

Introduction

Historical Background

In **539 BC**, Darius the Mede, at the age of 62, took over the Babylonian kingdom (Daniel 5:30-31). Darius the Mede was probably the Babylonian royal name for Cyrus the Persian, also known as Cyrus the Great, from the Aramaic dareyavesh (דָּרְיָוֶשׁ) meaning "lord."

In **538 BC**, King Cyrus the Great, who ruled from **539 - 530 BC**, gave the Jews permission to return to Jerusalem and rebuild God's temple, which had been lying in ruins since Nebuchadnezzar destroyed it in 586 BC. About 42300 Jews returned from Babylon under the civil leadership of Sheshbazzar and the spiritual guidance of Joshua the high priest (Ezra 5:16).

However, life back in the Promised Land was hard. No glorious new Israel awaited them. They were poor and weak, the land lay in ruins, and they were surrounded by hostile tribes. The temple rebuilding commenced in 536 BC but soon petered out. Opposition from neighbours and the indifference of the Jews caused the work to be abandoned (cf. Ezra 4:1–24). The work on the temple had only been going for two months when it stopped.

In **520 BC**, 18 years later, the temple still lay in ruins. This was the 2nd year of the reign of the Persian king Darius Hystaspes, who ruled from ca. 521–486 BC. King Darius Hystaspes ascended the throne after the death of Cambyses, who probably committed suicide. He was an officer of Cambyses and the great-grandson of the brother of Cyrus I. Darius Hystaspes retained the loyalty of the Persian army and thereby defeated other contenders for the throne.

As for the returning exiles, spiritually, many were still in **Babylon**, the place of rebellion. Therefore, the call came for them to 'Return to the LORD', the same call to repent and return from **Babylon** (Zechariah 2:7).

God sent Haggai and Zechariah as prophets to the Jews. Zerubbabel had taken over from Sheshbazzar, and Joshua was still the high priest. Haggai's task was mainly to encourage the physical rebuilding of the temple, and Zechariah's task was to encourage them spiritually.

In February of the year **519 BC**, Zechariah had eight apocalyptic visions, all during one night. Each vision followed the previous one, adding greater revelation. They were not dreams but visions.

What was the reason for these visions? It was to impart much needed comfort, hope, encouragement and a call to spiritual awakening for the weary and disheartened Jews.

According to R. Philips:

The prophetic word calls sinful people to repentance, while apocalyptic visions call downtrodden people to hope and belief.

To put it differently:

- **God's prophetic word afflicts the comfortable.**
- **God's apocalyptic word comforts the afflicted.**

Last but not least, the prophecy of Zechariah is a book saturated with Christ. Zechariah's portraits of Christ fill this prophecy with a depth and vibrancy unsurpassed anywhere else in an OT book or prophet, the prophet Isaiah being the only one to come close. The pointers to Jesus Christ are presented so frequently and dramatically on every page that some have called this prophecy, **The Gospel according to Zechariah**.

Question: Can you think of any reasons why Zechariah would be extremely relevant for us today?

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1. Return to Me

Zechariah 1:1-6

Question: Do people who fail God, people who do not advance spiritually, but are besieged by spiritual collapse and decay, merit a book in the Bible?

Yes, there is such a book: The Prophecy of Zechariah. Note in fact the meaning of Zechariah and his ancestors' names:

Zechariah 1:1 In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berekiah, the son of Iddo:

Zechariah - *YAHWEH remembers*
Berekiah - *YAHWEH blesses*
Iddo - *timely (at the appointed time)*

The Word of the LORD came to Zechariah for the first time in the second year of Darius Hystaspes's reign.

This was during the eighth Month, which is **October / November 520 BC**.

Where do you think a prophecy of encouragement would start, considering that these were downtrodden, disheartened and overwhelmed people? Do you think this is the right place to start?

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1.1 The Need for Repentance

Zechariah 1:2 "The LORD was very angry with your forefathers. ³ Therefore tell the people: This is what the **LORD Almighty** says: 'Return to me,' declares the **LORD Almighty**, 'and I will return to you,'" says the **LORD Almighty**.

1. Does God get angry? Why? **v.2**

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Note: The LORD was very angry with the people of Judah (**v.2**)
Literally translated, He is *angry with anger* or *displeased with displeasure*.

2. Three times the LORD addresses Judah, using his Name, *the LORD of Hosts*. What does the name, *The LORD of Hosts* signify?

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3. Why was God angry? Cf. Jeremiah 2:11-13

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Jeremiah 2:11 "Has a nation ever changed its gods? (Yet they are not gods at all.) But **my people have exchanged their Glory for worthless idols.** ¹² Be appalled at this, O heavens, and shudder with great horror," declares the LORD. ¹³ "My people have committed two sins: They have **forsaken me**, the spring of living water, and have **dug their own cisterns**, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.

4. What does God demand from rebels and sinners, as well as his covenant people? **v.3**
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1.2 A Definition of Repentance

Zechariah 1:3 Therefore tell the people: This is what the LORD Almighty says: '**Return to me,**' declares the LORD Almighty, 'and I will return to you,' says the LORD Almighty. ⁴ Do not be like your forefathers, to whom the earlier prophets proclaimed: This is what the LORD Almighty says: '**Turn from your evil ways and your evil practices.**' But they would not listen or pay attention to me, declares the LORD.

What is the meaning of repentance? Two aspects are mentioned with regard to repentance. What are they?

1. The first aspect: **v.1**
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2. The second aspect **v.4**
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The good news is that the LORD does not leave his people alone even when they rebel or drift away.

1.3 God's Gracious Provision

Zechariah 1:3 Therefore tell the people: This is what the **LORD Almighty** says: '**Return to me,**' declares the **LORD Almighty**, '**and I will return to you,**' says the **LORD Almighty.** ⁵ Where are your forefathers now? And the prophets, do they live for ever? ⁶ But did not my words and my decrees, which I commanded my servants the prophets, overtake your forefathers? "Then they repented and said, 'The LORD Almighty has done to us what our ways and practices deserve, just as he determined to do.'"

1. What will happen when we repent?

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2. What are the consequences of sin?
What happened to the forefathers of Judah? **v.5**

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3. Did they repent, return to the LORD after God's judgement fell on them?
Did that change the outcome of their punishment? **v.6**

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4. Ultimately there has to be a penalty for sin and satisfaction for God, as God is totally righteous. What is the penalty for sin? And how does God deal with sin?

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Looking ahead through Zechariah at Jesus. The Son of God and his dealing with sin is not found as clearly and as frequently anywhere else in the OT as in the prophecy of Zechariah.

Some examples:

Zech. 1	He will plead for mercy for Jerusalem and Judah.
Zech. 2	He will be YAHWEH living with us.
Zech. 3	He will stand accused on our behalf.
Zech. 3	He will deal with the sin of God's land in a single day.
Zech. 4	He will be the capstone of God's temple.
Zech. 4	He will complete God's temple as the Word of YAHWEH.
Zech. 5	He will banish sin to Babylon forever.
Zech. 6	He is the man who will build God's temple.
Zech. 6	He will be both king and priest of God.
Zech. 11	He will receive his pay of 30 pieces of silver for his shepherding work.
Zech. 12	He will be pierced for his people.
Zech. 13	He will become a fountain of cleansing for God's land.
Zech. 14	He will return to the Mount of Olives.
Zech. 14	He will fulfil the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles.

An Urgent Appeal

1. Is repentance something we can postpone?

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2. Is God serious about repentance?

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3. Is repentance demanded only from unbelievers or from believers as well?

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Read **Hebrews 10:26-31**

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Read **Hebrews 12:4-14**

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A Note on Babylon: Some of the Jewish exiles came back from Babylon physically, but Babylon, just like Jerusalem also has a spiritual significance. In the Bible, Babylon is the place of rebellion. Some physically returned to Jerusalem, but spiritually they remained in Babylon. They had never entered the spiritual Jerusalem. The same is true of many who assume that they are believers today.

2. A Man on a Red Horse

Zechariah 1:7-17

The Word of the LORD came to Zechariah for the first time during the eighth month of the second year of Darius Hystaspes, which was in October / November 520 BC. Three months later, we read again:

Zechariah 1:7 On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, the month of Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah, son of Berekiah, the son of Iddo.

This was during the month of February of the year 519 BC. The exact date was **9 or 10 February 519 BC**. During the course of one night, Zechariah received eight *apocalyptic visions*. These visions all build one upon another. They were not dreams, but visions with Zechariah being in a fully conscious state.

Remember, ***God's apocalyptic word comforts the afflicted.***

What was the first vision that Zechariah had?

2.1 A Man among the Myrtle Trees

Zechariah 1:8 During the night I had a vision--and there before me was **a man riding a red horse!** He was standing among the **myrtle trees** in a ravine. Behind him were red, brown and white horses. ⁹ I asked, "What are these, my lord?" The angel who was talking with me answered, "I will show you what they are." ¹⁰ Then the **man** standing **among the myrtle trees** explained, "They are the ones the LORD has sent to go throughout the earth." ¹¹ And they reported to the **angel of the LORD**, who was standing **among the myrtle trees**, "We have gone throughout the earth and found the whole world at rest and in peace."

1. Who is this man on the red horse? **v.11**

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2. What is the meaning of this name, the **Angel** or **Messenger of the LORD**?

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Hebrew: אֶת־מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה or 'malach YAHWEH'.

3. Who do you think the Angel or Messenger of YAHWEH is?

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4. By what other Name is the Messenger of the LORD called? **Genesis 22:15-18**

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5. What work has the Messenger of the LORD done before? **Genesis 22:11-18; Exodus 3:2-8; Numbers 22:27; Judges 2:1-2.**

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The myrtle tree: A beautiful shrub with white clusters of flowers. It was also a symbol of Israel to some of the righteous. When the leaves of this tree are crushed, a lovely fragrance results. It is one of the trees used during the Feast of Tabernacles to build the booths. **Nehemiah 8:15**

The ravine: It probably indicates a sense of oppression or a sense of foreboding.

The Interpreting Angel: There seems to be another figure in **v.9**, different from the Angel of the LORD. He is an interpreting angel explaining the visions to Zechariah.

6. What is the meaning of the brown, red, and white horses? **v.8**

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Note: In the book of Revelation, horses of different colours denote different things: power to effect warfare, peace, death, pestilence.

7. Zechariah's question to the interpreting angel (**v.9**), is answered by the rider on the red horse (**v.10**). What was the answer and what do you think is the meaning?

8. What did the other riders report to the Angel of the LORD? **v.11**

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Did this answer seem to please the Angel of the LORD?

2.2 A Plea for Mercy

Zechariah 1:12 Then the **angel of the LORD** said, "**LORD Almighty, how long will you withhold mercy from Jerusalem and from the towns of Judah, which you have been angry with these seventy years?**"

1. What does the Angel of the LORD do when he receives the news? **v.12**

2. With whom does the Angel of the LORD plead? **v.12**

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Note: The LORD of Hosts/warfare/the armies of Heaven. יהוה צבאות

3. What is the meaning of God's 70-year anger? **Jeremiah 25:11-12**
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Chronology of Events:

1st Deportation to Babylon was in 605 BC, which included Daniel and his friends.

2nd Deportation to Babylon was in 597 BC.

3rd Deportation to Babylon and the destruction of Jerusalem was in 586 BC.

Cyrus let the Jews return in 539 / 538 BC

A full 67 / 68 years had elapsed between 605 and 539 / 538 BC.

The exile, according to the prophet Jeremiah, would end after 70 years.

It was now the year 519 BC, almost 90 years later, and the exile should have ended.

4. Would God remember his people's plight? **Jeremiah 29:10-11; Daniel 9:1-2**
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Note: This report of world peace did not seem to please the angel of the LORD, as he pleaded for God's anger against his covenant people to cease.

What had given great hope to the Jews was that two years before, there had been an uprising against Cambyses, son of Cyrus who had been king of Persia. This caused him so much stress that he committed suicide.

The Jews hoped that the yoke of the Persians would be finally thrown off. However, Darius Hystaspes, who was one of Cambyses' generals, crushed the revolt and became King.

However, nothing happened to improve the situation of the Jews. Now there was peace again; however, not a God-given peace. The peace brought about by the power of the new king.

Zechariah 1:13 So the **LORD** spoke **kind and comforting** words to the angel who talked with me. ¹⁴ Then the angel who was speaking to me said, "Proclaim this word: This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'I am very **jealous for Jerusalem and Zion**, ¹⁵ but I am very angry with the nations that feel secure. I was only a little angry, but they added to the calamity.'"

5. What was the LORD of Hosts' answer to the Angel of the LORD? **v.13-15**
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6. What was the LORD's message to the Jews? **v.14-15**
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But there was more to come!

2.3 The LORD will Return

Zechariah 1:16 "Therefore, this is what the **LORD** says: **`I will return** to Jerusalem with **mercy**, and there **my house will be rebuilt**. And the **measuring line** will be stretched out over **Jerusalem**," declares the LORD Almighty."

1. Which two promises did the LORD of Hosts make in response to the Angel of the LORD's plea for mercy? **v.16**

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Zechariah 1:17 "Proclaim further: This is what the LORD Almighty says: **`My towns will again overflow** with prosperity, and **the LORD** will again **comfort Zion** and **choose Jerusalem**."

2. Which two further promises did the LORD also make? **v.17**

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3. What does this all mean? How do you return to a city with mercy? And how would the temple and the city be rebuilt?

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Cf. **Isaiah 60:1-3; 11, 14-22; Haggai 2:9**

The Comfort of Zion

The LORD did return to Jerusalem, and He did rebuild the temple.
John 1:14; John 2:19-22; John 7:37-39; 8:12; 8:24.

We also know that the New Jerusalem will have no temple.

^{NIV} **Revelation 21:22** I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³ The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.

Reading the rest of Zechariah confirms this. We know that the promises were not about the physical temple and the physical city alone.

1. Are you part of Babylon or part of the New Jerusalem? **Hebrews 12:22-24.**

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2. Do you know the rider on the red horse? Does he know you? **Psalms 34:7.**

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3. The New Jerusalem

Zechariah 1:18-2:5

During the night of **9 or 10 February 519 BC**, Zechariah received eight *apocalyptic visions*.

Zechariah's **1st vision** was of a man on a red horse.

Zechariah's **2nd vision** was that of four horns and four craftsmen.

3.1 Four Horns and four Craftsmen

Zechariah 1:18 Then **I looked** up--and there before me were four **horns!** ¹⁹ I asked the angel who was speaking to me, "What are these?" He answered me, "These are the horns that **scattered** Judah, Israel and Jerusalem." ²⁰ Then the LORD **showed me** four craftsmen. ²¹ I asked, "What are these coming to do?" He answered, "These are the horns that scattered Judah so that no one could raise his head, but the craftsmen have come to terrify them and throw down these horns of the nations who lifted up their horns against **the land of Judah to scatter its people.**"

1. What was the angel's answer to Zechariah's question? **v.19**

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2. What do think these four horns signify?

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Remember Nebuchadnezzar's dream and Daniel's interpretation of four successive kingdoms, which were of course, the kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. However, here it cannot mean the same, as **v.19** is past tense and the kingdoms of Greece and Rome still lay in the future.

The **four horns** represented oppression, i.e., powers from all **four directions**. They had scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem in the past.

From the North:	the Assyrians and Babylonians
From the South:	the Egyptians
From the West:	the Philistines
From the East:	the Moabites and Ammonites

3. What is the significance of the number **four** in apocalyptic language?

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Note: We read of the **four living creatures** (Revelation 4-5).

The **four living creatures** call forth the **four horsemen** of the apocalypse (Revelation 6).

We read of **four mighty angels** sealing God's elect (Revelation 7).

Four represents *the whole of*. For example, we speak of 'the four corners of the earth', meaning the whole of the earth.

4. What is the significance of the four craftsmen? **v.20**

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5. What will happen to the powers that scattered Judah? **v.20**

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6. Who do think is the ultimate craftsman? **Matthew 16:18**

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Then Zechariah received a **3rd vision**.

3.2 A Man with a Measuring Line

Zechariah 2:1 Then I looked up--and there before me was **a man with a measuring line** in his hand! ² I (**Zechariah**) asked, "Where are you going?" He answered me, "To **measure Jerusalem**, to find out how wide and how long it is."

Notice that the **3rd vision** is given in fulfilment of God's promise in the **1st vision**. In **Zechariah 1:16**, we heard: "Therefore, this is what the LORD says: 'I will return to Jerusalem with mercy, and there my house will be rebuilt. And the measuring line will be stretched out over Jerusalem,' " declares the LORD Almighty.

