

# Zechariah 12-14 • The Day of the Lord

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All right, you guys ready? These last 3 chapters of Zechariah are absolutely amazing. As we get into these chapters though, I want to prepare you for something. What the Lord is going to do through Zechariah is He's going to go back and forth several times repeating some basic themes. I can't remember if I put these on a slide, did I do that? There should be like 4 things, did I? Yeah, there they are, I couldn't remember if I put it on there or not. Essentially, he's going to go through and talk about these things

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- The nations will gather against Jerusalem
- The situation will be dire for Jews
- The Lord will arrive when defeat is imminent
- Israel will be strengthened to defeat their enemies

The nations, he's going to talk about how the nations are going to gather one day against Jerusalem, the nations of the world. He's going to talk about how dire that situation is going to be for the people of Israel, particularly. He's then going to make mention of the fact that the Lord himself will arrive right at the point when the defeat of the Jews is most imminent and pretty much everybody thinks it's a foregone thing and then he's going to talk about how Israel will be strengthened to defeat their enemies.

Now again, what we've just said here, these are going to repeat. He's going to repeat them over and over, and sometimes he's going to jump from thing to thing to thing and not necessarily in order. So, it's important that we pay attention as we're going through these chapters.

As we start here off in chapter 12, I want you to notice that it begins by saying:

<sup>1</sup> *"The oracle of the word of the LORD concerning Israel: Thus declares the LORD, who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth and formed the spirit of man within him:" (ESV)*

Now stop there for a minute. Now we could go on and read about what he's going to say, but it's important that you understand why He said what he just

said, because what we're reading here and what he's about to do in these next chapters, is reveal absolutely incredible detail about the day of the Lord.

But you'll notice that he begins before he even says anything about the day of the Lord. He begins by reminding us of the person who's speaking. That's important when somebody starts to get up and say something we kind of want to say, well, who's speaking and do you have the right to speak? Is there some reason why I should be listening to you?

You know when somebody gets on a talk show or something and they're about to make a statement about something that we care about, they'll usually tell us in the interview, while I have so and so, Dr. so and so with me, he's got a Ph.D. and such. He's got a master's degree in this, and he has 3 earned degrees in philosophy and forever and whatever. And they talk about, his all his things. And what that all is meant to do is to communicate to you and me, pay attention, this person's probably an expert, all right?

Do you understand that's exactly what God is doing here? He opens up in this first verse and He says, *“thus declares the Lord”*. Now wait a minute, hold on, wait. Who's the Lord? Hey, He's the one *“who stretched out the heavens”*, this is the one who *“formed the earth”*, and this is the one who *“formed the spirit of man within him”*.

This is kind of God's way of saying, pay attention here, I know what I'm talking about and I'm about to say something important, okay. So, the first thing the Lord is going to speak about here is Jerusalem. Notice in verse 2, He says:

<sup>2</sup> *“Behold, I am about to make Jerusalem a cup of staggering to all the surrounding peoples. The siege of Jerusalem will also be against Judah.”* (ESV)

All right, now we need to also stop here for a moment and we need to look at this very descriptive term that the Lord uses here related to Jerusalem. He says it's going to be a *“cup of staggering to the surrounding peoples”*. The New American Standard Bible (NASB) says it's going to be a cup that causes reeling, and the New King James (NKJV) gives us a little further insight by calling it a cup of drunkenness.

And that's really what it means: A cup of drunkenness. Now, this is not an uncommon idea. When God sent his people into exile in the Persian kingdom

for 70 years, he referred to it in a very similar way. Let me put this on the screen, it's from Isaiah chapter 51 and says:

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### **Isaiah 51:17 (ESV)**

Wake yourself, wake yourself, stand up, O Jerusalem, you who have drunk from the hand of the LORD the cup of his wrath, who have drunk to the dregs (and that means to the very last bit) the bowl, the cup of staggering.

So, see, this is something that the Lord makes reference to from time to time, drinking the cup, the full cup, and the cup is usually a cup of God's wrath, but it's different here.

I want you to notice in verse 2, the cup is Jerusalem? It's literally Jerusalem itself, did you notice that? He says, “*behold, I'm about to make Jerusalem a cup of staggering*” and the picture that God wants you and me to see in his saying that, is that the nations are going to be drawn to Israel like a drunkard is drawn to drink. They're literally going to be drawn, almost like by a magnetic force, but they're going to be drawn to come against her in battle, and the Lord is going to do the drawing, right? And so, you can see the picture here is God summoning the nations for a one final battle. But when they drink this cup, this cup of staggering, it's going to end up being deadly for them although it's not going to look that way at first.

