

# Bible Class Notes On Zechariah



*“In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came to Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet...” (Zechariah 1:1)*

# A Timeline of Events Relevant to the Exilic & Post-exilic Prophets

- 614 B.C. Nabopolassar begins the siege of Nineveh
- 612 B.C. Nineveh falls as prophesied (Nahum 1:8; 2:6)
- 610 B.C. Ashurbanipal defeated at Haran
- 610 B.C. Josiah slain at Megiddo by Pharaoh Necho (II Kings 23:29)
- 609 B.C. Assyrian counter-attack at Carchemish repulsed
- 606 B.C. Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael & Azariah taken to “Shinar” (Daniel 1:1; about 17 years old)
- 605 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar defeats Assyria and Egypt at Carchemish (II Kings 24:7)
- 605 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar ascends to the throne of Babylon (Jeremiah 25:1; 46:2)
- 604 B.C. First full year of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign.
- 603 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of the Great Image (Daniel 2:1; cf. 1:1, 5)
- 597 B.C. Jehoiachin taken captive of Nebuchadnezzar (II Kings 24:10-12; Ezekiel about 25 years old, cf. 1:1-2; II Kings 24:14-15; Jeremiah 52:28)
- 597 B.C. Zedekiah ascends to the throne of David (II Kings 24:17)
- 587 B.C. Jerusalem besieged (Jeremiah 32:1-2; 52:1 ff.; II Kings 25:1; Ezekiel 24:1)
- 586 B.C. Jerusalem is destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar (II Kings 25:2-9; Jeremiah 39:1-10)
- 585 B.C. Word reaches the captives that Jerusalem is destroyed (Ezekiel 33:21; cf. 24:24-27)
- 582 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar’s 23<sup>rd</sup> year in which 745 persons are carried captive (Jeremiah 52:30)
- 581 B.C. + Nebuchadnezzar has the dream of the Great Tree and “the seven times” pass over him.
- 562 B.C. Evil-Merodach “lifts up” Jehoiachin (Jeremiah 52:31; II Kings 25:27-30)
- 560 B.C. Neriglissar (Nergalsharezer of Jeremiah 39:3) assassinates Evil-Merodach & takes throne
- 555 B.C. Labashi-Marduk, Neriglissar’s infant son, deposed by Nabonidus
- 553 B.C. Belshazzar becomes co-regent with his father, Nabonidus (cf. Daniel 7:1; Jeremiah 25:6-7)
- 553 B.C. Daniel receives the vision of the Four Beasts, the Ancient of Days & the Little Horn (7:1)
- 551 B.C. Daniel receives the vision of the Ram and He-Goat (Daniel 8:1)
- 539 B.C. Belshazzar sees “the handwriting on the wall” (Daniel 5:1ff.)
- 539 B.C. Daniel prays in the first year of Darius the Mede understanding the 70 years and receives the vision of the 70 Weeks (Daniel. 9:1ff.)
- 539-536 B.C. (?) Daniel is in the lion’s den (Daniel 6:1)
- 536 B.C. The first year of Cyrus King of Persia—decree given for the Jews to return (II Chronicles 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-4; Daniel. 9:2; Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10)

536 B.C. Zerubbabel leads the first captives to Judah (Ezra 1:1ff.)

536 B.C. The Feast of Tabernacles kept in the Seventh Month in the year of the Return (Ezra 3:1-6)

535 B.C. The foundation of the temple is laid by Zerubbabel in the Second Month (Ezra 3:7-13)

533 B.C. Daniel after fasting for three weeks has the vision of Michael concerning the overthrow of Persia by Alexander the Great (10:1-12:13)

529 B.C. The first year of Cambyses [Ahasuerus (?)], King of Persia (Ezra 4:6); the Samaritans write a letter against the Jews (Ezra 4:6)