1. Zechariah asks the man the measuring line, "What are you going to do?"

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2. Why do you measure a building or a city?

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Note: To a large extent, Jerusalem was lying in ruins. Not just the temple but also the city as a whole lay in ruins. The city wall had been rebuilt under Nehemiah's watch (**Nehemiah 6:15**), but inside, nothing had been going on for the past 18 years. But that was not the full story. Something wonderful was going to happen. The man with the measuring line spoke as if the city had been completed!

3. Where else do we read of a man with a measuring line?

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4. What is/was the significance of a man with measuring equipment in the following scriptures?

Ezekiel 40:3

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Revelation 11:1-2

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Revelation 21:15

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But there was more. Another angel came with a message of correction to the departing angel.

Zechariah 2:3 Then the angel who was speaking to me left, and another angel came to meet him ⁴ and said to him: "Run, tell that young man, '**Jerusalem** will be **a city without walls** because of the great number of men and livestock in it.'"

5. There was something about the future Jerusalem that would be beyond the ordinary. What was it?

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The New Jerusalem would be an extremely large city. The city wall of the old Jerusalem was completed in 52 days. But the New Jerusalem would be an altogether different matter. It would be a city without walls to accommodate the large number of people and livestock in it. Livestock speaks of the wealth and prosperity of the people. It would be so large that it would be impossible to enclose the city with protecting walls. It was unthinkable in the ancient world. A city without the protection of city walls would be at the mercy of any marauding enemy. But the New Jerusalem would have no protecting city walls!

But how could this future city be left in such a vulnerable state?

3.3 A City without Walls

Zechariah 2:4 '**Jerusalem** will be **a city without walls** because of the great number of men and livestock in it. ⁵ And **I myself** will be a **wall of fire around it**,' **declares the LORD**, '**and I will be its glory within**.'

1. Why would there be no need for protecting walls?

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Cf. **Exodus 13:21-22; 40:38**. Also **Isaiah 26:1, 60:18-19**

2. So, what kind of city is this?

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3. How can you become a citizen of this city?

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Cf. **Psalm 87; Hebrews 12:22-23; Revelation 3:12; 7:14**

The Glory of the City

Zechariah 2:5 “And I myself will be a wall of fire around it,' declares the LORD, 'and I will be its glory within.’”

4. What will be the glory of the New Jerusalem? Cf. also **Haggai 2:9**

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Cf. **Isaiah 60:19; John 1:14; Hebrews 1:3; Revelation 21:22-23**

4. A Tale of Two Cities

Zechariah 2:6-13

The LORD first spoke to Zechariah during October / November 520 BC.
Three months later, Zechariah received eight *apocalyptic visions* during the night of **10 February 519 BC**.

These visions were of:

- 1st vision:** A man on a red horse.
- 2nd vision:** Four horns and four craftsmen.
- 3rd vision:** A Man with a measuring Line.

We have heard that God's apocalyptic word is to comfort the afflicted. We see this in the very opening sentence of the prophecy of Zechariah:

Zechariah 1:1 In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah, son of Berekiah, the son of Iddo:

Remember the significance of the names:

- Zechariah - the LORD remembers
- Berekiah - the LORD blesses
- Iddo - timely (or at the appointed time)

Many of the exiled Jews had returned from Babylon and were back in the Promised Land. However, the LORD shows Zechariah a vision of a man with a measuring line about to measure Jerusalem (**Isaiah 28:17; Ezekiel 40:3**). A city without walls and the LORD himself as its glory within (**v.4-5**).

And then the LORD's command comes...

4.1 Escape from Babylon!

Zechariah 2:6 "Come! Come! Flee from the land of the north," declares the LORD, "for I have scattered you to the four winds of heaven," declares the LORD. ⁷ "Come, O Zion! **Escape**, you who live in the Daughter of Babylon!"

1. What is this 'land of the north'? **v.6**

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2. What tone of language is being used here? What event is being recalled?

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Cf. **Isaiah 52:11**

3. What does this call mean, as the Jews have already returned to Jerusalem?
v.7

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4. Is this merely a call to return to an earthly city? Who or what exactly is 'Zion'?

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Cf. **Psalm 87; Hebrews 11:10, 16; 12:22; 13:14**

5. Where in the book of Revelation do we hear a similar call?

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Note: Many of the Jews were still living in a state of spiritual rebellion, a spiritual Babylon. So, Babylon and Jerusalem in Zechariah and also in many of the prophets, signified a greater spiritual reality. The city of rebellion and the city of blessing.

6. What is the Name of the Person calling them out? **v.6**

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Application: What does this mean for us today?

Unbeliever: If you are still living in sin and rebellion against God, you are still in Babylon! Come out!

Christian, you are a citizen of the New Jerusalem, of Zion. Do not keep going back to Babylon!

But there is more...

4.2 YAHWEH is coming to Zion

NKJ **Zechariah 2:8** For thus says **the LORD of Hosts**: "He sent **Me** after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who touches you touches **the apple of His eye**.⁹ "For surely **I** will shake **My** hand against them, and they shall become spoil for their servants. Then you will know that **the LORD of Hosts** has sent **Me**.¹⁰ "**Sing and rejoice**, O daughter of Zion! For behold, **I am coming** and **I will dwell** in your midst," says the **LORD**.

1. How does the LORD of Hosts feel about his people? **v.8**

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2. Do you think this statement includes all the Jews? **v.8**

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3. Whom will the LORD of Hosts honour and send against the nations that have plundered Jerusalem and Judah? **v.8**

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4. What will this person do in obedience to the LORD's command? **v.9**

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5. Who is this speaking in the 1st person: 'I' or 'me'? **v.9-10**

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Note: The NASB translates as follows:

^{NAS} **Zechariah 2:9** "For behold, I will wave **My** hand over them, so that they will be plunder for their slaves. Then you will know that **the LORD of hosts** has sent **Me**."

6. What must Zion shout and be glad about? **v.10**

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Cf. **Isaiah 52:7-8**

7. Are there two persons with the same name? **v.10**

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8. How is this possible?

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Challenge: Will you ask any Jew, Muslim or Jehovah's Witness to explain this?

But here the scope of Zechariah's vision of the New Jerusalem becomes even larger.

4.3 Glad Tidings for all Nations

^{NAS} **Zechariah 2:11** "And many nations will join themselves to **the LORD** in that day and will become **My people**. Then **I will dwell** in your midst, and you will know that **the LORD of hosts** has sent **Me** to you. ¹² "And the LORD will possess Judah as His portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem."

1. Will the New Jerusalem be for Jews only?

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Cf. **Psalms 87**

^{NAS} **Zechariah 2:11** "And many nations will join themselves **to the LORD** in that day and will become **My** people. Then **I** will dwell in your midst, and you will know that **the LORD of hosts** has sent **Me** to you."

Note: This is an extraordinary idea.

Gentiles were generally likened to dogs in Jesus' day.

Pharisees would pray: Thank God I'm not a gentile or a woman.

Gentile believers were not allowed into the Temple.

They could only go as far as the outer courtyard.

2. Where in the NT do we read about this fulfilment?

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Cf. **Ephesians 2:11-22; Romans 9:25-26**

3. How many persons called **the LORD** or **YAHWEH** are mentioned in **v.11**?

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Application: Do you believe this? Cf. **Genesis 19:24**

Be still before the LORD

Zechariah 2:13 "Be still before the LORD, all mankind, because he has roused himself from his holy dwelling."

1. What does it mean that God has roused himself from his holy dwelling?

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Cf. **Isaiah 33:10-14; John 12:31-32**

2. Why must mankind be still before the LORD?

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3. Have you entered this city? How can anyone enter this city? **Revelation 7:14; 22:14**

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5. Joshua the High Priest

Zechariah 3:1-5

In the Bible...

Babylon is the city of rebellion (**Revelation 17-18**).

All who are rebels and reject the LORD are citizens of Babylon.

They include the people of Old Testament as well as New Testament times.

Jerusalem is the city of God (**Revelation 21-22**).

All who believe and trust in the LORD are citizens of Jerusalem or Zion.

That includes Old Testament as well as New Testament believers.

The Gospel Call: Flee Babylon and come to the New Jerusalem or Zion, as the children of Zion do not belong in Babylon. So the gospel call was and still is: **Escape from Babylon!**

Furthermore, in time, Babylonians hiding in Jerusalem or Zion will be found out and expelled (**Isaiah 33:14**).

The LORD, **YAHWEH** himself, will deal with Zion's enemies, and YAHWEH himself will come and live in Jerusalem.

Question:

So how does one 'escape from Babylon'?

And how does one become a citizen of Jerusalem?

Zechariah's fourth vision gives the answer.

- 1st vision** A man on a red horse.
- 2nd vision** Four horns and four craftsmen.
- 3rd vision** A man with a measuring line.
- 4th vision** Joshua the high priest.

The interpreting angel who spoke to Zechariah earlier that night (**1:18-19**) now shows him the fourth vision, that of Joshua the high priest.

5.1 Accused and Accuser

Zechariah 3:1 Then he showed me **Joshua** the high priest standing before the **angel of the LORD**, and **Satan** standing at his right side to accuse him. ² The **LORD** said to Satan, "**The LORD rebuke you**, Satan! The LORD, who has **chosen Jerusalem**, rebuke you! Is not this man **a burning stick snatched from the fire**?" ³ Now Joshua was dressed in **filthy clothes** as he stood before the angel.

The high priest had to be a very godly person, as he was the only one allowed to enter the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle (later the temple), once a year only, on the **Day of Atonement** on behalf of the whole nation.

Cf. **Leviticus 16:7-10; 15-16**.

The high priest was the sole representative of the people; the one who pleaded and interceded for their sins before God. To be able to do this, he had to undergo elaborate preparation to make sure that he was holy.

1. Which three figures did Zechariah see in this vision? **v.1**

.....
.....
.....

2. What do you think is the work that Satan does? **v.1**

.....

3. What was the meaning of Joshua's filthy clothes? **v.3**

.....

Note on Satan's work

He does his work of betrayal, lying to us, promising us the good life. We give in to greed, hatred, slander, bitterness, selfishness, drunkenness, lust, and many other sins. But once caught in his web, we are truly guilty, and then he reveals his true person. Then he becomes the accuser and he knows every sinner and rebel belongs to him. His ultimate aim is to kill us. Not just our life on earth, but also to kill our souls!

4. Can you think of an example?

.....

But in Zechariah's vision, something amazing happened.

5.2 The LORD's rebuke!

Zechariah 3:2 The LORD said to Satan, "**The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you!** Is not this man **a burning stick snatched from the fire?**"

1. Who is the Angel of the LORD? **v.1-2**

.....

2. Did the Angel of the LORD accept Satan's accusation? **v.2**

.....

3. What does the LORD mean by, '**The LORD**, who has **chosen Jerusalem**'?

.....

4. In what manner is Joshua spared? **v.2**

.....

5. How does this apply to you?

.....

But the Angel of the LORD not only rebukes Satan...

5.3 A Change of Clothes

Zechariah 3:4 The angel (***of the LORD***) said to those who were standing before him, "**Take off his filthy clothes.**" Then he said to Joshua, "See, **I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you.**" ⁵ Then I (***Zechariah***) said, "Put a clean turban on his head." So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him, while the **Angel of the LORD** stood by.

1. What is commanded by the Angel of the LORD? **v.4**

.....

2. What is the only way that sin can be dealt with? **v.4**

.....

3. What is given in exchange for sin? **v.4**

.....

4. Which New Testament story does this remind you of?

.....

5. How does this apply to you?

.....

Augustus Toplady's beautiful hymn, **Rock of ages**:

*Nothing in my hand I bring, Simply to Thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for dress; Helpless, look to Thee for grace;
Foul, I to the fountain fly: Wash me, Saviour, or I die.*

6. Why the clean turban? **Cf. Exodus 28:36**

.....
Note that there is a Day coming when every 'vessel' in Jerusalem will be 'Holy to the LORD.' Cf. **Zechariah 14:20-21**.

On the Day of Atonement, Joshua the high priest had to enter into God's presence with the blood of the covenant. He did so for the sins of the people of God, individually and collectively.

Lesson: You have to go to Jesus Christ for your sins to be dealt with! He is the only One who can remove sin and replace it with righteousness.

The vision explains that it will be done, but how?

Holy Living

Without holiness, no one will see the LORD. Though Satan no longer has access to heaven, as Joshua we also stand accused, individually as *in filthy rags*, and as *burning sticks snatched from the fire*.

So how may we receive a place among those standing in heaven? How could our sins and the wrath of God be dealt with? The Angel of the LORD is able to take away our sin. A future 'Day of Atonement' was coming to deal with all the sins of the people of God's land in a single day. **Cf. Zechariah 3:9; 13:1**.

As a Christian, do you understand the seriousness of sin?

.....
Cf. Hebrews 12:1

.....
Cf. Romans 13:12-14

6. The Day of Atonement

Zechariah 3:6-10

Do you remember the four visions Zechariah has received so far?

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1st vision | A man on a red horse. |
| 2nd vision | Four horns and four craftsmen. |
| 3rd vision | A man with measuring line. |
| 4th vision | Joshua the high priest. |

How are they connected to one another? What is the story they tell?

.....

.....

.....

Zechariah's vision of **Joshua the high priest** shows him standing before the Angel of the Lord, dressed in filthy clothes (sin), with Satan accusing him. However, the Angel of the LORD, also called YAHWEH, rebukes Satan instead of rebuking Joshua. The LORD then commands the removal of Joshua's filthy clothes (sin) and to exchange them for new clothes (righteousness). Joshua's sins have been taken away! But how? How does God deal with sin?

We will find the answer in the rest of the passage. But first of all, what change must take place to show that this 'change of clothes' had indeed taken place?

6.1 A Solemn Charge

Zechariah 3:6 The Angel of the LORD gave this charge to Joshua: ⁷ "This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'If you will walk in my ways and keep my requirements, then you will govern my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you a place among these standing here.'"

1. Who is giving the charge to Joshua? **v.6**

.....

2. What is the content of this solemn charge? **v.7**

.....

3. What is meant by, **I will give you a place among these standing here?** **v.7**

.....

4. What does this mean for the life of a true believer?

.....
Cf. **Hebrews 12:4; 2 Corinthians 13:5**

5. Is salvation a two-way deal? God removes my sin and substitutes it with his own perfect righteousness, but salvation is also dependent on me doing my share. **v.3-4, 8**

.....
The Angel of the LORD then conveys a very important message from the LORD of Hosts to Joshua, with regard to the removal of sin.

6.2 God's Servant, the Branch

Zechariah 3:8 "Listen, O high priest Joshua and your associates seated before you, who are **men symbolic of things to come**: I am going to bring **my servant, the Branch**."

Joshua and the priesthood are symbolic of things to come!

1. In what way are Joshua and the other priests symbolic of things to come? **v.8**

.....
Hint: Note his name, office, work, Day of Atonement, nation.

2. What does **my servant** mean? **v.8**

.....
Cf. **Isaiah 52:11-53:11**

3. What does **the Branch** mean? **v.8**

.....
Cf. **Jeremiah 23:5-6**

When would this latter Joshua, new high priest or Branch do his work? How could they be sure that these things would definitely take place?

6.3 Sin Removed in a Single Day

Zechariah 3:9 "See, the **stone** I have set in front of Joshua! There are **seven eyes** on that one stone, and I will engrave an inscription on it," says the **LORD Almighty**, "and **I will remove the sin of this land in a single day.**"

1. What do you think is the meaning of the stone with the seven eyes and the LORD's inscription on it? **v.9a**

.....

2. What is the new covenant and memorial all about? **v.9b**

.....

Cf. **Isaiah 66:7-8**

3. What day would this be?

.....

Cf. **Hebrews 9:27-28**

An Invitation into the Shade

Zechariah 3:10 "In *that day* each of you will invite his neighbour to sit under his vine and fig tree," declares the LORD Almighty.

1. What is the result if someone has experienced this freedom? **v.10**

.....

2. How does *that day* apply to my neighbour? What is meant by **that day each of you will invite his neighbor to sit under his vine and fig tree?** **v.10**

.....

3. What does that day mean for all time?

.....

Cf. **Hebrews 3:7-4:11**

4. Have you experienced full salvation from sin? Have you experienced God's peace and rest? If so, are you inviting your neighbour to **sit in the shade?**

.....

7. The Work of the Holy Spirit - Part I

Zechariah 4:1-10

We get despondent when things don't seem to go well spiritually. Not only in the church of Jesus Christ, but also in our personal spiritual lives, in our families, in our children's lives. Does Zechariah have a message for us today to encourage us?