The Lord is going to go on to talk about how Jerusalem is going to be the demise of these nations in one other way. Look at how he says it again in verse 3. He's just using a different sort of a picture. He says:

<sup>3</sup> “*On that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples. All who lift it will surely hurt themselves. ...*” (ESV)

Anybody over about 50 knows what this passage is all about. It's funny, when you're young, you can lift anything and you're just, great. But then you get to be a certain age and you lift things that ought to be pretty easy to lift, and you're like in bed for the next 3 days.

Well, this is kind of the picture, but he goes on to then say things more plainly at the end of verse 3, and I want you to see this and this should maybe even be underlined in your Bible. He says:

<sup>3</sup> “... *“And all the nations of the earth will gather against it. (meaning Jerusalem)” (ESV)*

So, there it is. He made it a picture, first of all, of a cup of staggering, and then as a very heavy boulder that would hurt them if they lifted it. But now he just comes out and says, I'm going to gather all the nations and I'm going to draw them here in order that I might pour out my wrath on the peoples of mankind.

Verse 4:

<sup>4</sup> *“On that day, declares the LORD, I will strike every horse with panic, and its rider with madness. But for the sake of the house of Judah I will keep my eyes open, when I strike every horse of the peoples with blindness.” (ESV)*

Did you notice in that verse the echoes of another situation that had some similar wording? Do you remember when the Lord intervened when the nation of Egypt, the army of Egypt, was raging into the dried out part of the Red Sea to come against Israel after they had crossed the Red Sea on dry ground.

And were told that the Lord at that time also struck the horses and the chariots and things like that. And so, there's some similar language here. Well, there's been several battles throughout the word of God where we see remnants of some of these descriptive phrases of how the Lord is going to intervene in the battle.

But remember something, this is not just another battle, this is the battle. This is the battle of Armageddon, this is the last battle before the Lord ushers in the Kingdom of God.

Verse 5 goes on, it says:

<sup>5</sup> *“Then the clans of Judah shall say to themselves, ‘The inhabitants of Jerusalem have strength through the LORD of hosts, their God.’” (ESV)*

And this is a statement that marks the people of Israel when Jesus returns on their behalf.

God says it another way in verse 6.

<sup>6</sup> *“On that day I will make the clans of Judah like a blazing pot in the midst of wood, like a flaming torch among sheaves. ...”*

And there's pictures that he gives us there of fire, catching and burning. And He says:

<sup>6</sup> *“And they shall devour to the right and to the left all the surrounding peoples, while Jerusalem shall again be inhabited in its place, in Jerusalem.”* (ESV)

Now notice that he hasn't even mentioned the coming of the Lord really yet. He's talked about some of the benefits, he's talked about the way that people are going to respond. He's talked about the fact that he's going to bring the nations of the world against Jerusalem. He hasn't given us a whole lot of detail about that yet, and he hasn't talked to us about how the Lord is going to come. He simply gives us how the people respond to the Lord coming, right.

And then he goes on to say in verse 7:

<sup>7</sup> *“And the LORD will give salvation (and that word also means deliverance) to the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not surpass that of Judah.”* (ESV)

I want you to stop there because this is an interesting verse. You know, what God is describing here is how he's going to deal with different segments of the population in that day when Jesus returns, when He comes to bring deliverance.

Because remember, the armies that come against Jerusalem are going to come against all of Judah. Or, we would just say, Israel today, they're going to come against all of Israel, but they're going to of course, focus on Jerusalem, but they're going to try to conquer all the outlying lands as well, all the people of Israel.

And what He's saying in this verse is that He's going to first deliver the less populated areas of the land, so that the glory of the leading families and the and the families who are considered to be of more greater importance living in the city will not be considered of greater importance than the people lying in the outside areas.

And you might say, well, that's an interesting explanation, pastor Paul but why? I mean, why would he do that? What's the big deal? Now, this is kind of an interesting sort of a deal, the Lord is acknowledging here, the tensions that exist between different people, it is, it's one of the marks of our being human beings, I suppose. We're idiots and there's always tension between classes, skin color financial status. We make a big deal of all those things and we create tensions and the Jews did too. We read in the Old Testament how there was tension among the Jews for pretty much the whole Old Testament, after them becoming a nation.

You got the tension between the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah, and there was always, there was battles that went on for years. David and Solomon managed to unite the 2 kingdoms under their rule for a period of time. It didn't last, when Solomon's son Rehoboam came along, it split once again and it stayed split from that point onward and there was always tension.