529 B.C. + Building on the Temple stops by order of Cambyses (Ezra 4:24)

525 B.C. Cambyses conquers Egypt (cf. Daniel 8:3-4)

522 B.C. Guamata [a pretender posing as Smerdis] reigns in Persia seven months [Artaxerxes of Ezra 4:7 (?)]; the Samaritans continue their campaign against the Temple (4:8-24)

521 B.C. The first year of Darius I (the Great) King of Persia (cf. Ezra 4:5)

520 B.C. Haggai and Zechariah begin to prophesy (Haggai 1:1; Zechariah 1:1)

520 B.C. Work on the Temple is restarted (Ezra 5:1-2)

519 B.C. + Darius I deposes Vashti and makes Esther the Queen (Esther 1:3; I Esdras 3:1-2)

516 B.C. The Temple is completed (Ezra 6:14-15)

510 B.C. Haman's plot against the Jews overthrown by Esther & Mordecai (Esther 3:7ff.)

490 B.C. First Persian invasion of Greece ending in defeat at Marathon (cf. Daniel 8:4-5)

487 B.C. + The revolt of Egypt and death of Darius I

486 B.C. Xerxes I becomes King of Persia; he initiates the second war with Greece

480-479 B.C. Persia defeated at Plataea and Mycale (cf. Daniel 8:6-8)

473 B.C. Artaxerxes Longimanus appointed co-regent of Persia ("first year")

479 B.C. Decree to Ezra to beautify the Temple in the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes Longimanus (Ezra 7:1-28)

454 B.C. Decree to Nehemiah to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem in the 20<sup>th</sup> year (Nehemiah 2:1)

442 B.C. Nehemiah returns to Persia (Nehemiah 13:6)

441 B.C. The prophet Malachi

441 B.C. + Nehemiah returns to Jerusalem and implements needed reforms (Nehemiah 13:7ff.)

423 B.C. Xerxes II becomes King of Persia

413 B.C. Darius II (Nothus) becomes King of Persia

404 B.C. Artaxerxes II (Mnemon) becomes King of Persia

358 B.C. Artaxerxes III (Ochus) becomes King of Persia

337 B.C. Arses becomes King of Persia

335 Darius III (Codomanus) becomes King of Persia

331 B.C. Persia falls to Alexander (Daniel 8:1-7)

323 B.C. Alexander dies and the Empire is divided four ways (Daniel 8:8)

171 B.C. Antiochus Epiphanes plunders the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple (Daniel 8:11; 11:30ff.)

168 B.C. The Maccabean Revolt against Syria

63 B.C. Pompey takes Jerusalem (Daniel 11:45)

40 B.C. Herod the Great appointed “King” of Judea (cf. Daniel 11:41)

20 B.C. Herod begins renovation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple (cf. John 2:20)

4 B.C. The births of John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth (Matthew, Luke)

30 A.D. Jesus of Nazareth crucified (Daniel 9:24–26)

70 A.D. Titus Destroys Jerusalem (Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15)

(The above dates are based on the chronological studies of Floyd Nolen Jones, PhD. as found in his book *The Chronology of the Old Testament*, pp. 224–280. This timeline is a work in progress and subject to change or revision.)

# Zechariah

**Zechariah 1:1-6**, “In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the LORD unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying, The LORD hath been sore displeased with your fathers. Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Turn ye unto me, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. Be ye not as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets have cried, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Turn ye now from your evil ways, and from your evil doings: but they did not hear, nor hearken unto me, saith the LORD. Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever? But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers? And they returned and said, Like as the LORD of hosts thought to do unto us, according to our ways, and according to our doings, so hath he dealt with us.”

“**In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius...**” Haggai began his ministry in the sixth month of the second year of Darius on the first day of the month (Haggai 1:1). His second revelation came on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of the seventh month (Haggai 2:1-9). His final two revelations came in the ninth month on the 24<sup>th</sup> day (2:10, 20). Thus, Zechariah’s ministry began a week after the second revelation of Haggai and continued until at least the sixth year of Darius in the ninth month. His ministry was contemporary with the work of Zerubbabel in rebuilding the Temple which was completed in the sixth year of Darius on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of Adar (Ezra 6:15; Zechariah 4:9). Both Haggai and Zechariah seem to have continued in their ministries throughout the final building phase of the temple (Ezra 6:14).