During the night of the **10th of February 519 BC**, the LORD of Hosts gave Zechariah *eight apocalyptic visions*.

The visions were:

- 1st vision** A man on a red horse.
- 2nd vision** Four horns and four craftsmen.
- 3rd vision** A man with a measuring line.
- 4th vision** Joshua the high priest.

Zechariah had already received an overload of four mind-blowing visions and information, as well as spiritual excitement. Now perhaps, his concentration was beginning to wane and he drifted away into sleep. However, it was not yet the end. He received a **fifth vision!**

7.1 A Golden Lampstand

Zechariah 4:1 Then the angel who talked with me returned and wakened me, as a man is wakened from his sleep. ² He asked me, "What do you see?" I answered, "I see **a solid gold lampstand** with a bowl at the top and **seven lights** on it, with **seven channels to the lights**. ³ Also there are **two olive trees** by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left."

1. What did Zechariah see and what did it mean? **v.2**

.....

Note: A golden lampstand or menorah is a seven-fold chandelier or lamp.

However, the Hebrew literally speaks of seven times seven channels. So it was in actual fact, a lampstand consisting of a bowl and seven lamps with seven lights each. Can you imagine the effect? An incredibly beautiful vision in the still and darkness of the night. A golden lamp with 49 wicks, serenely burning, casting its light into its surroundings.

2. Where was the golden lampstand kept in the tabernacle/temple, and what did it represent?

.....

Note: It is interesting that in John's Revelation, we find a similar vision to what Zechariah had (**Revelation 1:9-20**). Here we find, once again, a vision of **seven lampstands, each with seven lights**.

3. Who was among the lampstands in the book of Revelation? **Revelation 1:13**

.....

4. What did each golden lampstand signify? **Revelation 1:20**

.....

Note: A golden lampstand not only signifies God's presence of the Holy Spirit but also signifies the presence of the people of God. The golden nature of the lampstand is a sign of purity!

5. Why do you think there are seven lights on each?

.....

What did this vision mean? What are the lamps plus the two olive trees? Let us see.

7.2 The Source of 'Oil'

Zechariah 4:4 I asked the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?" ⁵ He answered, "Do you not know what these are?" "No, my lord," I replied. ⁶ So he said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: **`Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,'** " says the LORD Almighty.

1. "What are these my lord?" Did Zechariah receive an answer? **v.4**

.....

2. What did the angel ask Zechariah in return? **v.5**

.....

3. What message did the angel have for Zechariah concerning Zerubbabel? **v.6**

- About Zerubbabel's own strength and effort?
-

- About the real source of power for God's people?
-

Note: The spiritual lives of the saints need the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to achieve what God desires. We are often despondent about our lack of spiritual progress, or our struggle with sin.

4. What is the 'source of oil' for God's people to keep their lamps burning?

.....

But, there was more! Something else was needed to **complete the temple!**

7.3 The Completion of the Temple

Joshua as high priest and especially Zerubbabel as political leader of Judah felt overwhelmed about the daunting task they faced. They were supposed to provide the spiritual and political guidance and direction for the despondent Jews. It lay like a huge obstacle before them. How would they cope? Notice the answer...

Zechariah 4:7 "What are you, O mighty mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become level ground. Then he will bring out the capstone to shouts of 'God bless it! God bless it!'" ⁸ Then **the word of the LORD** came to me (Zechariah): ⁹ "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this temple; his hands will also complete it."

1. What is meant by the 'mighty mountain' before Zerubbabel? **v.7**

.....

2. What does the capstone signify in the building? **v.7**

.....

3. What will be the outcome of the rebuilding process? **v.9**

.....

The hands of Zerubbabel laid the foundation, and he will, with the help of the Holy Spirit, complete it. The words translated in **4:7**, 'God bless it! God bless it!' are literally: **Grace, grace to it!**

'The Day of Small Things'

Zechariah 4:10 "Who despises the day of small things? Men will rejoice when they see the plumb-line in the hand of Zerubbabel." (These seven are the eyes of the LORD, which range throughout the earth.)

1. Why should no one despise the day of small things? **v.10**

.....

2. What is the meaning of the plumb-line in Zerubbabel's hand?

.....

Note: Zerubbabel's name means 'the seed from Babylon.' This man with the shameful but also hopeful name, Zerubbabel, would lay the foundation of this very simple building. However, he was building, unbeknownst to him, something far greater.

Read **Isaiah 28:16-17!**

This temple would be no ordinary building, but a spiritual building (**Haggai 2:6-9**). Not only will Messiah be the cornerstone, but justice will be the measuring line, and righteousness the plumb-line.

3. What encouragement is there for us as Christians?

.....

4. How do we apply the 'day of small things' in our own lives?

.....

5. The question was, What is the meaning of the 'Stone with Seven Eyes'? (**Zechariah 3:9**) The answer is given, 'These seven are the eyes of the LORD.' (**Zechariah 4:10**)

.....

8. The Work of the Holy Spirit - Part II

Zechariah 4:7-14

During the night of **10 February 519 BC**, the LORD of Hosts gave Zechariah *eight apocalyptic visions*.

The first five visions were as follows:

- 1st vision** A man on a red horse.
- 2nd vision** Four horns and four craftsmen.
- 3rd vision** A man with a measuring line.
- 4th vision** Joshua the high priest.
- 5th vision** A golden lampstand.

For Zerubbabel, the rebuilding of the temple lay like a huge mountain, an obstacle, before him. The initial rebuilding process lasted only two months, before it was abandoned. Now, 16 years later, the temple still lay in ruins. The Jewish people were despondent and the surrounding nations were hostile. However, it was God the Holy Spirit who would accomplish his will through the humble rebuilding process restarted by Zerubbabel.

Zechariah 4:6 So he said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty."

Zerubbabel should not be discouraged by its small beginnings, he was busy with something far greater than he could ever imagine.

However, there were three more things for Zerubbabel to note to encourage him.

8.1 The Capstone

Zechariah 4:7 "What are you, O mighty mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become level ground. Then he will bring out the capstone to shouts of 'God bless it! God bless it!'"

1. What does the capstone signify according to a Biblical and Jewish understanding?

.....

Read **Psalm 118:22-27** and note **v.22**.

This psalm was the climax to the Great Hallel. It was sung on the **Passover** day, as well as during the **Feast of Tabernacles**. The new temple would be more than just a physical building.

Capstone was a *messianic term*!

Note also that the Aramaic commentary on **Zechariah 4:7** in the Targum of Zechariah reads as follows:

**And He shall reveal His anointed One
Whose name is told from of old
(and He shall rule over all kingdoms – added clause)**

2. In what manner would the temple Zerubbabel was building be completed? **v.7**

.....

But there was even more.

8.2 The Word of the LORD

Zechariah 4:8 Then the **word of the LORD** came to **me**: ⁹ "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this temple; his hands will also complete it. Then **you** will know that the **LORD Almighty** has sent **me** to **you**."

1. Can you identify the four different subjects/persons/pronouns in this text?

v.8

v.8

v.9

v.9

v.9

Note on Zerubbabel.

Sheshbazzar was the son of Jehoiachin, the last king of Judah. Therefore, Sheshbazzar was meant to be the next king. He was very old when the Jews returned. But the mantle of leadership fell on Zerubbabel, the son of Sheshbazzar's older brother, Shealtiel. Zerubbabel was also in the accession line an important ancestor of Jesus. His name means 'the seed from Babylon'.

2. Whom did the LORD of Hosts send to Zechariah? **v.9**

.....

Note: The NKJ translates this passage as:

^{NKJ} **Zechariah 4:7** "'Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain! And he shall bring forth the **capstone** with shouts of "Grace, grace to it!"' ⁸ Moreover **the word of the LORD** came to me, saying: ⁹ "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this temple; his hands shall also finish it. Then you will know that the **LORD of Hosts** has sent **Me** to you."

3. So who is the **Word of the LORD** being sent by the **LORD of Hosts**? **v.9**

.....

Cf. **John 1:1-2**

If this is correct, then it has two very significant implications.

8.3 The LORD's Anointed

Zechariah 4:11 Then I asked the angel, "What are these **two olive trees** on the right and the left of the lampstand?" ¹² Again I asked him, "What are these **two olive branches** beside the two gold pipes that pour out golden oil?" ¹³ He replied, "Do you not know what these are?" "No, my lord," I said. ¹⁴ So he said, "These are **the two who are anointed to serve the Lord of all the earth.**"

1. Zechariah inquires for a second and a third time regarding this vision, but now focusing on the two olive trees. What did these two olive trees represent? **v.11-12**

.....

2. What was the angel's answer? **v.14**

.....

3. Who were the two **anointed ones to serve the Lord of all the earth?** **v.14**

.....

Note: Two olive trees, i.e. the LORD's anointed; who or what are they?
They are the offices of 'king' and 'high priest', in the line of David and Aaron.
The two offices of **anointing, to serve the LORD of all the earth.**

4. What did their names signify?

.....

5. Why was it important for Joshua and Zerubbabel to know this wonderful description that they were **the two anointed ones to serve the Lord of all the earth?** **v.14**

.....

'Sons of Oil'

God is not only building each of us individually, He is also building the New Jerusalem!

How does this apply to us?

.....

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Messiah, He is the Word of the LORD sent to us by the LORD of Hosts. He is the Cornerstone as well as the Capstone that will complete the building. Justice would be the measuring-line and righteousness the plumb-line.

The LORD's anointed, literally translated is **sons of oil!** Both Joshua and Zerubbabel were symbolic of God's anointed One or Messiah to come.

In what manner?

Together, Joshua as high priest (Zechariah 3) and Zerubbabel as king (Zechariah 4) represented the coming Messiah who would be both Priest and King. Messiah would remove sin permanently as High Priest and build God's Temple and Kingdom as God's eternal King!

9. The Law, Sin, and its final Destination Zechariah 5:1-11

God gave Zechariah **eight apocalyptic visions** in one night, probably on 10 February 519 BC. Five have already been discussed.

- 1st vision: **A man on a red horse.**
- 2nd vision: **Four horns and four craftsmen.**
- 3rd vision: **Man with a measuring line.**
- 4th vision: **Joshua the high priest.**
- 5th vision: **A golden lampstand.**

We will now study the next two visions:

- 6th vision: **A flying scroll.**
- 7th vision: **A woman in a basket.**

Let us look at the **sixth vision**.

9.1 A Flying Scroll

Zechariah 5:1 I looked again--and there before me was a **flying scroll!** ² He asked me, "What do you see?" I answered, "I see a flying scroll, thirty feet long and fifteen feet (10m x 5m) wide." ³ And he said to me, "This is **the curse that is going out over the whole land**; for according to what it says on one side, every **thief** will be banished, and according to what it says on the other, everyone who **swears falsely** will be banished. ⁴ The LORD Almighty declares, 'I will send it out, and it will enter the house of the **thief** and the house of him who **swears falsely** by my name. It will remain in his house and destroy it, both its timbers and its stones.' "

1. What was the purpose of the flying scroll? **v.1-3**

.....

2. Why was the curse going over the whole land? **v.3**

.....

3. Why specifically is a **thief** and **one who swears falsely** mentioned? **v.4**

.....

Hint: Look at the 10 commandments on the next page.

The 10 Commandments

First Half: ^{NIV} Exodus 20:3-12

You shall have no other gods before me.

You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below....

- You shall not **misuse the name of the LORD your God**, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God.

Honour your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

The third commandment – you shall not **misuse the Name of the LORD**.

Second Half: ^{NIV} Exodus 20:13-17

You shall not murder.

You shall not commit adultery.

- You shall not **steal**.

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbour.

You shall not covet your neighbour's house. You shall not covet ...

The eighth commandment – you shall not **steal**.

4. Are only these particular sinners banished from the land? **v. 4**

.....

Note: The two laws on the scroll represented the whole of the Law. Everyone could see it, everyone could read it, and it went out to all people. It found every law-breaker in the whole of the land guilty.

But then there was the **seventh vision**, that of a woman in a measuring basket.

9.2 A Woman in a Basket

Zechariah 5:5 Then the angel who was speaking to me came forward and said to me, "Look up and see what this is that is appearing." ⁶ I asked, "What is it?" He replied, "It is a **measuring basket**." And he added, "This is the **iniquity** of the people throughout the land." ⁷ Then the cover of lead was raised, and there in the basket sat a **woman**! ⁸ He said, "This is wickedness," and he pushed her back into the basket and pushed the lead cover down over its mouth.

1. Why a measuring basket? **v.6**
-

2. Who was the woman? What did she represent? **v.6-7**

.....

3. Where do we read about a similar woman in the New Testament?

.....

Cf. **Revelation 17:5**

4. Why a cover of lead? **v.8**

.....

5. Is this not a very anti-women / chauvinistic depiction of iniquity?

.....

6. How does this vision connect with the **sixth vision**?

.....

9.3 The Land of Babylon

Zechariah 5:9 Then I looked up--and there before me were two women, with the wind in their wings! They had wings like those of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between heaven and earth. ¹⁰ "Where are they taking the basket?" I asked the angel who was speaking to me. ¹¹ He replied, "To **the country of Babylonia** to build a house for it. When it is ready, the basket will be set there in its place."

1. Why wind in their wings? **v.9**

.....

2. Where are they taking iniquity? Why do they build a house for it? **v.10-11**

.....

Note:

The New Jerusalem or Zion is just another name for heaven or God's land.
The final destination of sin and rebellion will be Babylon and not in God's land.
Babylon is just another name for Hell, and a house is a permanent abode, distinct from a tent.

Read **Revelation 18:2, 10, 21**, where we find ***the doom song of Babylon***.

The Final Solution

There is a day when God will finally deal with sin. Sinners will not be welcome in heaven.

Read **Revelation 22:11-15**

1. As you can see, sin and sinners will have a different final destination.

.....

2. Do you realise this is how God will finally deal with sin and with sinners?

.....

How about you? Choose this day your final destination. It is either Zion, the New Jerusalem, or it is Babylon.

10. A Vision of Heavenly Power

Zechariah 6:1-8

In one eventful night in February 519 BC, the prophet Zechariah had already received seven great visions together with their interpretation. These visions all concerned God's future plan for Jerusalem and the Messiah.

These visions were as follows:

- 1st vision: **A man on a red horse.**
- 2nd vision: **Four horns and four craftsmen.**
- 3rd vision: **Man with a measuring line.**
- 4th vision: **Joshua the high priest.**
- 5th vision: **A golden lampstand.**
- 6th vision: **A flying scroll.**
- 7th vision: **A woman in a basket.**

There was a lot to see and much information to digest, and it would have taken most of the night. It was probably early morning, as the sun was rising, when the **eighth vision** came to Zechariah.

Eighth vision: **Four chariots between two mountains of bronze.**

In Zechariah's day, the military chariot was the heavy machinery of war, used to smash the enemy, especially when on the open plain. This would be the most frightening sight a foot-soldier could face, as the chariot was the physical demonstration of raw power, meant to strike fear into the hearts of the enemy. It was the ancient equivalent of the modern-day tank or armoured vehicle.

So, let us look at the eighth vision.

10.1 Two bronze mountains

Zechariah 6:1 I looked up again--and there before me were **four chariots** coming out from between two mountains--mountains of bronze!

1. Which two mountains were the probable ones in his vision? **v.1**

.....

2. What did bronze signify in Zechariah's day? **v.1**

.....

Cf. **Jeremiah 1:18**

Note:

This **eighth vision** came in a similar fashion as the 1st vision. In the first vision, Zechariah saw a rider upon a red horse in **a ravine**. Now, once again Zechariah sees horse-drawn chariots appearing from between two bronze mountains, probably the same ravine as in vision 1.

3. What were chariots used for? **v.1**

.....

Let us look at the horses drawing the chariots.

10.2 Four Coloured Horses

Zechariah 6:2 The first chariot had **red** horses, the second **black**, ³ the third **white**, and the fourth **dappled**--all of them powerful. ⁴ I asked the angel who was speaking to me, "What are these, my lord?" ⁵ The angel answered me, "**These are the four spirits of heaven, going out from standing in the presence of the Lord of the whole world.** ⁶ The one with the **black** horses is going towards the north country, the one with the **white** horses towards the west, and the one with the **dappled** horses towards the south."

1. What were the four colours of these immensely powerful horses? **v.2-3**

.....

2. What do you think these colours signified?

.....

Cf. Revelation 6:2-8

Note:

It is clear that this is an apocalyptic image signifying events beyond description.

Red = warfare, carnage, and bloodshed

Black = scarcity and famine

White = conquest

Dappled = disease, pestilence, death

3. What was the meaning of the angel's reply to Zechariah's question?
Was the angel's reply good news or bad news? **v.4-5**

.....