Well, he's acknowledging the fact that when Jesus comes back, there's still going to be tension between people who are living in the outlying areas of Israel and those who are living in the city of Jerusalem. And usually people who are living in larger cities are more wealthy than people who are living in outside rural areas.

Sometimes they're even considered by our culture as being more important. But here's what God says, in light of the fact that men like to cause divisions among themselves, God says, you know what I'm going to do? I'm going to deliver the people, the poor people first, so that the rich and the famous and the important are not going to have anything to brag about. They're going to know that those people out there that they used to despise, and even look down on, they're the ones who got delivered first. And that's what God is saying. And so, God is kind of responding to this whole propensity that we have as human beings to consider ourselves more important than other people.

I just think it's really masterful the way He handles human tensions, but that what Jesus said? *“The last shall be first, and the first shall be last”*. (Matthew 20:16)

All right. Going on, verse 8.

<sup>8</sup> *“On that day the LORD will protect the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the feeblest among them on that day shall be like David, and the house of David shall be like God, like the angel of the LORD, going before them.”* (ESV)

Now, this verse is truly incredible, especially if you've ever read in the Old Testament about the life of David. David was an incredible man, he was a warrior, he was courageous, he was bold, he was incredible. I have a lot of respect, I can't wait to meet the man.

Well, what it says here is that when the Lord returns to fight for his people. And again, he hasn't really even told us about that yet, we're just reading about the benefits after his return. He says that the weakest and most feeble of the people living in the city are going to be like David. And what's crazy amazing about that as well is that those who are of David's descendants, he says they're going to be likened unto God among the people, they're going to be like the angel of the Lord.

And so, this is this kind of mind blowing, I mean, what's going to come upon these people and their ability, once the Lord returns to both defend themselves and their nation, it really is amazing. Now, as we move into verse 9, I want you to be careful to pay well, special attention really for the rest of this chapter 2 because God is going to spell out here His purpose for the battle of Armageddon.

Verse 9, says very clearly, it just lays it out why is that battle going to take place?

<sup>9</sup> *“And on that day (God says) I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.”* (ESV)

Now, it's not just because they've come against Jerusalem. This is a long-standing hatred of God and a long-standing hatred of the principles and the word of God. They're simply kind of focusing all that hatred on Israel and on Jerusalem.

And so, this is, according to verse 9, this final act of judgment that God is going to bring upon the nations that hated Israel and hated the Lord.

All right now we're going to approach verse 10. And once again, this is amazing and really deserves our attention because the Lord begins to explain here now something that I made mention of in an earlier study, and that is the emotional and spiritual turmoil that the people of Israel are going to feel when they recognize who their deliverer is, right? Look what it says in verse 10 and following:

<sup>10</sup> *“And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn.”*

<sup>11</sup> *On that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be as great as the mourning for Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.”* (ESV)

Wow, this is just, this is really, truly amazing. So not only does the Lord reveal here how the people are going to react when they behold the Messiah, but you'll notice that he prophecies here, how the Messiah is going to give his life in his first coming.

Remember something, this prophecy came 500 years before the birth of Christ. “500 years”. And I want you to notice that he speaks to them of looking upon Him whom they have pierced, right? He's speaking literally of crucifixion here, okay? And so that's amazing enough, but I also want you to see how the Lord describes this emotional turmoil, literally this horror that the people have when they discovered that their deliverer, this one who has come to their aid, who is there to deliver them from all of their enemies and so forth, is the same one who came before.

And you'll notice the depth and the severity of their grief. The prophet, I should say the Lord through the prophet, compares their grief to a couple who mourns over the death of their child, over a firstborn. He says *“they're going to mourn for as an only child”*. They're going to realize the people of Israel on that day are going to realize, this is the one, He's the one who came and we didn't recognize Him, and we rejected Him and we crucified Him and they're going to mourn it. It really is truly amazing and there's going to be a great time of repentance.

We're going to see that as we get into some other verses and there's going to be a great time of cleansing. We'll talk about that, but this chapter really ends with this whole idea of mourning, and it just, it goes on in this kind of strange, sort of poetic repetition.



Notice in verse 12, it says:

<sup>12</sup> *“The land shall mourn (the whole land of Israel is just going to mourn at that time, He says:), each family by itself: the family of the house of David by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself, and their wives by themselves;*

<sup>13</sup> *the family of the house of Levi (those are the priests) by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the Shimeites by itself, and their wives by themselves;*

<sup>14</sup> *and all the families that are left, each by itself, and their wives by themselves.”* (ESV)

It's interesting, isn't it, how the Lord just kind of breaks down the whole community of peoples in such a way that he speaks of all of them mourning and accepting their own personal responsibility for rejecting their Messiah when He came the first time.

