary on the Hebrew Bible. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Meredith Kline – the Exaltation of Christ https://meredithkline.com/klines-works/articles-and-essays/the-exaltation-of-christ/ paragraph 15 [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. H.C. Leupold, Exposing Zechariah pg. 124 [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Rollston, Chris A. 2000. “Hadrach.” In Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible, edited by David Noel Freedman, Allen C. Myers, and Astrid B. Beck, 538. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Leslie M. Grant – The Visions of Zechariah pg. 59 [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/zechariah-9/ [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Josephus, Antiquities 11.8.4-5 [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Josephus, Antiquities 11.8.4-5 [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Baldwin, p. 166. See also Kenneth C. Way, “Donkey Domain: Zechariah 9:9 and Lexical Semantics,” Journal of Biblical Literature 129:1 (2010):105-14 [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. *King Comments* commentary on Zechariah [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Biblical Studies Press. 2006. [*The NET Bible First Edition Notes*](https://ref.ly/logosres/gs-netnotes?ref=Bible.Zec11.11&off=656&ctx=S+19+(1982)%3a+26%E2%80%9330.+~Luke%2c+on+the+basis+o). Biblical Studies Press. “Luke, on the basis of Sumerian analogues, suggests that “thirty” came to be a term meaning anything of little or no value (p. 30)” [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Josephus *Antiquities of the Jews* 14:62 - After three months, Pompey’s troops finally managed to overthrow one of the Baris towers and were able to enter the Temple precinct, both from the citadel and from the west. First over the wall was Faustus Cornelius Sulla, the son of the former dictator and a senior officer in Pompey’s army. He was followed by two centurions, Furius and Fabius, who each led a cohort, and the Romans soon overcame the defending Jews, 12,000 of whom were slaughtered. However, only a few Romans troops were killed. Pompey himself entered the Temple’s Holy of Holies, which only the High Priest was allowed to enter, and thus desecrated it. He did not remove anything, neither its treasures nor any funds, and the next day, he ordered the Temple cleansed and its rituals resumed. Pompey then headed back to Rome and took Aristobulus with him for his triumphal procession. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Fries, Micah Exalting Jesus in Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi pg. 277 [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Elwell, Walter A., and Barry J. Beitzel. 1988. “Azel (Place).” In *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, 1:237. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House. “Unknown place supposedly on the eastern outskirts of Jerusalem.” [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Kings Commentary on Zechariah 14:20-21 [↑](#footnote-ref-48)