Cf. Zechariah 4:14

4. Who are the four spirits of heaven? **v.5**

.....

Cf. Ezekiel 1:5ff; 10:1ff; Revelation 4:6; 6:1-8; 7:1

5. Where were they sent, and of what were they symbolic? **v.6**

.....

But we notice something else...

10.3 The Command to ‘Go’

Zechariah 6:7 When the powerful horses went out, they were straining to go throughout the earth. And he said, "**Go throughout the earth!**" So they went throughout the earth. ⁸ Then he called to me, "Look, **those going towards the north country have given my Spirit rest in the land of the north.**"

1. Did the powerful horses go whenever they wished to do so? **v.7**
.....
2. How does this compare with the four horsemen of the apocalypse in **Revelation 6:1-8**?
.....
3. What would happen wherever they went and what did this mean for God's people? **v.7**
.....
4. What does the number four signify in this vision? **v.1**
.....
5. What does, *those going towards the north country have given my Spirit rest in the land of the north mean?* **v.8**
.....

Hope for God's People

1. How does this vision compare with vision 1? Cf. **Zechariah 1:11**
.....

In Zechariah 1:12 the angel of the LORD asks: "**LORD of Hosts, how long will you withhold mercy from Jerusalem...**?"

The eighth vision tells us that God's Spirit will find rest in the Land of the North, i.e., Babylon. Notice the play on words from the first vision.

Vision 1: The world was at peace and at rest.

Vision 8: God's Spirit is at peace and at rest.

2. What do we learn from this vision in Zechariah 6?
.....

11. God's Servant, the Branch

Zechariah 6:9-15

The first Spanish seafarers to the Americas planted Spanish flags on the beaches of South America and on various islands. These acts signified that they claimed the territories for their respective Kings. The result to follow these symbolic acts was that many indigenous peoples lost their territories, as they were confiscated in time through military might.

The lesson is this: ***The symbolic act signifies something far greater to come.***

In this case the symbolic act of planting a flag preceded the future fulfilment of a conquest and a new order. In this passage we see such a symbolic act, conducted in the Name of the LORD, which points to a vastly greater reality in future.

The eventful night in February 519 BC ended. Zechariah saw 8 great visions and the interpretation of each vision was also given. Now a new tone is detected in the prophecy. Zechariah did not write what he **saw**, but what he **heard** as the Word of the LORD came to him.

11.1 A Crown for Joshua

Zechariah 6:9 The word of the LORD came to me: ¹⁰ "Take *silver and gold* from the exiles Heldai, Tobijah and Jedaiah, who have arrived from Babylon. Go the same day to the house of Josiah son of Zephaniah. ¹¹ Take the silver and gold and **make a crown**, and **set it on the head of the high priest, Joshua** son of Jehozadak."

Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah were returning exiles from Babylon. Their names were not important, but the fact that they came from Babylon with a gift of gold and silver. They had either made a collection amongst the Jews in Babylon, or it could have been the financial help King Darius provided to the Jews, alluded to in **Ezra 6:8**.

1. What did Zechariah have to do with the silver and gold? **v.9-11**

.....

2. Who was Josiah, son of Zephaniah? **v.10**

.....

3. Why would Zechariah place the crown on the head of Joshua, the high priest? **v.11**

.....

4. How would King Darius probably have viewed such an action? Cf. **Ezra 5, 6**

.....

Note: The crown would not remain on Joshua's head...

Zechariah 6:14 The **crown** will be given to Heldai, Tobijah, Jedaiah and Hen son of Zephaniah **as a memorial in the temple of the LORD.**

5. What had to happen as soon as Joshua was crowned? **v.14**

.....

But that was not all. A certain prophetic word had to be spoken before the crown was to be removed and placed in the temple.

11.2 Behold the Man!

As Zechariah placed the crown on the head of Joshua, he had to speak certain prophetic words.

Zechariah 6:12 "Tell him this is what **the LORD Almighty says: 'Here is the man** whose name is **the Branch**, and he will branch out **from his place** and **build the temple of the LORD.**"

1. What did the words 'Here is the man whose name is the Branch', mean? **v.12**

.....

Cf. **Jeremiah 23:5-6**

2. Where have we read of the Branch before? **Cf. Zechariah 3:8**

.....

3. Could Joshua be the Messiah?

.....

4. Where and when would this crowning act find its fulfilment?

.....

Cf. **John 19:1-5, 19**

Note: The Messiah or God's Anointed would be crowned 550 years **later** as the King of the Jews.

Instead of a golden crown, he would receive a crown of thorns. As he came before the Jews bloodied and with his crown of thorns, Pilate uttered these prophetic words: **'Behold the man!'**

But there was more...

The second part of the prophecy in v. 12 predicted that the Messiah or Branch would be the one to build the temple of the Lord.

11.3 The Temple of the LORD

Zechariah 6:12 Tell him this is what the LORD Almighty says: `Here is the man whose name is the Branch, and he will branch out **from his place** and **build the temple of the LORD**. ¹³ It is **he who will build the temple of the LORD**...

1. Did Zerrubabel and Joshua not complete the temple in 516 BC?

.....

2. How would Messiah or the Branch then build the temple? **v.12**

.....

The Messiah or Branch will build the house of God!

David wanted to build a house for God, but God said he could not do it, as he had shed too much blood. It had to be a man of peace.

God said: "I will build a house for you" as well as "an everlasting kingdom".

2 Samuel 7:11, 16

3. So, what is this House of God?

.....

Cf. **Matthew 16:16-18**

11.4 Priest and King

Zechariah 6:13 'It is he who will build the temple of the LORD, and he will be **clothed with majesty** and will **sit and rule on his throne**. And **he will be a priest on his throne**. And **there will be harmony between the two**.'

1. Which words concerning the Branch convey the idea of kingship? **v.13**

.....

2. How could Joshua as a priest symbolically represent the Messiah? **v.13**

.....

3. Would the Branch or Messiah only be a King? **v.13**

.....

4. A new kind of priesthood, a kingly priesthood? The Branch would bring harmony, which meant that he would unify the priesthood and kingship. **v.13**

.....

Cf. **Hebrews 7:1-5, 15-17**

Those Far Away will Come

Zechariah 6:14 "The **crown** will be given to Heldai, Tobijah, Jedaiah and Hen son of Zephaniah **as a memorial in the temple of the LORD**. ¹⁵ **Those who are far away** will come and help to **build the temple of the LORD**, and you will know **that the LORD Almighty** has sent **me** to you. This will happen if you diligently obey the LORD your God."

1. What was the purpose of the crown as a memorial in the temple? v. 14

.....

2. What was the meaning of, **Those who are far away** will come and help to **build the temple of the LORD**? v.15

.....

Note: Others will come from afar to help build the temple of the LORD. This was unthinkable to the people of Zechariah's time. In **Ezra 4**, we read that they did not want the surrounding peoples to help with the rebuilding. These gentiles were the ones that were making life hard for them. But in future, things would be different (**Ephesians 2:13-22**).

3. Who is the person talking to Zechariah, calling himself 'me'? **v.15**

.....

Notice the NKJV translation:

NKJ **Zechariah 6:15** "Even those from afar shall come and build the temple of the LORD. Then you shall know that **the LORD of hosts** has sent **Me** to you."

12. True Religion

Zechariah 7:1-14

This section, Zechariah 7:1-14, is an interlude in the prophecy of Zechariah.

In **December 518 BC**, more than a year after Zechariah had received his eight night visions, the Word of the LORD came to Zechariah again. This was in response to some envoys who had come from **Bethel** to enquire about a religious matter from the priests and prophets in Jerusalem. The people of **Bethel** had gone astray under the rule of **Jeroboam I and II**, and they were punished severely by the Assyrian and Babylonian invasions (Cf. **1 Kings 12:31; 2 Chronicles 11:13-15**). Now, they were deeply concerned about the possibility of incorrect worship. The prophet Hosea called Bethel by the name **Beth Aven**, house of wickedness (Cf. **Hosea 1:1; 4:15; 10:5**).

12.1 False Religion

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, the month of Kislev. ² The people of Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regem-Melech, together with their men, to entreat the LORD ³ by asking the priests of the house of the LORD Almighty and the prophets, "**Should I mourn and fast in the fifth month**, as I have done for so many years?" ⁴ Then the word of the LORD Almighty came to me: ⁵ "Ask all the people of the land and the priests, 'When you fasted and mourned in the **fifth** and **seventh** months for the past seventy years, **was it really for me that you fasted?**'" ⁶ And when you were eating and drinking, were you not just feasting for yourselves? ⁷ Are these not the words the LORD proclaimed through the earlier prophets when Jerusalem and its surrounding towns were at rest and prosperous, and the Negev and the western foothills were settled?"

1. Why did Sharezer, Regem-Melech and their men arrive from Bethel? **v.1-3**

.....

2. What was the role of the priest and the prophet in Judah and Israel? **v.3**

.....

Cf. also **Isaiah 30:9-11; Malachi 2:6-7**

3. What was the Lord's answer to their question? To what alluded the 70 years mentioned? **v.4-6**

.....

4. Why did the LORD mention some other fast days as well? **v.5**

.....

Note: What were these fast days all about?

The **9th** year of king **Zedekiah**:

10th month: the beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem
2 Kings 25:1; Jeremiah 52:4; Ezekiel 24:1

The **11th** year of king **Zedekiah**:

4th month: the breaching of the walls of Jerusalem.
2 Kings 25:8-10; Jeremiah 52:7

5th month: the burning of the temple.
2 Kings 25:8-10; Jeremiah 52:12-14

7th month: the assassination of Gedaliah, governor of Jerusalem.
2 Kings 25:22-25; Jeremiah 41:1-3

5. So why do you think the Jews fasted in the 5th and 7th months? **v.5, 8:19**

.....

For example:

One could liken this to South Africans in Australia getting together to reminisce about life in the old country, feeling heartbroken and sorry for themselves, and then again having a lovely barbecue or a 'braai'.

6. What does the LORD really require of His people? **v.7**

.....

Note:

God did not command any national fast day in Scripture, **except** that of the **Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:29-31)**. Fasting on this day should have been because of their sins, a genuine reason for fasting – to show deep distress about sinful ways and a desire for God to hear their cry and forgive them.

Application

We approach God with all kinds of religious questions and problems, which God is not really concerned about.

7. Can you think of some irrelevant questions we ask the LORD?

.....

.....

12.2 True Religion

Zechariah 7:8 And the word of the LORD came again to Zechariah: ⁹"This is what the LORD Almighty says: **`Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another.** ¹⁰**Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the alien or the poor. In your hearts do not think evil of each other.**"

1. What is God really concerned about? **v.9-10**

.....

2. Does this apply to the church of Jesus Christ? Cf. **Matthew 25:31-46**

.....

3. What do you think loving God is all about? **Luke 10:25-37**

.....

Cf. **James 2:14-17**

4. How does one show love to one's neighbour?

.....

5. What were the two areas they were warned about before the exile?
Cf. **Jeremiah 7:1-15; Jeremiah 19:1-6; Isaiah 58:1-12; Micah 6:8**

.....

.....

Did the people of God listen?

12.3 Hard Hearts, Closed Ears

Zechariah 7:11 "But they **refused to pay attention**; stubbornly they **turned their backs** and **stopped up their ears**.¹² They **made their hearts as hard as flint** and would not listen to the **law** or to the **words** that **the LORD Almighty had sent by his Spirit through the earlier prophets**."

1. Which five things did the people of God do? **v.11-12**

.....

2. To which warnings did they not listen? **v.12**

.....

3. What do we really find in the writings of the prophets? **v.12**

.....

Zechariah 7:12 ...So the LORD Almighty was **very angry**.¹³ 'When I called, they did not listen; so when they called, I would not listen,' says the LORD Almighty. ¹⁴ 'I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations, where they were strangers.'

The land was left so desolate behind them that no one could come or go. This is how they made the pleasant land desolate."

4. What happens when people reject God's pleading? **v.13-14**

.....

Cf. **Isaiah 65:2-5**

5. How angry was God?

.....

Literally: The LORD was **angry with anger**.

Note: The same phrase is bracketing Zechariah 1:2 and Zechariah 7:12.

6. What happens when rebels call out in distress? **v.13**

.....

Apply it!

1. What is true religion according to Zechariah 7?

.....

.....

2. What are the two outcomes of either true or false religion?

.....

13. A Promise to Bless

Zechariah 8:1-17

Do you want to receive God's blessing? The question is, what kind of blessing does God promise? Here in **Zechariah 8** the LORD makes ten great promises of blessing. The LORD then 'signs' these promises with his holy Name. For example, eight times the phrase 'the LORD Almighty (of Hosts) says' is used. Five times the phrase 'declares the LORD Almighty (of Hosts)' is used.

Remember how the people from Bethel came, asking a question regarding fasting and true religion? The reason they came was that they felt that God had abandoned them, as circumstances were not as glorious after the exile as expected. Well, the LORD answers through the prophet Zechariah.

13.1 The LORD loves Zion

Zechariah 8:1 Again the word of the LORD Almighty came to me. ² This is what the LORD Almighty says: "I am very jealous for Zion; I am burning with jealousy for her." ³ This is what the LORD says: "I will return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth, and the mountain of the LORD Almighty will be called the Holy Mountain."

1. How does the LORD feel about Zion? **v.2**

.....
Cf. **Zechariah 2:8b**

2. What does this mean? Is jealousy not a bad thing? **v.2**

.....
Cf. **Exodus 20:5; Exodus 34:14**

3. Who or what is **Zion**? Cf. **Zechariah 1** to **7**. What do the terms **City of Truth** and **Holy Mountain** convey? **v.3**

4. What does the LORD promise to do in future? **v.3**

5. How and when would the LORD return to Jerusalem? Cf. **Zechariah 2:10-11**

.....
But there is more.

Zechariah 8:4 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Once again men and women of ripe old age will sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with cane in hand because of his age. ⁵ The city streets will be filled with boys and girls playing there."

6. What does this mean:
***men and women of ripe old age will sit in the streets and
the streets will be filled with boys and girls playing there? v.4-5***

.....
Cf. **Isaiah 65:20**

7. When and to what extent was this realised in past history?

.....
Cf. **Isaiah 11:6-9**

8. When will this be fully realised?

.....
Cf. **Isaiah 65:17-19**

'In the OT the centre for God's praise was Mt. Zion. In the NT Jesus brings fulfilment of that picture. No longer is Jerusalem the centre of worship, for Christ is the true Temple. We now come in worship to the heavenly Zion where Jesus is. Because heaven is now the centre of our worship, there can be no earthly sanctuary.

Hebrews warns us that we have not here an abiding city but seek after that which is to come. We are pilgrims, journeying towards the city of God. That city has foundations and it will endure.'
Edmund Clowney

13.2 Two Kinds of Citizens

There are two kinds of citizens in the city of Jerusalem, which is symbolic of the spiritual reality.

Zechariah 8:6 This is what **the LORD Almighty** says: "It may seem marvellous to the **remnant of this people** at that time, but will it seem marvellous to me?" declares the LORD Almighty. ⁷ This is what the LORD Almighty says: "I will save **my people** from the countries of the east and the west. ⁸ I will bring them back to live in Jerusalem; they will be **my people**, and I will be faithful and righteous to them as **their God**."

1. Who were the first kind? **v.6**

-
2. Can you think of some names included in this group? Cf. **Hebrews 11**.

-
3. Do you have to be physically present to be a citizen of Zion?

.....
Cf. **Psalm 87; Hebrews 11:10, 16; 12:22-24; 13:14**

4. Do you know that there is **another group**? Who are they? What will happen to them in the end?

.....
Cf. **Matthew 13:24-30; Galatians 4:25-26; Revelation 11:2**

13.3 A Promise of Immediate Blessing

Zechariah 8:9 This is what **the LORD Almighty** says: "You who *now* hear these words spoken by the prophets *who were there when the foundation was laid* for the house of the LORD Almighty, **let your hands be strong so that the temple may be built.** ¹⁰ **Before that time** there were no wages for man or beast. No one could go about his business safely because of his enemy, for I had turned every man against his neighbour. ¹¹ **But now** I will not deal with **the remnant of this people** as I did in the past," declares the LORD Almighty. ¹² "The seed will grow well, the vine will yield its fruit, the ground will produce its crops, and the heavens will drop their dew. I will give all these things as an inheritance to **the remnant of this people.** ¹³ As you have been an object of cursing among the nations, **O Judah and Israel**, so will I save you, and you will be a blessing. Do not be afraid, but let your hands be strong."