But the beautiful part of all the tears and the way this chapter ends is really kind of sad with all the mourning, but the beautiful part is that it ends up creating so much cleansing. Weeping may go on, for a night but joy comes in the morning, the Bible tells us, and that's what happens. (Psalm 30:5)

As we begin chapter 13, look at verse 1.

<sup>1</sup> *“On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, (why?) to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness.”* (ESV)

People, can I just tell you what that fountain is? That fountain is Jesus. There's only one way people can be cleansed of sin and uncleanness and that's through the blood of the lamb. There's only one way right, to be clean. It's no different for these people than it is for us today right now. But isn't this a beautiful picture?

In fact, there's going to be such a cleansing, such a change that overcomes these people, it's going to, it's going to change their whole land.

Look at verse 2.

<sup>2</sup> *“And on that day, declares the LORD of hosts, I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, so that they shall be remembered no more. And also I will remove from the land the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness.”*

It says on that day, it's all going to be taken away. Do you guys remember we read something that kind of talked about this, actually hinted a little bit back in the third chapter of Zechariah, I won't make you turn back there. I'll put it on the screen for you. Check this out, look at Zechariah 3:9. We read this few weeks ago:

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### **Zechariah 3:9 (ESV)**

For behold, on the stone that I have set before Joshua, on a single stone with seven eyes, I will engrave its inscription, declares the LORD of hosts, (and look at this) and I will remove the iniquity of this land in a single day.

And that's what's going to happen when the Lord returns. It's going to begin with the people recognizing who the Messiah is, recognizing He's the one that they pierced and rejected. Recognizing their sin and recognizing that He's the only Savior. There's going to be mourning, there's going to be repentance and guess what? There's going to be cleansing and it as the Lord said in that earlier passage of Zechariah, *“He's going to remove the iniquity in a single day”*. It's going to be crazy, just amazing.

And of course, there's not going to be any need for prophecy because Jesus is going to be on the throne. Look at verse 3.

<sup>3</sup> *“And if anyone again prophesies, his father and mother who bore him will say to him, ‘You shall not live, for you speak lies in the name of the LORD.’ And his father and mother who bore him shall pierce him through when he prophesies.”* (ESV)

And that sounds kind of harsh, but you got to remember, prophecy is going to be unnecessary in the day of the Lord because we're going to have the Lord Himself on the throne. Literally ruling and reigning upon the throne of the earth at that time and people are going to stream to Jerusalem to hear his words, there will be no need.

So, you see, if anyone, anybody who even attempts to prophesy and say, “I have a word from the Lord for you” is the person attempting to deceive during that time? Because the Lord is not going to be giving prophecy, the Lord is not going to be pouring out upon anyone the spirit of prophecy, because there's no need at that time.

Paul tells us this, when we go back to 1 Corinthians, which we don't, we won't turn there now, but when we go back to 1 Corinthians chapter 13, what does Paul say about prophecy? He says, “prophecies will cease, prophecies will cease”. (1 Corinthians 13:8-10) When? When all things are made new, that's when Jesus returns there's no need for prophecy, He's here, He's with us, right? So those things are going to, the gifts of the Spirit literally are going to pass away we're told at that time when the Lord returns because we're going to have the gift giver right among us.

Now, the spirit of prophecy is still available today, the gifts of the Spirit are still available today because the Lord has not yet returned. Things have not been made new yet, right. But there is coming a day, and that's why this is going to be such a heinous crime, frankly, because someone is a is meaning to deceive, he's literally set out to deceive at that time.

In fact, he goes on to say in verse 4 that:

<sup>4</sup> *“On that day every prophet will be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies. He will not put on a hairy cloak in order to deceive, (That's what prophets would wear)*

<sup>5</sup> *but he will say, ‘I am no prophet, I am a worker of the soil, (I’m just a farmer) for a man sold me in my youth.’” (ESV)*

And what this is saying is that those who had previously been speaking falsely before the coming of the Lord and in the name of the Lord are going to be ashamed of the fact that they used to prophesy falsely in the name of the Lord. And if anybody asks them what they are, what they do, or whatever, they're going to no longer admit to being a prophet. They're going to say, “*I'm no prophet*”, I'm a farmer, leave me alone.

Look at this next verse.

<sup>6</sup> *“And if one asks him, ‘What are these wounds on your back?’ he will say, ‘The wounds I received in the house of my friends.’”* (ESV)

What's that all about? Well, do you guys remember when Elijah was dealing with the prophets of Baal? Remember that story in the Old Testament? There were 400 prophets of Baal and Elijah built an altar and put a sacrifice on it and he challenged the prophets of Baal to call down fire from heaven and consume the sacrifice. He said, hey, if Baal is God, then this shouldn't be a big deal for you guys, right?

And so, they couldn't very well not take the challenge. So, the prophets of Baal started hooping and hollering. Did you ever read that passage? It says they began to slash themselves until blood flowed. That was a common practice among pagan priests. They would literally mutilate themselves, they'd cut themselves, and it was a way of getting their god's small “g” attention.

So, here's this interesting verse in verse 6. It says:

<sup>6</sup> *“And if one asks him, ‘What are these wounds on your back?’ ...”* (ESV)

In other words, here's somebody who just denied being a prophet and somebody's going to look and say, oh yeah, well then where'd you get all those cuts on your back, he's going to deny that he got them as a pagan or false prophet, and he's going to basically say, no, those are just, I was just having a friendly brawl with some of my buds. It was nothing, no big deal.

In other words, he's going to be so ashamed, he's going to deny the physical marks on his body that marked him as a false prophet. And that's really what that is all about.

These last 3 verses of the chapter (verses 7, 8 and 9), and again, this is not a long chapter, this chapter 13, it really take us back now to the battle of Armageddon. And it begins by saying in verse 7:

<sup>7</sup> *“Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man who stands next to me,” declares the LORD of hosts. “Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered; I will turn my hand against the little ones.”* (ESV)

And again, this speaks of the very dire situation that the people of Israel are going to face in the battle of Armageddon just prior to the return of the Lord Jesus.

In fact, he goes on to say in verse 8 that:

<sup>8</sup> *“In the whole land, declares the LORD, two thirds shall be cut off and perish, and one third shall be left alive.”* (ESV)

See, this is how dire their situation is going to be when the nations come against Israel, two thirds of the people are going to be slaughtered. And it's even going to get worse than that, but only one third is going to remain. He says here in verse 8 and left alive.

And notice what's going to happen to that one third. Verse 9:

<sup>9</sup> *“And I will put this third into the fire, and refine them as one refines silver, and test them as gold is tested. ...”* (ESV)

In other words, these people are going to be thrown into the crucible, which is an oven that was used in those days to bring impurities out of the gold or the silver. And they would do it by heating up that oven to such intense heat that the impurities in the metal would be burned away and only the metal would remain, albeit in liquid form. And God says, I'm going to do that to these, this one third that remained, I'm going to refine them through testing and trial.

In other words, these people are going to think that they're dead. They're going to think our lives are forfeit and they are going to call out to the Lord. You'll notice earlier God said, I'm going to give them a spirit of supplication. They're going to cry out to God like they've never cried out before and they're going to return to the Lord in their hearts.

Chapter 14. Now, as we get into this chapter, I want to remind you again that the Lord is going to move back and forth in these verses between talking about positive elements related to the day of the Lord and negative aspects of the day of the Lord.

And he says in verse 1:

<sup>1</sup> *“Behold, a day is coming for the LORD, when the spoil taken from you (and that's spoil taken by the invading armies) will be divided in your midst.”* (ESV)

In other words, God is telling the people of Israel that they are going to be made to watch (those that survive) while the invading armies literally divide up their goods, their possessions, okay. They're going to be made to watch and He's telling them that ahead of time. And then here's why, verse 2:

<sup>2</sup> *"For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, ..." (ESV)*

But I want you to notice here before we keep reading, who is it? Who gathers the nations to Israel? Right? God says, I am going to gather them. Yes, they're going to be under the leadership of the anti-Christ, I know that, but this is the Lord's doing. This is the Lord's doing. *"I will gather the nations"*, God says, *"against Jerusalem to battle"*.

<sup>2</sup> *"... and the city shall be taken and the houses plundered and the women raped. Half of the city shall go out into exile, but the rest of the people shall not be cut off from the city." (ESV)*

So, half of the people are going to start to be carried off by the enemy, half of the people are going to be allowed to remain in the city, and at this particular point in the whole battle, it's going to be considered lost by the people of Israel. They're just going to say, we lost, and it's hopeless at this point. But I want you to notice how the tide turns, and this is the first time that we begin to read these specific things.

Verse 3. *"Then"* what is then referred to? That time of the worst hopelessness.

<sup>3</sup> *"Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle."*

So, this is when the Lord is going to return. You know when Jesus is going to return to the earth. Now, people don't mistake this for the rapture. This is not the rapture, this is the second coming of Jesus. The rapture is when He comes for the church, and in that coming, He doesn't come to earth, He comes in the air and we, and Paul says very specifically, we meet him in the air. (1 Thessalonians 4:17) All right, so that is considered to be the rapture of the church.