1. Which blessings were immediately applicable? **v.12**

.....
Notice: **you who now hear...**, **who were there when... v.9** **but now... v.11**

2. What was the prevailing situation **before that time...? v.10**

-
3. But now, what would be different? **v.11**

-
4. What had changed? What event had taken place? **v.9**

.....
Cf. **Haggai 2:18**

5. What does this teach us? Was it simply the act of laying the foundation stone?
v.9

-
6. Who would God bless? **v.11-12**

13.4 God Blesses Obedience to the Covenant!

Zechariah 8:14 This is what **the LORD Almighty** says: "Just as I had determined to bring disaster upon you and showed no pity when your fathers angered me," says the LORD Almighty, ¹⁵ "so now I have determined to do good again to Jerusalem and Judah. **Do not be afraid.** ¹⁶ These are the things you are to do: Speak the truth to each other, and render true and sound judgment in your courts; ¹⁷ do not plot evil against your neighbour, and do not love to swear falsely. I hate all this," declares the LORD.

1. What are the pre-conditions for blessing? **v.16-17**

.....

2. How does God feel about disobedience to these commands? **v.16-17**

.....

Apply It!

There is a city called the New Jerusalem. A city with foundations. A city whose architect and builder is God. A heavenly city. The city of Truth. A place without death and suffering and pain. Great joy and laughter and peace. An unhurried and unstressed existence. Cf. **Psalm 87; Hebrews 11:10, 16; 12:22-24; 13:14**

How does anyone receive citizenship of this city? **Revelation 7:14-17; 22:14**

.....

14. The Gospel Age

Zechariah 8:18-23

In **Zechariah 7**, we hear about the people of Bethel sending special envoys to enquire of the prophets and the priests whether they should observe fasts such as that of the fifth month. Why did they ask this question? It was because circumstances were not as glorious as they thought it should have been. They were thinking that the LORD may have abandoned them.

However, in **Zechariah 8** we hear of the LORD's re-affirmation to bless his people. Ten times, the LORD of Hosts promises to bless his people.

What have we learnt from these blessings so far?

- The LORD loves (v. 2)
- These were not open-ended promises, but promised to the (v. 6, 7).
- There was promise of blessing (v.12) as well as blessing (v.13).
- obedience to the covenant always meets with (v.10). Cf. **Deuteronomy 28**.

14.1 From Fast to Feast

Zechariah 8:18 Again the word of the LORD Almighty came to me. ¹⁹ This is what the LORD Almighty says: "The fasts of the **fourth, fifth, seventh** and **tenth** months will become joyful and glad occasions and happy festivals for Judah. Therefore love truth and peace."

The people from Bethel initially inquired only about the fast of the fifth month (Zechariah 7:3), but there were actually four different fast days...

1. What were these fast days all about? v.19

.....
See Table 1 on the next page.

2. What do you think true fasting is all about?

.....
Cf. **Isaiah 57:15; Isaiah 58:6-12; 1 Corinthians 7:5**

The 9th year of king Zedekiah:

10th month: the beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem.
2 Kings 25:1; Jeremiah 52:4; Ezekiel 24:1

The 11th year of king Zedekiah:

4th month: the breaching of the walls of Jerusalem.
2 Kings 25:8-10; Jeremiah 52:7

5th month: the burning of the temple.
2 Kings 25:8-10; Jeremiah 52:12-14

7th month: the assassination of Gedaliah, governor of Jerusalem.
2 Kings 25:22-25; Jeremiah 41:1-3

Table 1: The Days of Fasting in Zechariah's Time

3. What did God promise to do if the people of Judah truly fasted? **v.19**

.....

But there was more...

14.2 Blessing for all Nations

These occasions would not only become joyful occasions to the people of Judah alone, but in future people from many cities and nations would come...

Zechariah 8:20 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Many peoples and the inhabitants of many cities will yet come, ²¹ and the inhabitants of one city will go to another and say, 'Let us go at once to entreat the LORD and seek the LORD Almighty. I myself am going.' ²² And many peoples and powerful nations will come to Jerusalem to seek the LORD Almighty and to entreat him."

1. Would this blessing of God be for Jews only? **v.20**

.....

2. What will these 'others' do as well? **v.21**

.....

3. What do we call this: ***Let us go at once to entreat the LORD and seek the LORD Almighty. I myself am going.***? **v.21**

.....

As you call to mind this description, do you hear the gospel? Many people of many nations coming to Zion? This ingathering was described by the prophets. For example in Daniel we read of the rise of a kingdom that would fill the earth (**Daniel 2:44-45**); a kingdom that will never be destroyed (**Daniel 7:13-14**). The prophet Isaiah makes it very clear that God's plan of salvation includes all nations (**Isaiah 42:6; Isaiah 49:6**). The prophet Hosea promises that in the very place where the gentiles are called *not my people*, they will be called *sons of the living God* (**Hosea 1:10; 2:23**).

14.3 "God is with you"

Zechariah 8:23 This is what **the LORD Almighty** says: "In those days ten men from all languages and nations will take firm hold of one Jew by the hem of his robe and say, 'Let us go with you, because we have heard that God is with you.'"

1. To what does 'those days' when ten men will take firm hold of one Jew refer? **v.23**

.....

2. Why would ten men from all languages take firm hold of one Jew? **v. 23**

.....

Cf. **Acts 2:5-11**

3. When did the events predicted here happen? **v.23**

.....

The Greatest Blessing

In which areas do the blessings of God lie?

Just as the people from Bethel, we are often confused about the blessings or promises of God in the Bible. We need to note that some blessings are material and some are spiritual. Some blessings are temporal and immediate, but some are eternal and deferred.

Complete **Table 2** below.

Compare your findings with the beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-12 and can you distinguish between immediate and future blessings?

		Material Blessing	Spiritual Blessing
1	v. 2		
2	v. 3		
3	v. 4		
4	v. 6		
5	v. 7		
6	v. 12,13		
7	v. 15		
8	v. 18		
9	v. 20		
10	v. 23		

Table 2: The Material and Spiritual Blessings of the LORD.

15. The Burden of the LORD

Zechariah 9:1-8

Approximately 40 years later, Zechariah received two 'oracles' from the LORD. These oracles are found in **Zechariah 9-11** and **Zechariah 12-14**.

1. What is the meaning of an oracle? Note that the word *massah* means 'a burden'.

.....
מִשָּׁא דְּבַר־יְהוָה Literally 'the burden of the word of the LORD'.

To what did these oracles refer?

First Oracle: The identity and character of the expected Priest-King.

Second Oracle: The People of God.

The scope of the oracle in chapter 9 is broad and refers to three eras:

- | | |
|---|---------|
| 1: The near future | v.1-8 |
| 2: Messiah & gospel age | v.9 -13 |
| 3: Until the end of time and the return of the LORD | v.14-17 |

The near future in **v.1-8**, from Zechariah's perspective, consisted of four prophecies, three against the nations of **Syria**, **Phoenicia**, and **Philistia**, the traditional enemies of Judah. The final prophecy concerned the future of **Judah** at this time.

These four prophecies were literally fulfilled under the expansion and conquests by Alexander of Macedon, which led the great Christian philosopher **Blaise Pascal** to comment:

Under the Christian religion, I find actual prophecy, and I find it in no other.

Alexander was a young man of about 20 when he defeated the Medo-Persian armies. He crossed the Hellespoint and started with a conquest that lasted 12 years in which he subdued the whole known earth. In **1 Maccabees 1:2-7** we read:

1 Maccabees 1:1 Alexander of Macedon son of Philip had come from the land of Kittim and defeated Darius king of the Persians and Medes, whom he succeeded as ruler, at first of Hellas. ² He undertook many campaigns, gained possession of many fortresses, and put the local kings to death. ³ So he advanced to the ends of the earth, plundering nation after nation; the earth grew silent before him, and his ambitious heart swelled with pride. ⁴ He assembled very powerful forces and subdued provinces, nations and princes, and they became his tributaries. ⁵ But the time came when Alexander took to his bed, in the knowledge that he was dying. ⁶ He summoned his officers, noblemen who had been brought up with him from his youth, and divided his kingdom among them while he was still alive. ⁷ Alexander had reigned twelve years when he died.

The New Jerusalem Bible

As Alexander advanced south towards Egypt during his conquest, he attacked one nation after another on his way, in the same order as foretold in the prophecy of Zechariah: first **Syria**, then **Phoenicia**, then **Philistia**.

15.1 Against Syria

Zechariah 9:1 The word of the LORD is against the land of Hadrach and will rest upon **Damascus**--for the eyes of men and all the tribes of Israel are on the LORD-- ² and upon Hamath too, which borders on it...

Syria was the first nation to bear the full onslaught of Alexander's armies.

1. Which was the first nation that would fall to Alexander? **v.1**

.....

2. Who else was behind the conquest of Syria? **v.1**

.....

Note: The Greek armies conquered and captured Syria around the year 323 BC, plus / minus 170 years after the prophecy of Zechariah.

^{ESV} **Zechariah 9:1** The burden of the word of the LORD is against the land of Hadrach and Damascus is its resting place. **For the LORD has an eye on mankind and on all the tribes of Israel...**

For the eye of the LORD is on all mankind and on all the tribes of Israel as well. God is Sovereign and he is in control.

15.2 Against Phoenicia

Zechariah 9:2 ... and upon **Tyre and Sidon**, though they are very skillful. ³ Tyre has built herself a stronghold; she has heaped up silver like dust, and gold like the dirt of the streets. ⁴ But the Lord will take away her possessions and destroy her power on the sea, and she will be consumed by fire.

1. Which was the second nation conquered by Alexander? **v.2-3**

.....

2. How wealthy was the city of Tyre? **v.3**

.....

Tyre seemed to be unconquerable. There was an island about a kilometer offshore on which they built an impenetrable fortress, and whenever attacked, they would withdraw to the island. However, 200 years after Zechariah's prophecy, her end came at the hands of Alexander. He took only 7 months in a vast undertaking to build a causeway to connect the mainland with the island.

15.3 Against Philistia

Zechariah 9:5 Ashkelon will see it and fear; **Gaza** will writhe in agony, and **Ekron** too, for her hope will wither. Gaza will lose her king and Ashkelon will be deserted. ⁶ Foreigners will occupy **Ashdod**, and I will cut off the pride of the **Philistines**. ⁷ I will take the blood from their mouths, the forbidden food from between their teeth. Those who are left will belong to our God and become leaders in Judah, and Ekron will be like the Jebusites.

1. Who was the third nation in Alexander's way? **v.5-6**

.....

2. What is the meaning of **Those who are left will belong to our God and become leaders in Judah...?** **v.7b**

.....

Cf. **Psalm 87:4; Zechariah 2:11; 8:20-23**

God's promise to Abraham was always that they would be a blessing to the nations. Here again we find a further confirmation of God's universal plan of salvation.

3. Who were the Jebusites? **v.7** Cf. Judges 1:21

.....

4. What did King David do? **2 Samuel 5:6-7**

.....

5. What happened to the Jebusite survivors?

.....

Judah was the next nation in Alexander's way. What would happen to them?

15.4 "I will Defend my House!"

Zechariah 9:8 But I will defend **my house** against marauding forces. Never again will an oppressor overrun **my people**, for now I am keeping watch.

1. What actually happened in history?

.....

Alexander came within sight of Jerusalem and then turned away. The Jewish historian Josephus says that he was **arrested by a dream and turned away**.

2. But was Jerusalem not overrun many times? **v.8**

.....

The second temple would be rebuilt but would again be destroyed in AD 70.

3. Could this have referred to the actual temple and the actual people? **Zechariah 2:4-5**

.....

The **Targum of Zechariah**:

And I will make my glorious Shekinah dwell in my Sanctuary, and the strength of my mighty arm shall be as a wall of fire encircling round about, that none may pass to and fro; and a ruler shall not overrun them again, for now I have revealed my might to do good for them.

4. Did **my house** and **my people** refer to the Jewish nation alone? **v.8**

.....

Cf. **Zechariah 6:12; Matthew 16:16-18; Hebrews 11:10, 16**

What can we learn?

1. About earthly opposition and kingdoms?

.....

2. About evil people such as Alexander and God's purposes?

.....

3. About God's house and God's people?

.....

4. In whom do you place your trust?

.....

16. The Coming of Messiah

Zechariah 9:9-13

Joshua the high priest and his associates were symbolic of the coming of the Messiah or 'the Branch', another way of referring to the Messiah or Christ.

Zechariah 3:8 Listen, O high priest **Joshua** and your associates seated before **you, who are men symbolic of things to come**: I am going to bring **my servant, the Branch**.

Joshua's symbolic coronation was a foreshadowing of a future king that would also be a priest; a priest-king.

Zechariah 6:11 Take the silver and gold and make a crown, and set it on the head of the high priest, **Joshua** son of Jehozadak. ¹² Tell him this is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Here is the man whose name is **the Branch**, and he will branch out from his place and build the temple of the LORD.'

The Oracle in **Zechariah 9-11** focuses on the identity and character of the expected Priest-King. The scope of the oracle in chapter 9 is broad, encapsulating three eras:

- v.1-8** The near future from Zechariah's perspective.
- v.9-13** The coming of the Messiah and the gospel age.
- v.14-17** The distant future towards the end of time and the return of the LORD.

16.1 A Gentle King

Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, **righteous** and **having salvation**, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

1. How would it sound to 'rejoice greatly'? Would it be a quiet affair? **v.9**

.....

2. Who is the '**Daughter of Zion?**' **v.9**

.....

3. Why would they rejoice? **v.9**

.....

4. What would the coming king be like? **v.9**

.....

Note that **the key** to understanding the passage is **Zechariah 3:8** and **Zechariah 6:12**, quoted earlier. Prophecies refer to a servant Messiah (**3:8**) who would be a priest as well as a king.

5. In what manner would he come? **v.9**

.....
Cf. **Matthew 21:4-5**

6. What did this king have to offer? **v.9**

.....
Cf. **Jeremiah 23:5-6**

Their **Messiah** would come to save them, as he would dispense salvation. But how would he bring about salvation as a military liberator? Thus far, the text does not tell us, but it will become clear

Notice the kind of peace and salvation to come...

16.2 A Universal Peace

Zechariah 9:10 I will take away the chariots from **Ephraim** and the war-horses from **Jerusalem**, and the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth. ¹¹ As for you, because of **the blood of my covenant** with you, I will free your **prisoners** from the waterless pit.

Remember **the Key**, **Zechariah 3:8** and **Zechariah 6:12-13**, fulfilled by Jesus.

1. What do the terms **chariots**, **war-horses**, and **battle bow** signify? **v.10**

.....

2. Will this peace be limited only to Jerusalem and Judah? **v.10**

.....

3. What did this peace specifically mean for Jerusalem and Judah? **v.11**

.....

4. What does **the blood of my covenant with you** mean? **v.11**

.....

16.3 A Gospel Invitation

^{NIV} **Zechariah 9:12** Return to your fortress, O **prisoners** of hope; even now I announce that I will restore twice as much to you.

¹³ I will bend **Judah** as I bend my bow and fill it with **Ephraim**. I will rouse your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece, and make you like a warrior's sword.

1. What is the meaning of the words, ***return to your fortress*** in v.12?

.....
Cf. **Psalm 18:2; 48:2-3**

2. What kind of bondage is referred to by the words, '***prisoners of hope***'? v.12

3. Who are Judah and Ephraim? v.13

4. How would the LORD use the sons of Zion against the sons of Greece as a bow and arrow and as a warrior's sword? v.13

.....
The Targum on Zechariah states:

*I will strengthen your children O Zion against **the children of the nations**.*

Note: The LORD would raise the sons of Zion against Yawan or Ionia, referring to Greece. Note the irony. Greece would be the enemy to destroy the Syrians, Phoenicians and Philistines, and even attempt to destroy Judah. However, the LORD would use the sons of Zion to attack the world ruler!

Do you know this King?

The **Messiah** or righteous king bringing about salvation and establishing a world peace had come. However, he was not a warlike king but came to make peace in another way.

1. What did ***the blood of the covenant*** mean under the new covenant?
Cf. **Luke 22:20**

2. How was this world peace established in the time of Jesus?
Cf. **Matthew 28:18-20**

3. How would the attack of the sons of Greece happen in **Messiah's** day?
Cf. **Acts 1:8**

The gospel would be taken in Greek to the Gentile nations. The gospel age or the age of world peace will come about by the slaying of the gentiles by the sons of Zion through their witness regarding their **Messiah**.

4. What was needed to accomplish this peace? **v.9, 11**

.....