This is when He physically comes to the Earth, and not only do we know He physically comes to the earth, we know where He physically lands when He comes to the earth, and it's in verse 4.

<sup>4</sup> *“On that day (it says) his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley, so that one half of the Mount shall move northward, and the other half southward.” (ESV)*

Now this is crazy, but, he's telling us here, the Lord is going to descend upon the Mount of Olives and is coming, is going to be so powerful, it's going to be so glorious that it's going to be attended by an earthquake that is actually going to split the mountain into 2.

And there literally is going to be a movement northward and southward of this mountain, not unlike the parting of the Red Sea, by the way, another dynamic parting or separation that the Lord caused during the deliverance of his people and so forth. But I want to also talk about this mention of the Mount of Olives.

This is important because it is precisely where Jesus ascended into heaven when He ascended for the last time in the full sight of His disciples. Let me show you this on the screen from Acts chapter 1.

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### **Acts 1:9-12 (ESV)**

And when he (that's Jesus) had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.” (and not just the same way, we know he is going to be coming on the clouds, but we know he is going to be coming back to the same place. Where was it? It says,)

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet (which is the mount of Olives), which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away (or if you will, a Sabbath day's walk away from the city).”

So, Acts (the book of Acts) tells us that is exactly where Jesus ascended and it's, and Zechariah reveals for us, or should I say the Lord reveals through Zechariah that is in fact where he will return specifically.

Verse 5 goes on and it says:

<sup>5</sup> *“And you shall flee to the valley of my mountains, for the valley of the mountains shall reach to Azal. And you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him.”* (ESV)

And it's going to be an incredible day and he goes on to describe it. He says:

<sup>6</sup> *“On that day (look at this, verse 6) there shall be no light, cold, or frost.*

<sup>7</sup> *And there shall be a unique day, which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but at evening time there shall be light.”* (ESV)

Now that sounds confusing to you, it's because it is, and the reason it's confusing is because he's telling us here that it's going to be a unique day. That means it's something that man has never experienced before. In fact, he calls it a day known to the Lord, not known to man, known to the Lord.

So again, if it sounds confusing it's because we can't really relate. There's, it's not going to be day, it's not going to be night, and there's really not going to be light there, but there's going to be kind of light and it's kind of weird. And I believe the Lord himself is going to be that light. But, it's going to be just a very unique day, as He says. Verse 8:

<sup>8</sup> *“On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea. It shall continue in summer as in winter.”* (ESV)

And as you read that verse, you think to yourself, okay, is that speaking of literal waters, or is this some kind of a metaphoric picture of the wisdom of God that goes forth from Jerusalem as the Lord begins to speak and teach and so forth? One of the rules of biblical interpretation is that if the literal interpretation makes sense, don't try to figure out anything else.

And it's very possible, very possible (repeated for emphasis) that this could be speaking of literal waters that are flowing out from Jerusalem at that time.



And verse 9 tells us that:

<sup>9</sup> *“And the LORD will be king over all the earth. ...”* (ESV)

There it is right there, guys, you might want to underline it, circle it in your Bible because there it is. On that day:

<sup>9</sup> *“And the LORD will be king over all the earth. On that day the LORD will be one and his name one.”* (ESV)

And this is beginning that time of the Lord reigning and what we call the millennial kingdom. And in verse 10, he tells us that:

<sup>10</sup> *“The whole land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. ...”* (ESV)

Now, this is interesting, once again the whole land is going to be turned into a plain, you know what that means? It means no mountains, except for 1, there's only going to be 1 mountain. Literally, there's going to be such upheaval among the land, earthquakes and so forth, that we're told the land is going to flatten except for Mount Zion where Jerusalem sits. And you know this is not, Zechariah is not the only prophet that tells us this, and I don't believe this is prophetic language.

Let me show you, Isaiah chapter 40 on the screen.

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### **Isaiah 40:3-5 (ESV)**

A voice cries: “In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. (Look at this) Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

Can God make the valleys lifted up in the mountains to be lowered, made low? Yeah, He can do anything he wants to do. In fact, He's going to do it and we're going to see it and all the people of the earth are going to see it.

And the glory of the Lord will be revealed in it. And this is the interesting thing, because we're still kind of in the middle of verse 10.

<sup>10</sup> “...*But Jerusalem shall remain aloft on its site...*” (ESV)

That's Mount Zion. Did God promise that one day Zion would be elevated and exalted? Well, this is going to be the literal fulfillment of that prophecy, he says:

<sup>10</sup> “...*from the Gate of Benjamin to the place of the former gate, to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's winepresses.*

<sup>11</sup> *And it shall be inhabited, for there shall never again be a decree of utter destruction. Jerusalem shall dwell in security.*” (ESV)

I don't know that Jerusalem has much ever dwelt in security. I mean there, there were times, there were short periods of security during some of the kings, there were also enemies even during those times. But this is going to be a time unlike any other when Jesus is on the throne.

Verse 12. We're going to, now we're going to go back to the battle of Armageddon, okay. We were just talking about the millennial kingdom.

<sup>12</sup> “*And this shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the peoples that wage war against Jerusalem: their flesh will rot while they are still standing on their feet, their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongues will rot in their mouths.*

<sup>13</sup> *And on that day a great panic from the LORD shall fall on them, so that each will seize the hand of another, and the hand of the one will be raised against the hand of the other.*

<sup>14</sup> *Even Judah will fight at Jerusalem. And the wealth of all the surrounding nations shall be collected, gold, silver, and garments in great abundance.*” (ESV)

We heard about how when the battle was going very badly for Israel, they were going to have to sit and watch while their possessions were being divided by their enemies. But when the Lord returns, they are going to actually plunder the nations and that's what that says right there in verse 14.

And 15 says:

<sup>15</sup> *“And a plague like this plague shall fall on the horses, the mules, the camels, the donkeys, and whatever beasts may be in those camps.”* (ESV)

So interestingly enough in verse 15, we go back to the battle of Armageddon. Once again, you can see how we teeter totter kind of back and forth in terms of what is being described.

Verse 16:

<sup>16</sup> *“Then everyone who survives of all the nations that have come against Jerusalem...”* (ESV)

So, let me stop there. Will there be survivors of the people who come against Jerusalem? Yes. Will there be survivors of the people of the world who didn't come against Jerusalem? Yes, there will be people living on the earth during the millennial kingdom who survived the great tribulation.

Now, that's not going to be you. Because you're not going to experience the great tribulation, I don't believe. I believe that the rapture of the church is what ushers in the great tribulation, that the church is caught up to be with the Lord. The world is then thrust into the time of the great tribulation while we have the marriage supper of the lamb during that period, and then we return with the Lord when he returns to earth, right? And at that time, we've received our new bodies.

In fact, Paul says that when the Lord returns to catch away his church, we will be changed, some will be raised, those who have gone on before and those who are still alive, he says will be transformed, changed in the twinkling of an eye. (1 Corinthians 15:51-52) And what that means is they will, there are some people who believers who are alive at the time when Christ returns for his church, who will not experience physical death.

Isn't that amazing? But they will simply be changed, in the twinkling of an eye. And so those who are raised, the bodies who are raised are brand new. Those who are transformed in a twinkling eye, their bodies are brand new, and those are never to die again, right?

So, when I talk about the fact that there are going to be mortal people living upon the earth who will have survived the great tribulation and will actually go into the millennial kingdom, I'm talking about these people, these mortals that remained on the earth.

And because you see during the millennial kingdom, people will live, be born and die, but not you, because you will not be able to die at that time because you already will receive your incorruptible body, okay? But there will be mortal people on the earth at that time. That's a very important thing to remember.

So, He says:

*<sup>16</sup> "Then everyone who survives of all the nations that have come against Jerusalem shall go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, (And this is kind of odd) and to keep the Feast of Booths." (ESV)*

Your Bible may say "The Feast of Tabernacles" known by the same thing.

Now, what is the, first of all, he says that this is what's going to happen during the Millennial kingdom. People are going to come up annually to Jerusalem to celebrate and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. So, you're kind of going, okay, well first of all, what's the Feast of Tabernacles? Well, the Feast of Tabernacles was what the Nation of Israel would celebrate, which originally was meant as a commemorative celebration for the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness when they lived in, tents and booths and that sort of thing.

And it kind of celebrated how God took care of them and so forth during that 40 years, and fed them and provided for them, and, their clothes didn't wear out, their shoes didn't wear out. And that initially was that kind of a celebration. So that kind of begs the question, why in the world is that the festival that God wants, the people of the world, and I assume this is us because we're going to be there too.

Why are, why is everyone required to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles? I mean, I could think of some better feasts, like the Feast of Passover or something like that. Well, you got to understand that by the time of Zechariah, the Feast of Tabernacles had kind of morphed a little bit, and it became more than just a commemorative feast for their time in the wilderness wanderings.