17. The Return of the LORD

Zechariah 9:14-17

The first oracle described in **Zechariah 9-11**, which Zechariah received ca. 480 BC in his old age, covered history from the perspective of three periods:

- | | | |
|----|--|---------|
| 1: | The near future | 9:1-8, |
| 2: | Messiah and gospel age | 9:9-13 |
| 3: | Until the end of time and the return of the LORD | 9:14-17 |

The study of this oracle so far has covered the near future with the prophecy concerning the nations, as well as the coming of Messiah and the gospel age. The next part of the oracle deals with events at the end of time.

One could be tempted to read all kinds of fanciful interpretations into these last verses were it not for the fact that the words and ideas of these last verses of this prophecy are reproduced almost verbatim in parts of the New Testament.

The **first** observation is that...

17.1 The LORD will Appear

Zechariah 9:14 Then **the LORD will appear** over them; his arrow will flash like lightning. The **Sovereign LORD** will **sound the trumpet**; he will march in the storms of the south, ...

1. What does this sound like? **v.14**

.....
Cf. Mark 13; Luke 21; Matthew 24

2. What can we learn about the return of the LORD? Can it be missed? Will it be universally visible and audible? **v.14**

.....
Cf. Matthew 24:27

3. In the wilderness, what was the sounding of the trumpet for?

.....
Cf. Exodus 19:13b, 16-19; Exodus 20:18; Leviticus 23:23-24

4. What do you think is the significance of the Feast of Trumpets?

The Fulfilment of the Feast of Trumpets.

First: 'I believe that the truest fulfilment of this festival is Jesus' offer of the New Covenant to all who would receive it.'

"This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you" (**Luke 22:20b**).

Source: Jews for Jesus

Second: The apostle Paul also writes about an event that will unfold 'at the last trumpet' which probably is a specific reference to 'the last trumpet' blown on the Feasts of Trumpets.

1 Corinthians 15:52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16

The **second** observation is about ...

17.2 The Final Battle

Zechariah 9:15 ... and the **LORD Almighty will shield** them. They will destroy and overcome with slingstones. They will drink and roar as with wine; they will be full like a bowl used for sprinkling the corners of the altar. ¹⁶ The **LORD their God will save** them **on that day** as the **flock of his people**.

1. What is a shield for and who will be the shield for God's people? **v.15a**

.....

2. What will happen to all evil? **v.15b**

.....

Cf. **Revelation 20:7-9**

3. What concept does **drink and roar as with wine** convey? **v.15c**

.....

4. What is the meaning of **full like a bowl used for sprinkling the corners of the altar**? **v.15d**

.....

Cf. **Leviticus 16:15-16b**

5. What will the LORD their God do for his flock on that day? **v.16**

.....

6. Which day is here referred to? **v.16**

.....

The **third** observation regards a promise.

17.3 The Endless Rest

Zechariah 9:16b ...They will **sparkle in his land** like jewels in a crown. ¹⁷ How **attractive and beautiful** they will be! **Grain** will make the young men thrive, and **new wine** the young women.

1. To whom do **they** refer? **v.16b-17**

.....

2. What is the meaning of the description **they will sparkle like jewels** and **attractive and beautiful they will be**? **v.16b-17**

.....

Cf. **Isaiah 62:3-5; Revelation 21:11, 19**

3. What do you think is the meaning of **grain** and **new wine**? **v.17**

.....

Cf. **Genesis 27:28; Jeremiah 31:12; Amos 9:13; Joel 3:18; Haggai 1:11**

4. What idea does **young men** and **young women** convey? **v.17**

.....

Note:

Grain and **new wine**: God's blessing upon and provision for his people.

Beautiful: God's people will be attractive and beautiful. All the marks of sin will be removed.

Young men and women: There will be the absence of old age and death. We will indeed be 'forever young'.

Are you prepared for the LORD's return?

Jesus said: "No one knows about **that day** or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. "Therefore **keep watch**, because you do not know **on what day your Lord will come**. **Matthew 24:36, 42** ^{NIV}

18. The Good Shepherd

Zechariah 10:1-5

Zechariah 10 continues the theme of **Zechariah 9:9-10**, regarding the promised messianic king.

Note that the Messiah, the shepherd-king, would first of all be king of the Jews, but the peace he would establish would also extend to all the nations.

Would the Messiah be so different from the leaders they already had? Joshua the high priest and Zerubbabel the governor, as well as the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, were godly leaders. We also know that the priest Ezra, the governor Nehemiah and the prophet Malachi, who came after them, were godly people too. However, it did not go very well even in the days of these godly leaders. Zechariah was killed at the temple (**Matthew 23:35**). We also know that Malachi and Nehemiah spoke against all the abuses of the Jews and their false religion.

Throughout Jewish and Israelite history, there were a few good kings and true prophets, but mostly the leaders of the nation, kings, priests and prophets were only looking out for themselves. In the days of Jesus, the religious leaders were in it only for themselves. Therefore, a good king was necessary, a righteous king, but not only that, a godly priesthood was also needed.

So if the Messiah would come, what kind of a king would he be?

18.1 The LORD and Idols

Zechariah 10:1 Ask **the LORD** for rain in the springtime; it is **the LORD who makes** the storm clouds. He gives showers of rain to men, and plants of the field to everyone.

² **The idols** speak deceit, diviners see visions that lie; they tell dreams that are false, they give comfort in vain.

1. Who is in control of the elements and sustains life? **v.1**

.....

NB: There are seemingly self-evident truths that need to be remembered.

2. Why this agricultural example and lesson? **v.1**

.....

3. Does this mean that God is a God of agriculture? **v.1**

.....

4. What did the Jews do when God did not act in a preconceived manner? **v.2**

.....

The word for 'idols': תַּרְפִּים is translated as household gods in the ESV.

5. Where does the problem actually lie?

.....

Note the irony: Coming from Babylon, they knew the stories of Daniel and the absolute inability of the diviners, so-called 'wise men' and enchanter to solve anything, they still trusted in similar charlatans.

6. Is that not true of the world today?

.....

7. Is it perhaps possible to turn even God and Jesus into 'household gods'?

.....

Note: These false gods 'don't tell the truth.'

Our spiritual state must be right. Our hearts must be turned towards the Creator and Sustainer of all things.

18.2 Abused Sheep and false Shepherds

Zechariah 10:2 ...Therefore **the people wander like sheep oppressed for lack of a shepherd.** ³ "My anger burns against **the shepherds**, and I will punish **the leaders**; for the LORD Almighty will care for **his flock**, the house of Judah, and make them like a proud horse in battle."

1. What was the result for the people? **v.2**

.....

Cf. **Matthew 9:36**

2. What happens when there is a general lack of trustworthy, godly, servant leaders today, in the government as well as in the church?

.....

This was of course, an age-old problem that existed long before the Babylonian exile. That is why they ended up in Babylon in the first place! Note Isaiah's prophecy more than two centuries before, where he gave this apt description:

Isaiah 8:18-22, Isaiah 30:10-11

3. How would God react to this false guidance and teaching? **v.3**

.....

God's anger will burn against these עֲתֻדִּים (*attud*), meaning: **male goats**.

Leaders who are abusing the flock.

False teachers, false visions, lying shepherds.

False teaching, false message, counterfeit miracles.

4. What would the LORD do for his flock? **v.3**

.....

How would the LORD accomplish this?

18.3 The LORD's True Shepherd

Zechariah 10:4 From **Judah** will come the **cornerstone**, from him the **tent peg**, from him the **battle bow**, from him **every ruler**. ⁵ Together they will be like mighty men trampling the muddy streets in battle. Because the LORD is with them, they will fight and overthrow the horsemen.

1. How and in what manner would God care for his people? **v.4**

.....

2. What would this shepherd of God be like? **v.4**

.....

.....

Cf. **1 Peter 2:6; Ephesians 2:20**

3. What is the meaning of battle bow? **v.4**

.....

Cf. **Revelation 6:2**

Note: He is a warrior and he will slay and conquer his enemies.

The idea is that this ruler, this shepherd will fight for and protect his sheep, not merely enriching himself.

4. What is the meaning of 'Every Ruler'? **v.4**

.....

Cf. **Genesis 49:10-11**

5. Who would be the true shepherd, the ruler to whom everything belongs?

.....

6. What would the LORD do for his oppressed and abused people? **v.3, 5**

.....

Where do you place your trust?

1. Do you trust in idols or false shepherds?

.....

2. Or have you placed your trust in Jesus Christ?

.....

19. The Second Exodus

Zechariah 10:6-12

In the first oracle Zechariah received ca. 480 BC, there was the promise of a king coming to bring salvation to the Daughter of Zion (**Zechariah 9:9**). This king would not only remove the instruments of war from Ephraim and Jerusalem but also usher in a world-wide peace (**Zechariah 9:10**).

Then there was also the concern of the LORD for the scattered sheep of Israel, as the people of God **‘wander like sheep oppressed for lack of a shepherd’** (**Zechariah 10:2**).

The LORD then promised a new shepherd that would come from the tribe of Judah, called, **‘the cornerstone, tent peg, battle bow’** as well as **‘every ruler’** (**Zechariah 10:4**).

God would use this shepherd to **‘strengthen the house of Judah and save the house of Joseph’** (**Zechariah 10:6**).

What would be the work of this King?

19.1 The Work of God’s Promised King

Zechariah 10:6 "I will strengthen the house of Judah and save the house of Joseph. I will restore them because I have compassion on them. They will be as though I had not rejected them, for I am the LORD their God and I will answer them. ⁷ The Ephraimites will become like mighty men, and their hearts will be glad as with wine. Their children will see it and be joyful; their hearts will rejoice in the LORD."

1. Who are the house of Judah and the house of Joseph? **v.6**
How do the Ephraimites differ from the house of Joseph? **v.7**

.....
.....

2. What will God do for them? **v.6**

.....

3. What is meant by the words **restoration** and **compassion**? **v.6**

.....

Cf. **Isaiah 40:1-2**

4. In what way were they rejected by the LORD? **v.6**

.....

5. How would they rejoice in the LORD? **v.7**

.....
Cf. **Isaiah 35:5-10; 40:9, 52:7**

19.2 Blessing and Gathering

Zechariah 10:8 I will **signal for them** and **gather them** in. Surely I will **redeem them**; they will be as numerous as before. ⁹ Though I scatter them among the peoples, yet in distant lands they will remember me. They and their children will survive, and **they will return**. ¹⁰ I will **bring them back from Egypt** and gather them **from Assyria**. I will bring them to Gilead and Lebanon, and there will not be room enough for them.

1. In what manner will God signal for them? **v.8**

.....
Cf. **Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 11:10**

2. Why will there be a signal for God's people? **v.8-9**

.....
Note: This is the same terminology used at the end of Zechariah 9, where the LORD signalled by the flash of lightning and the sounding of the trumpet.

3. What will happen to those in distant lands? **v.9**

-
4. Where do you think we find first fulfilment in the New Testament? **v.6**

.....
Cf. **Acts 2:5; 16-18**

Note: A new exodus will take place.
The redemption of God's people, the gathering of his elect, as they return from exile.

19.3 A New Exodus

Zechariah 10:11 "They will pass through the sea of trouble; the surging sea will be subdued and all the depths of the Nile will dry up. Assyria's pride will be brought down and Egypt's sceptre will pass away. ¹² I will **strengthen them in the LORD and in his name they will walk**," declares the LORD."

1. What kind of language is being used here? **v.11**

2. What will happen when this New Exodus takes place? **v.12**

.....

False Shepherds vs. Zion's King

1. In whom do you place your trust?

.....

2. What will be the two possible outcomes of the choices we make?
Zechariah 10:5; 11b-12

.....

20. Rejection of the Good Shepherd

Zechariah 11:1-17

During the first part of Zechariah's lifetime, it seemed as if the encouragement of the eight apocalyptic visions, together with Haggai's practical instruction had the desired effect. Joshua the High Priest and Zerubbabel the governor accomplished what God had demanded and the temple was completed by 516 BC. However, this good spell did not seem to last very long.

In Nehemiah we read about reforms needed for various abuses that had crept in. In the prophet Malachi we read about a shameful religion being practiced that did not please God. The same echoes are found in these latter chapters of Zechariah. For example we hear about the help of diviners and idols being sought (**Zechariah 10:2**). Sadly there would come a time in future, when Judah's apostasy would become very great.

It was against this future apostasy that Zechariah speaks and acts out a parable about two kinds of shepherds (**Zechariah 11:1-17**) for the instruction and warning of the people. This was not a new thing for the prophets:

- **Hosea** had to marry a prostitute and give his children strange names.
- **Ezekiel** had to lie on his side for more than a year, bake his food over a dung fire, then cut off his beard and hair and burn it and scatter it in and around the city.
- **Isaiah** had to go around naked and barefoot and also had to call his children by strange names.

Zechariah 11 starts with a lament for the Promised Land.

20.1 Lament for the Promised Land

Zechariah 11:1 Open your doors, O **Lebanon**, so that **fire may devour** your **cedars**!
² Wail, O **pine tree**, for the **cedar has fallen**; the stately trees are **ruined**! **Wail, oaks of Bashan**; the dense forest has been **cut down**! ³ Listen to the **wail of the shepherds**: their **rich pastures are destroyed**! Listen to the **roar of the lions**; the **lush thicket of the Jordan is ruined**!

Some call this a **Poetic Taunt**. 'The shepherds' wail, the lions' roar', is a parody on the leaders, esp. the kings of Israel, not excluding the prophets and priests. For example, **Ezekiel 34** speaks of the kings of Judah as shepherds and **Jeremiah 23** of the kings, prophets, and priests as shepherds.

1. Why do they wail and roar? **v.3**

.....

2. What are they really concerned about? **v.3**

.....

Note: Oaks, cedars, and pines probably speak of arrogance, haughtiness, and pride.

This was a warning of coming calamity upon the land. Starting from the north, from the northwest (the coast – Lebanon) to the northeast (east side of Jordan – Bashan), including the middle, the lush thickets of the Jordan, these natural barriers would be breached. The forests, the animals, and the people of the land would suffer, and the destruction would be devastating.

3. Why would they be threatened with this destruction? **v.4-14**

.....

4. What time is foretold here?

.....

Note: The Roman siege and fall of Jerusalem happened in AD 70.

20.2 A Flock Marked for Slaughter

God's desire is for the shepherds of his people to fear him and care for his people. Zechariah had to act out the **first part** of this parable, the role of a **foolish shepherd**. You will see it more clearly later on when you read **v.15**.

Zechariah 11:4 This is what **the LORD my God** says: "**Pasture the flock marked for slaughter.**" ⁵ Their buyers **slaughter them and go unpunished**. Those who sell them say, **'Praise the LORD, I am rich!'** **Their own shepherds do not spare them.** ⁶ For **I will no longer have pity** on the people of the land," declares the LORD. **"I will hand everyone over** to his neighbour and his king. They will oppress the land, and **I will not rescue** them from their hands."

1. What was the predicament of the people? **v.4**

.....

2. Was God concerned about the people? What had to be done? **v.4**

.....

3. Why was this so? What was the quality of their leaders? **v.5**

.....

4. How did they add insult to injury to add to the evil of this crime? **v.5**

.....

5. Where do we see similar attitudes and blasphemy today? For example, many so-called Christian TV networks such as **TBN, Daystar, GOD TV**, etc.

.....

6. What would be the result of this kind of leadership and abuse? **v.6**

.....

This was not the expected shepherd king, but an evil shepherd or shepherds. So it seems as if Zechariah had to assume this first role and act like an evil shepherd and actually had to show no concern for the people. He had to act this out as a parable against the leaders/shepherds of Judah.

20.3 The work of the Good Shepherd

Zechariah then had to act out the **second part of the parable** against the covenant people and their leaders, the part of a good shepherd, a type of the true shepherd-king.

Zechariah 11:7 I pastured the flock marked for slaughter, particularly the oppressed of the flock. Then I took **two staffs** and called one **Favour** and the other **Union**, and I pastured the flock. ⁸ In one month I got rid of the **three shepherds**. **The flock detested me, and I grew weary of them** ⁹ and said, "**I will not be your shepherd**. Let the dying die, and the perishing perish. Let those who are left eat one another's flesh." ¹⁰ Then I took my staff called **Favour** and broke it, **revoking the covenant I had made with all the nations**. ¹¹ It was revoked on that day, and so the afflicted of the flock who were watching me knew it was the word of the LORD.

1. What was Zechariah's initial approach? **v.7**

-
2. What did the two staffs represent? **v.7**

.....

Note: The two staffs of the shepherd:

- Heavy staff/rod – ward of evil.
- Crook - to lean on and to help up the fallen.