The Feast of Tabernacles had become really the highlight of their religious year for the most part, and it became this very joyful kind of celebration of the autumn season, which is the season, that we're in right now. Because Autumn's season was the time when it was the end of the agricultural year. And just as we're seeing this endless supply of trucks, going by, filled with onions, it was, it's the same thing in Israel during that time of the Feast of Tabernacles, there was the in gathering of food and it was really a time of great celebration of the goodness of God.

And that is why, God is going to have us celebrate that during the millennial kingdom because we're going to be celebrating the fruitfulness and the goodness of God. The overflowing, abundant blessing of the Lord and that's a good reason to celebrate. That's a good reminder, but verses 17, 18, and 19 of this chapter also remind us that during this time there will be some people, some mortals who will walk in some level of an attitude of defiance toward the Lord. I want you to see this.

Verse 17 says:

*<sup>17</sup> "And if any of the families of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain on them.*

*<sup>18</sup> And if the family of Egypt does not go up and present themselves, then on them there shall be no rain; there shall be the plague with which the LORD afflicts the nations that do not go up to keep the Feast of Booths.*

*<sup>19</sup> This shall be the punishment to Egypt and the punishment to all the nations that do not go up to keep the Feast of Booths." (ESV)*

Remember, there's still going to be people on the earth who have a sinful nature. And that sinful nature is going to rise up from time to time, and people are going to become stubborn and they're going to refuse. I'm not going to make that trip to Jerusalem, I don't care what's going on. And there's going to be consequences for that.

The final verses of the chapter speak of the specialness of the millennial kingdom. I don't know if specialness is a word, but I just said it. So, there you go.

But in verse 20, it says,

<sup>20</sup> *“And on that day there shall be inscribed on the bells of the horses, “Holy to the LORD.” And the pots in the house of the LORD shall be as the bowls before the altar.”* (ESV)

And what that simply means is that the ordinary is going to become special, that it's really all that it means. But it says they're going to start inscribing things like Holy to the Lord. And here's the crazy thing, they're going to mean it. You pull out a dollar bill today and you look at it and it says, “in God we trust” and we've inscribed that on our money, but we don't mean it. We don't trust in the Lord, that's the fact of the matter. We're a post-Christian nation and we are primarily an atheistic nation. We don't trust in God, but, during the millennial kingdom, people are going to ascribe holy to the Lord on things because there's going to be such great joy and true holiness.

And it says here in verse 21 that:

<sup>21</sup> *“And every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holy to the LORD of hosts, (and holy means special, set apart for the service of the Lord) so that all who sacrifice may come and take of them and boil the meat of the sacrifice in them. And there shall no longer be a trader in the house of the LORD of hosts on that day.”* (ESV)

So, nobody's going to be buying and selling during that time. And yes, verse 21 says, there's going to be sacrifices going on during the millennial kingdom. That's a little bit of a mind bender too. And you, so you kind of ask, well, why is there going to be sacrifices during the millennial kingdom? Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament sacrificial system.

Well, the only thing we can surmise from that is that once again, it's going to be done kind of like we do communion today. It's going to be done as a commemorative act. We do communion and we talk about the body and the blood of Jesus. But it's already happened, but we do it in remembrance, and I can only believe that any sacrifices that go on during the millennial kingdom will be done for the same reason that we do communion.

So, you can see here that as we end out this study, the world is literally free at last from sin and corruption and filled with those who have been redeemed by the Lord and so forth.

I want to end our study here of Zechariah with reading for you or having us read together a corresponding passage that I'm going to give you in 2 parts here from Isaiah chapter 2. Let me show you this. This is beautiful.

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**Isaiah 2:1-4 (ESV)**

The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, and many peoples shall come, and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths."

And it goes on to say:

For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

Why? Because the Prince of Peace will be on the throne and there shall be true peace. And so, ends our study of the book of Zechariah. Let's close in prayer.

Heavenly Father, once again, you know we're just in awe of you. We're in awe of how much you have revealed in your word, and if we'll just dig and open our hearts and pray for wisdom and understanding and search for these nuggets of truth, Lord, there they are, just waiting to be found. You have outlined for us your redemptive plan, and we are in awe and we know, Lord God, that you are sovereignly moving even today in all the things that we see going on today, the way the world is heading toward greater darkness, the way even the governments of the world have turned to darkness and the decisions of politicians have become corrupt and evil. And yet, Lord God, you are sovereign and you are preparing the stage for the very things that we have read about tonight.

Lord, may our hearts be at rest in your presence as we wait for that day and we long for you, Lord God, and the spirit and the bride say, come, even so come Lord Jesus, we await your return. We pray these things in the name of Jesus Christ and all God's people said together. Amen. God bless you. Have a good rest of your evening.