3. How did Zechariah shepherd/pastor them? **v.7**

.....

Cf. **Isaiah 40:11, Jeremiah 23:1, 5-6**

4. Who do the three shepherds he got rid of, represent? **v.8**

.....

Cf. **Jeremiah 23, Ezekiel 34**

5. What does the one month represent? **v.8**

6. Who fulfilled this work of getting rid of three false shepherds and how?

.....

7. A great shock! Did the flock appreciate the good shepherd? **v.8b**

.....

8. What did the good shepherd do next? **v.8c-9**

.....

9. How was this fulfilled in history? **v.9**

.....

10. How did the Good Shepherd let this happen? **v.10**

.....

Note: The staff was to protect the sheep, but Zechariah broke it. Zechariah, by breaking the staff, symbolically and on God's instruction, enacted the revoking of the covenant of favour, security, and restraint holding back the nations from attacking God's people.

11. Which part of the flock understood what was happening? **v.11**

.....

And how about the rest? Did they repent and feel ashamed?

20.4 The Price of a Dead Slave

The Good Shepherd, acted out by Zechariah, asked for severance pay.

Zechariah 11:12 I told them, "If you think it best, give me my pay; but if not, keep it." So they paid me thirty pieces of silver. ¹³ And the LORD said to me, "Throw it to the potter" --the handsome price at which they priced me! So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the LORD to the potter. ¹⁴ Then I broke my second staff called **Union**, breaking the **brotherhood between Judah and Israel**.

1. How much did they pay him? **v.12**

.....

2. How much was it? Was it substantial? **Exodus 21:32**

.....

3. How was this fulfilled? **Matthew 26:14-15**

.....

4. What did Zechariah have to do with this payment? **v.13**

.....

Note: 'Throw it to the potter' – most probably a proverb such as 'throw to the dogs.' The potter was the lowest and poorest of all craftsmen.

5. How was this literally fulfilled? **Matthew 27:3-7**

.....

6. What will happen to the sheep for having rejected the good shepherd? **v.1-3, 10**

.....

7. What did Zechariah have to do next and what would be the result? **v.14**

.....

The Consequences of Rejection

Note the word 'again'. Zechariah had to continue acting out this first role of the parable; that of a wicked shepherd.

Zechariah 11:15 Then the LORD said to me, "Take **again** the equipment of a **foolish shepherd**. ¹⁶ For I am going to raise up a shepherd over the land who will **not care for the lost, or seek the young, or heal the injured, or feed the healthy, but will eat the meat of the choice sheep, tearing off their hoofs.** ¹⁷ **Woe to the worthless shepherd**, who deserts the flock! May the sword strike his arm and his right eye! May his arm be completely withered, his right eye totally blinded!"

1. What did this impersonation imply God would do? **v.15-16**

.....

2. How would this foolish shepherd deal with the people? **v.16**

.....

3. How was this fulfilled? Who would this shepherd be? **John 19:14-15**

.....

Cf. **Isaiah 8:21-22**

Caesar they demanded, Caesar they got. In AD 70, such terror was unleashed against Judah and Jerusalem as had never been seen before, not even during the Babylonian siege. One million Jews died in that terrible time. They in fact ate each other's flesh during the siege.

The last thing Zechariah had to do was to declare a lament against the worthless shepherd that deserts the flock.

4. Who will face the greatest judgement? **v.17**

.....

Note: His right arm and right eye will wither, i.e. he will be unable to be a shepherd. The right eye and right arm represent the side of blessing. In Leviticus, it was the side on which the priest was marked with blood.

Which Shepherd do you choose?

A choice has to be made between blessing and destruction:

- The blessing of Zechariah 10 under the shepherd-king.
- The curse of Zechariah 11 under the foolish shepherds of this world.

21. The Battle against God's People

Zechariah 12:1-9

Zechariah 12-14 was Zechariah's **second oracle** or **burden of the Word of the LORD** that he received regarding the people of Israel. What were these oracles about?

The First Oracle (Zechariah 9-11) was against the surrounding nations, namely Syria, Phoenicia, and Philistia. It also spoke of the abuse by the evil shepherds and spoke of the LORD's faithful shepherd. It included a description of the work and character of the faithful shepherd and his rejection at the hands of the people. Here, the burden concerns Israel, specifically regarding their treatment of the LORD's shepherd.

With the Second Oracle (Zechariah 12-14), the LORD gave his prophet a burden to prophesy about events that would take place almost 500 years later, as well as events at the very end of time! The day of Judgement, or as it was called '**that day**', in the Old Testament.

Three questions arise from this oracle:

- Who exactly is **the LORD**?
As this is a burden of **the word of the LORD** concerning Israel.
- Who or what is **Jerusalem**?
As Jerusalem is mentioned **21 times** in Zechariah 12-14.
- What does **on that day** mean?
As **that day** is mentioned **16 times** in Zechariah 12-14.

21.1 Who is the LORD?

The credentials of the originator of the prophecy were given.

Zechariah 12:1 (This is) **the word of the LORD** concerning Israel. **The LORD, who stretches out the heavens, who lays the foundation of the earth, and who forms the spirit of man within him, declares...**

1. Who is YAHWEH? **v.1**

-
-
-

2. Are the three statements in **v.1** self-evident to the people of this world?

.....

3. Why would YAHWEH describe Himself in this manner in the opening words of this prophecy? **v.1**

.....

4. How does man differ from the animals, and what does that mean? **v.1**

.....

The second question is, who or what is **Jerusalem**?

21.2 A Clear and Significant Distinction

Zechariah 12:2 "I am going to make **Jerusalem** a cup that sends all the surrounding peoples reeling. **Judah will be besieged as well as Jerusalem.** ³ On **that day**, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against **her**, I will make **Jerusalem** an immovable rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves. ⁴ On **that day** I will strike every horse with panic and its rider with madness," declares the LORD. "I will keep a watchful eye over **the house of Judah**, but I will blind all the horses of the nations. ⁵ Then **the leaders of Judah** will say in their hearts, **'The people of Jerusalem are strong, because the LORD Almighty is their God.'**"

1. Why does YAHWEH mention, **Judah will be besieged as well as Jerusalem**? **v.2**

.....

2. Why does YAHWEH speak of Jerusalem as **an unmovable rock for the nations (v.3)** and then declare that He will **keep a watchful eye over Judah (v.4)**

.....

Cf. **Isaiah 28:16; Ephesians 2:20; 1 Peter 2:6**

3. Is there a distinction between the house of Judah and Jerusalem? **v.2-5**

.....

4. Why would the people of Judah say, **"The people of Jerusalem are strong because the LORD Almighty is their God?" v.5**

.....

Literally: The LORD of Hosts (**יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת**) is the God of the people of Jerusalem.

5. Who only are the people of Jerusalem? **v.5**

.....

Note: In the future there will be a clear distinction between Judah and Jerusalem.

The people of Jerusalem are **only** those people who can truly call the LORD of Hosts their God!

That would be the only reason for their strength and security, and the people of Judah will notice this!

6. What kind of city is this Jerusalem? **Galatians 4:24-26, Hebrews 12:22-24**

.....
Cf. **Zechariah 2:4, 5; Zechariah 8:3**

7. How will the Jews by and large feel about Jerusalem? **Romans 10:19; Romans 11:11**

.....
The third question concerns the meaning of **that day** as found in Zechariah 12-14.

21.3 That Day

Zechariah 12:6 "On **that day** I will make the leaders of Judah like a brazier in a woodpile, like a flaming torch among sheaves. They will consume right and left all the surrounding peoples, but Jerusalem will remain intact in her place. ⁷ The LORD will save the dwellings of Judah first, so that the honour of the house of David and of Jerusalem's inhabitants may not be greater than that of Judah. ⁸ On **that day** the LORD will shield those who live in Jerusalem, so that the feeblest among them will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the Angel of the LORD going before them. ⁹ On **that day** I will set out to destroy all the nations that attack Jerusalem."

1. What is the meaning of the phrase **that day** or **on that day** as found in **v.3, 4, 6, 8-9**?

.....
Note: 'On that day' in the Bible normally refers to **a day of Judgement**. It may also be called a 'day of the LORD', such as in Joel.

There are three such great days of judgement to be found in the NT:

- **The Day of Crucifixion.** This is a Great Day of Judgment in the History of mankind and the cosmos. **Matthew 27:50-54**
- **The Day of the Final Battle** against God's people as described in Revelation (**Revelation 16:12-16; 19:19-21; 20:7-10**). Please note that this 'day' could take place over a period of time and may actually already be under way at this moment.
- **The Final Day of Judgement**, or the **Day of the Return of Jesus** at the end of time (**Revelation 6:15-17; Matthew 24:30-31, 36; Matthew 25:31-32**).

The context of Zechariah 12-14 will tell us which day of judgement is referred to.

2. Which **day** do you think is being referred to in the following passages?

The Day of **Zechariah 12:1-9**

The Day of **Zechariah 12:10-13:9**

The Day of **Zechariah 14:1-21**

3. What may we learn from this great burden YAHWEH laid on Zechariah's heart concerning the future Jerusalem and the Jews?

.....

4. How do the NT writers refer to the day mentioned in this passage? **v.1-9**

.....

Cf. Revelation 16:12-16; 19:19-21; 20:7-10

5. Will Jerusalem be harmed? **v.8-9**

.....

Cf. Isaiah 28:16, Romans 9:33, 1 Peter 2:6-8

6. What do you think is meant by the statement in **v.7**? **Cf. Romans 11:25-27**

.....

The New Jerusalem

1. Are you a citizen of Jerusalem? **Hebrews 12:22-24**

.....

2. Can you truly call the LORD of Hosts your God?

.....

22. A Day of Mourning

Zechariah 12:10-14

Three questions were addressed in the study on **Zechariah 12:1-9**:

First: Who is YAHWEH?

YAHWEH is the One who made the heavens and the earth and also the One who forms the spirit of man within him. This was the God who was informing Zechariah concerning the future.

Second: Who were the inhabitants of Jerusalem?

They were only those who called the LORD of Hosts their God. The inhabitants of Jerusalem differ from the house of Judah.

Third: What does 'on that day' in Zechariah 10:12-14 mean?

We saw that **on that day** had more than one possible meaning and the meaning is determined by the context.

In **Zechariah 12:10-14** the question is:

What would YAHWEH do for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem?

22.1 A Spirit of Grace and Supplication

^{NAS} **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 supplication**, so that **they will look on Me whom they have pierced**; and **they will mourn for Him...**"

Notice the **and** in v.10. This is still the LORD at work. He created, He makes history, He places man's spirit within him, He will shield and protect Jerusalem, **AND** He will also do something else for the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

1. What will YAHWEH do for the House of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem? **v.10**

.....

2. What is the meaning of **a spirit of grace and supplication?** **v.10**

.....

Definition: *Supplication is to make a humble and earnest entreaty to God.*

3. What will be characteristic of the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem? **v.10**

.....

4. Why would they mourn? **v.10b**

.....

5. Who is **the One they have pierced?** v.1, 10a-10b

.....

Note: The same Person says: 'I will pour out ...they will look on **Me** whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for **Him** ...' (NASB)

6. Are there two persons called by the name YAHWEH, as it speaks of **I, Me** and **Him?** How can a person be both **me** and **him** in the same sentence? v.10

.....

Cf. Zechariah 2:10-11; Acts 20:28

Note: They will pierce me, YAHWEH, but they will mourn for HIM.

The one that is pierced is YAHWEH, and he speaks of both **I** and **him**.

How can this be?

- First, only if there are two persons bearing the Name of YAHWEH!
- Second, if piercing the One, it is the same as if you are piercing the other as well.

7. How was this prophecy fulfilled in history? **Cf. John 19:33-37**

.....

8. Did this prophecy have only one fulfilment in history? **Cf. Acts 2:23, 36-37**

.....

9. Who are the inhabitants of Jerusalem, upon whom are poured the Spirit of grace and supplication, who mourn for the one they have pierced?

.....

The next question is: How would the mourning of Jerusalem be described?

22.2 A Bitter and Hopeless Grief

Zechariah 12:10b They will look on me, **the one they have pierced**, and **they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child**, and **grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son**.¹¹ On that day the weeping in Jerusalem will be great, like the weeping of Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.

The mourning of the house of David and Jerusalem, would be great. These would be all who can call the LORD of Hosts their God and who realise that they have pierced YAHWEH.

1. What is the first description be of how they would mourn? v.10

2. What other element of their mourning do we find? **v.11**

.....
Cf. **2 Chronicles 35:22-25**

3. Why would there be such grieving for those who have pierced the LORD?

-
4. Have you ever mourned in this manner for your sins?

22.3 The Land will Mourn

Zechariah 12:12 The land will mourn, each clan by itself, with their wives by themselves: the clan of **the house of David** and their wives, **the clan of** the house of **Nathan** and their wives, ¹³ the clan of **the house of Levi** and their wives, **the clan of Shimei** and their wives, ¹⁴ and all the rest of the clans and their wives.

1. What does 'the land will mourn' imply? **v.12**

.....
Two houses and clans specifically are mentioned.

2. Who were the house of David and the clan of the house of Nathan? **v.12**

-
3. Who were the house of Levi and the clan of Shimei? **v.13**

-
4. Why would these two houses specifically mourn?

.....
Cf. **Zechariah 6:11-13**

Inhabitants of the New Jerusalem.

1. Have you received a spirit of grace and supplication?

-
2. Do you look to the pierced one as the LORD?

3. Do you realise that your sins have pierced YAHWEH the Son?

.....

4. Do you mourn for the death of Christ as one mourns for an only child?

.....

5. What will YAHWEH do for his people? Cf. **Matthew 5:4**

.....

23. Qualified to Live in God's Land

Zechariah 13:1-9

In this passage, we continue with the events that took place **on that day** as described in **Zechariah 12:10-14**.

What was the **that day** referred to in **Zechariah 12:10-14; 13:1-9**?

.....

Another observation is the following:

In **Zechariah 12:12** we read that **the land will mourn...**

The land is mentioned five times in this oracle.

Some of the questions that come to mind are:

- What is the land?
- Do you want to live in God's city and in God's land?
- What needs to happen to enable you to live in God's land?

The **house of David** and **inhabitants of Jerusalem** are really synonymous when describing Messiah's people, and they are also the people who live in God's land. So the inhabitants of Jerusalem and of the land are in fact the same.

What are the consequences of the **piercing of YAHWEH** upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem? Jerusalem's inhabitants mourn for Christ, and the land mourns for him as well.

Zechariah 13 speaks about three further consequences of the cross for God's people, which are as follows:

- **Cleansing**
- **Purification**
- **Testing**

The **first observation** we can make regarding the consequence of the piercing of YAHWEH upon those who would be able to live in the land, is that they will be **cleansed**.

23.1 A Fountain of Cleansing

Zechariah 13:1 "On **that day** a fountain will be opened to **the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem**, to cleanse them from sin and impurity."

1. Which day does **that day** refer to? **v.1**
-

2. What is the LORD going to do for **the inhabitants of Jerusalem** on that day? **v.1**
-

3. What does **a fountain will be opened** imply? **v.1**

.....

4. To be able to live in God's land, what is necessary? **v.1**

.....

Cf. **Ezekiel 36:25**

Note: Water is symbolic of cleansing in the OT sacrificial system, but this cleansing and purification had to be repeated over and over. Christ's death will **open a fountain that will cleanse from sin and impurity** continuously.

5. Is this what king David prayed for? Cf. **Psalms 51:1-2**

.....

Jesus: **'Unless I wash you, you have no part of me.'** **John 13:8**

The old Hymn writers understood this idea well:

*Let the **water** and the **blood**
From thy riven side which **flowed**
Be for sin the double cure
Cleanse me from its guilt and power*

*Naked come to thee for dress
Helpless look to thee for grace
Foul I to the **fountain** fly,
Wash me Saviour or I die.*

Augustus Toplady

The **second observation** we can make is that not only will those who will be fit to live in God's land be cleansed and purified, but the land itself will experience **purification**.

23.2 No place for Substitutes

Zechariah 13:2 "On that day, I will **banish** the names of the idols from **the land**, and they will be remembered no more," declares the LORD Almighty. I will **remove** both the **prophets** and the **spirit of impurity** from **the land**.³ And if anyone still prophesies, his father and mother, to whom he was born, will say to him, **'You must die**, because **you have told lies in the LORD's name**.' When he prophesies, his own parents will stab him.⁴ On that day **every prophet will be ashamed** of his prophetic vision. He will not put on a prophet's garment of hair in order to deceive.⁵ He will say, 'I am not a prophet. I am a farmer; the land has been my livelihood since my youth.'⁶ If someone asks him, 'What are these wounds on your body?' he will answer, 'The wounds I was given at the house of my friends.'"

1. What does **I will banish the names of the idols from the land** mean? **v.2**

.....

Note: An idol does not have to be a primitive object carved from wood or stone. An idol can be anything that receives more love, attention, devotion or time than the LORD. To be able to truly live in God's land, we can have no idols. Nothing can stand between an inhabitant of Jerusalem and the LORD.

Cf. **Matthew 19:16-24**

2. What will happen to the false prophets and the spirit of impurity in the land? **v.2**

.....

Cf. **Matthew 7:22-23, 2 Peter 2:3, 17, Jude 13**

3. For what will there be the great desire in the land on that day? **v.3**

.....

4. How would the church fare today if we had this same attitude to falsehood and lies? **v.3**

.....

5. How would the false prophets themselves feel? **v.4-5**

.....

6. What will they be reluctant to wear? **v.4**

.....

Cf. **2 Kings 1:8**

7. What do you think would be the equivalent clothing in the modern day 'prophetic' movement?

.....

8. What are the marks on their bodies? **v.6**

.....

Cf. **1 Kings 18:28**

The **third observation** regarding those who would be fit to live in God's land is that they will experience **testing**.

23.3 Tested by Fire!

This is part of the message we may like to skip over.

Zechariah 13:7 "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man who is close to me!" declares the LORD Almighty. "Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered, and I will turn my hand against the little ones. 8 In the whole land," declares the LORD, "two-thirds will be struck down and perish; yet one-third will be left in it. 9 This third I will bring into the fire; I will refine them like silver and test them like gold. 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 our God.' "

1. What does **strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered** mean? **v.7**

.....

2. If the faithful shepherd, the Messiah, will be struck what will happen to those who follow him? **v.7**

.....

Cf. **Matthew 26:31**

3. About what did Jesus consistently warn his followers?

.....

Cf. **Matthew 10:24-25, 28, 34-39; John 15:18-20**

4. How does this message sit with the church in the **free world** today?

.....

Cf. **1 Corinthians 1:18-24**

5. How do we understand **v. 8**?

.....

Note: We know this is true if we look at the church of Jesus Christ in the world today. The persecuted church is far larger than the free church. We see this in places such as North Korea, Syria, Somalia, Saudi Arabia, Northern Nigeria - the two-thirds that will be struck down. Even in culturally 'Christian' countries, persecution is mounting.

6. Is this good news for the others, the one-third, left behind? **v.9**

.....

Cf. **1 Peter 4:12-16**

Note: There seem to be only two options for a Christian before leaving this world. Even those who do not suffer persecution and death will be tested by fire.

This is of course not only through religious persecution and suffering, but also through physical circumstances and crises. From personal experience we know that it is through suffering that most Christian growth comes.

As one man said: *'Grace grows best in winter'* (Ligon Duncan III).

7. Of whom will the LORD say, 'they are my people'? **v.9**

.....

Is this true for you?

Do you realise that if you consider yourself to be a Christian, the cross has certain consequences?

1. Have you been **cleansed** with the ever-flowing supply of the spring of living water?

.....

2. Have you been **purified** from all false religion and idols, to be fit to live in God's land?

.....

3. Have you been **refined** like silver and **tested** like gold?

.....

24. The LORD will be King!

Zechariah 14:1-11

Would you like to know the future? The only sure way is to turn to the One who knows the future. It is He who is speaking here in the first person throughout Zechariah 12 and 13 and also here in 14:2.

Zechariah prophesied about a certain day called **that day** or **a day of the LORD**. Now it is man's day, but world history is moving inexorably towards a coming day that will be called **the Lord's day**. This day, as described in Zechariah 14, will be different from the **day of crucifixion**.

What is this day? It is a day concerning **Jerusalem**. Do you remember what can be said about the **inhabitants of Jerusalem**?

- The LORD of Hosts is their God (**12:5**).
- YAHWEH will pour out upon them `a spirit of grace and supplication. (**12:10**)
- They will look upon the LORD and they will realise that they have pierced Him (**12:10**).
- They will bitterly mourn for the pierced One as for an only child (**12:10**).
- A fountain will be opened to cleanse them from sin and impurity (**13:1**).

24.1 The Suffering of Jerusalem

Zechariah 14:1 A day of the LORD is coming when your plunder will be divided among you. ² I will gather all the nations to **Jerusalem** to fight against it; the **city** will be captured, the houses ransacked, and the women raped. Half of the **city** will go into exile, but the rest of the people will not be taken from the **city**.

Literally: **what has been plundered from you will be divided in your midst v.1**

1. What sort of words are used in these verses? What do they describe? **v.1-2**

.....

2. What does this mean for God's people? **v.1-2**

.....

3. What will the nations do against the city of God's people? **v.2**

.....

Note: The nations of the world will gather against God's people to:

- Persecute, oppress, and take her belongings.
- Take her freedom and wage war against her.
- Defile everything which is sacred to her, her holiness and purity.

Note also: Remember the number of **inhabitants of the land** involved. Two-thirds will be struck down and perish (**Zechariah 13:8**). One-third will remain in the land and will be purified and refined through suffering (**Zechariah 13:9**).

Of the one-third that will suffer, half will go into exile.

4. What is meant by 'half of the **city** will go into exile '? **v.2**

.....

5. What positive lesson may be learnt from all of this? Who is ultimately gathering the nations? **v.1-2**

.....

Cf. **Revelation 16:13-14**

And when all seems lost, what will happen?

24.2 The LORD will return!

Zechariah 14:3 Then **the LORD will go out and fight against those nations**, as he fights in the day of battle. ⁴ **On that day** his feet will stand on **the Mount of Olives**, east of Jerusalem, and the **Mount of Olives** will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south. ⁵ You will flee by my mountain valley, for it will extend to Azel. You will 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.**

1. What will happen on that day when all seems lost? **v.3**

.....

2. Whose feet will stand on the Mount of Olives east of Jerusalem? **v.3-4**

.....

3. Who is this LORD?

.....

Cf. **Acts 1:8-12**

4. What will he do when he comes? **v.3-5**

.....

5. When the LORD comes, will he be alone? **v.5b**

.....

Cf. **Revelation 19:11-16**

6. What indicates Zechariah's excitement? **v.5b**

.....

Let us look at this Day of the LORD.

24.3 The Day of the LORD

Zechariah 14:6 On that day there will be no light, no cold or frost. ⁷ It will be a unique day, without daytime or night-time -- **a day known to the LORD. When evening comes, there will be light.** ⁸ On that day living water will flow out from Jerusalem, half to the eastern sea and half to the western sea, in summer and in winter.

1. What kind of day will this be? **v.6-7a**

.....
Cf. **Isaiah 13:9-11**

Note: **No cold or frost** is better translated as loss of light from the stars and planets. See **NASB, NKJV**

2. What does **a day known to the LORD** mean? **v.7b**

.....
Cf. **Matthew 24:36**

3. What is the significance of in the evening there will be light? **v.7c**

4. What will happen in Jerusalem on that day? **v.8**

.....
Cf. **Ezekiel 47:1-12; Revelation 22:1-2**

5. What did Jesus claim at the Feast of Tabernacles?

.....
Cf. **John 7:37-39, John 8:12**

When this day comes and the LORD returns, what happens next?

24.4 The Kingdom of the LORD

Zechariah 14:9 The **LORD will be king over the whole earth.** On that day there will be **one LORD**, and **his name the only name.** ¹⁰ The whole land, from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem, will become like the Arabah. But Jerusalem will be raised up and remain in its place, from the Benjamin Gate to the site of the First Gate, to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the royal winepresses. ¹¹ It will be inhabited; never again will it be destroyed. Jerusalem will be secure.

1. What will be true of the LORD on that day? **v.9**

.....
Cf. **Matthew 6:10**

2. Will there be any other gods or religions? **v.9**

3. Whose Name will be above every other name?

.....
Cf. **Philippians 2:9-11**

4. What will happen to the city?

.....
Cf. **Isaiah 40:1-5**

Note: Geba is 10 km to the north, while Rimmom is in the south. The Arabah is the valley of the Jordan River; from the Sea of Galilee in the North down to the gulf of Aqabah on the Red Sea in the south. The meaning here could also be **a plain**, for **ha-rabah** means a dry, burnt, or wasteland. It could also mean that from the north to the south it will be like a fertile well-watered valley. Even the parts which are dry will become well-watered and the Dead Sea fresh (**Ezekiel 47:10-12**).

5. What will be true of Jerusalem? **v.10-11**

.....
Note: The prophecy regarding **a day of the LORD**:

- Starts with words of war namely plunder, pillage, strife, rape, exile.
- Ends with words of peace, YAHWEH is King over the whole earth, only one LORD, only one Name and Jerusalem inhabited and secure!

Are you Living in Expectation?

1. When things get tough for the church of Jesus Christ, do you despair or do you really believe he is in control?

2. Are you encouraged by the promise that the LORD will return in the same way as he ascended from the Mount of Olives?

3. Do you believe that after the suffering and great darkness there will be **everlasting light** and **living water** to drink?

.....

4. Do you believe that when the LORD returns, he will be king over all the earth and that His Name above every other name?

.....

Cf. **Matthew 25:31**

25. God with us!

Zechariah 14:12-21

What will happen to the city of **Jerusalem** and its inhabitants at the end of time?

- A **Day of the LORD** is coming (**14:1**).
- Before **that day**, Jerusalem will experience increased oppression and suffering (**14:2**).
- However, when things are at their worst, the LORD will return with the armies of heaven (**14:3, 5**).
- The LORD will save his people (**14:4**).
- He will establish his kingdom forever (**14:9**).
- He will be King and His name the only Name (**14:9**).

At first, things will look bleak for **Jerusalem** during the gospel age. Rebellion and wickedness will seem to thrive. However, the LORD will return and overthrow all the enemies of his people and establish his rule over all the earth.

If this is the case, what do you think will happen to all rebellion and evil?

.....

Note: The final chapters of Revelation lean heavily on Zechariah 14.

25.1 The destiny of all Rebellion

Zechariah 14:12 This is the **plague** with which the LORD will strike all the nations that fought 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. ¹³ On that day men will be stricken by the LORD with great **panic**. Each man will seize the hand of another, and they will attack each other. ¹⁴ **Judah too will fight at Jerusalem**. The wealth of all the surrounding nations will be collected -- great quantities of gold and silver and clothing. ¹⁵ A similar plague will strike the horses and mules, the camels and donkeys, and all the animals in those camps.

1. What will happen when the LORD returns to save, reign and live in Jerusalem, and rebellion and evil shall end? **v.12**
-

2. Which are the nations mentioned here? **v.2-3, 12, 14**
-

Note: Not only will the nations fight at Jerusalem, but the house of Judah will fight as well. It literally says, **and even Judah will wage war at Jerusalem**.

Will the Jews be fighting **against** or **with** the people of Jerusalem? The Targum of Zechariah seems to say 'against': **And even the people of the house of Judah shall the nations bring by force to wage war against Jerusalem**.

3. Which two things will happen to the nations? **v.12-13**

.....

4. What does the word **plague** remind us of? Why are **eyes** and **tongues that will rot** mentioned? **v.12**

.....

5. Why would a similar plague strike the horses and mules, the camels and donkeys, and all the animals in those camps? **v.14**

.....

Note: Notice how the tables are turned in the end.

- Jerusalem initially suffers, and the nations of the world seem to be winning in destroying her. What is plundered from her is divided in her midst.
- In the end, the nations are struck by plague, and Jerusalem will receive vast blessings and wealth. Great wealth tells us that the victory for God's people will be sweet.

25.2 The Feast of Tabernacles

Zechariah 14:16 Then the **survivors from all the nations** that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, **the LORD of Hosts**, and to celebrate the **Feast of Tabernacles**.¹⁷ If any of the peoples of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, **the LORD of Hosts**, they will have no rain.

¹⁸ If the Egyptian people do not go up and take part, they will have no rain. The LORD will bring on them the **plague** he inflicts on the nations that do not go up to celebrate the **Feast of Tabernacles**.¹⁹ This will be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not go up to celebrate the **Feast of Tabernacles**.

1. Who is the LORD of Hosts, according to verses **3-4, 9, 16-17**?

.....

Cf. **Matthew 24:29-30; 25:31; Acts 1:11-12**

2. Who are the survivors from the nations and what will they do? **v.16**

.....

3. What is the significance of the Feast of Tabernacles? **v.16, 18-19**

.....

4. Which three things are celebrated at the Feast of Tabernacles?

- **John 7:37-39**

- **John 8:12**
- **John 8:24, 28 (NASB)**

Note: Zechariah 14:6-9 mentions **on that day** four times. That is the day that the LORD will reign over the whole earth from 'Jerusalem' and there will be **light, living water** and His Name i.e. **YAHWEH, will be the only Name**.

5. Who is the Egypt that is mentioned? **v.18-19**

.....
Cf. **Psalm 87:4a** mentions **Rahab** or **Egypt**.

6. What does the absence of rain signify? **v.17-18**

.....
Cf. **Zechariah 14:8**

7. What do plague and punishment signify? **v.18-19**

8. What is the message being conveyed here to God's enemies? **v.17-19**

.....
Note: God's enemies need to repent. The 'survivors' need to go to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of Hosts, as He is reigning there. Refusal to do this means curse and the same plague He inflicted on the nations!

25.3 Jerusalem the Holy City

Zechariah 14:20 **On that day HOLY TO THE LORD** will be inscribed on the bells of the horses, and the cooking pots in the LORD's house will be like the **sacred** bowls in front of the altar. ²¹ Every pot in Jerusalem and Judah will be **holy** to the **LORD of Hosts**, and all who come to sacrifice will take some of the pots and cook in them. And **on that day** there will **no longer be a Canaanite** in the house of the LORD Almighty.

These verses describe the New Jerusalem and 'on that day' brackets these verses again, with the contrast emphasised between **HOLY TO THE LORD** and **no longer a Canaanite in the house of the LORD**.

1. What does **HOLY TO THE LORD** on the bells of the horses signify? **v.20**

.....
Cf. **Exodus 28:36**

2. What does this mean for **every pot** in Jerusalem and in Judah? **v.20-21**

.....
Cf. 2 Timothy 2:20-21

3. What kind of city is Jerusalem? **Cf. Revelation 21:2, 10**

.....
Who will not be allowed in the Holy City?

No Canaanites there!

Zechariah 14:21b ... And **on that day** there will **no longer be a Canaanite** in the house of the **LORD of Hosts**.

1. Who are the Canaanites mentioned here?

.....
Cf. Revelation 21:27

2. What is the difference between those outside and those inside the city?

.....
Cf. Revelation 22:14-15

Conclusion

Prophecy

In the prophecy of Zechariah, we find many rich descriptions of a divine figure that will do all of the following:

- | | |
|----------|--|
| Zech. 1 | He will plead for mercy for Jerusalem and Judah. |
| Zech. 2 | He will be YAHWEH living with us. |
| Zech. 3 | He will stand accused on our behalf. |
| Zech. 3 | He will deal with the sin of God's land in a single day. |
| Zech. 4 | He will be the capstone of God's temple. |
| Zech. 4 | He will complete God's temple as the Word of YAHWEH. |
| Zech. 5 | He will banish sin to Babylon forever. |
| Zech. 6 | He is the man who will build God's temple. |
| Zech. 6 | He will be both king and priest of God. |
| Zech. 11 | He will receive his pay of 30 pieces of silver for his shepherding work. |
| Zech. 12 | He will be pierced for his people. |
| Zech. 13 | He will become a fountain of cleansing for God's land. |
| Zech. 14 | He will return to the Mount of Olives. |
| Zech. 14 | He will fulfil the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles. |

All of these prophecies are fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ.

The Nature of YAHWEH

We meet three clearly distinct and divine persons making up the Godhead.

- YAHWEH (1:2, 4; 8:2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 14, 18, 20, 23).
- The Spirit of YAHWEH (Zechariah 4:6; 7:12; 12:10).
- A second YAHWEH figure, distinct from YAHWEH called:
 - The Angel of YAHWEH** (Zechariah 3:1-2).
 - The Word of YAHWEH** (Zechariah 4:8-9; 6:9, 15).
 - YAHWEH** either sent by YAHWEH (Zechariah 2:10-11) or himself identified as YAHWEH (Zechariah 12:1, 10; 14:1-4).

What benefits derive from the study of Zechariah, with respect to the following?

Worship

Faith

Apologetics

Evangelism

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