These prophets were contemporaries and their ministries complimented one another. Haggai’s first message was: “It is time to build the House of the Lord and not your own houses” (Haggai 1:2-11). The work on the Temple had ceased in about 529 B.C., six years into the return (Ezra 4:24). The first year was spent in travel, getting settled in their cities and erecting the altar (Ezra 2:68-3:7). In the second year the foundation was laid and building progressed until Ahasuerus (Cambyses) ordered it stopped. After nearly a decade of being idle, Haggai at the urging of the Spirit rebuked them for resisting the calls to return to building the Temple (cf. Haggai 1:2). Haggai reassures Zerubbabel and Joshua that “God Almighty is with you.” Haggai’s second message comes about six or seven weeks later, in it he speaks of the greater glory of the second Temple (2:1-9). It is following this second message that Zechariah follows Haggai’s call to build with a call to repent. In his message he offers an explanation for the misfortunes that had befallen them (cf. Haggai 1:5-11) and issues an exhortation not to make the same mistakes their

fathers had made. Zechariah's message is intended to bolster the Jews confidence in the Lord Almighty that He will keep all His promises both for evil and for good (Haggai 2:6; cf. Deuteronomy 28–30).

**“Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet...”** Zechariah was among the priests and Levites that came with Zerubbabel at the time of Cyrus' decree (Nehemiah 12:4, 16). His grandfather Iddo was one of “the chiefs of the priests” (12:7; cf. Genesis 31:28). Zechariah assumed his position as one of the “chiefs” during the priesthood of Joiakim the son of Joshua (Nehemiah 12:12). He was a young man when God called him to prophesy to Israel (2:4). He is mentioned by Jesus in Matthew 23:35 as having been murdered by the Jews while ministering in the Temple (others associate Jesus' reference to the son of Jehoiada murdered in 2 Chronicles 24:20-22). He was a righteous man murdered for his faithfulness to God and his commitment to Truth.

The prophet's name means “Jehovah has remembered.” It is an appropriate name for one born during the Captivity (Ezekiel 16:60–63; Jeremiah 31:20; Psalm 89:49–50; Isaiah 55:3). If it is possible to make anything of the prophet's name in connection with his mission it would be that the very mention of the prophet's name would arouse a consciousness in the minds of those to whom he prophesied that God had indeed remembered His promise concerning His people and their Messiah and that they needed to keep faith with Him in the work to which He had called them all (2:9, 11; 4:9; 6:15). It is interesting that one whose name means “God remembers” is called to remind the nation to remember God (1:3-6; 2:6-9; 3:7; 6:14; 7:5ff; 8:14ff; 10:9).

**“The LORD hath been sore displeased with your fathers.”** Jehovah was very angry (07107. **פָּ אַחַר וְהָפַח אֶת אָפָיו**), that is, provoked to rage (Zechariah 8:14; cf. Deuteronomy 1:34-35; Numbers 16:22-24; Deuteronomy 9:7–8,19, 22) with the Jews on account of their idolatry and iniquity. Therefore, He carried them away (Exodus 20:4–5; Leviticus 26:14ff; Deuteronomy 28:15–68; II Kings 17:18; 23:26; II Chronicles 33:6; 34:25; Isaiah 1:4; 65:1–7; Jeremiah 44:1–6) until the land had observed its Sabbaths (II Chronicles 36:21); therefore, Judah was held captive in Babylon for 70 years (Jeremiah 25:4–12; 29:10; Daniel 9:2; Zechariah 1:12; 7:5). There they languished without temple, priest, altar or sacrifice (Lamentations 2:6–7; Ezra 5:12; 9:7; Ezekiel 39:23–24; cf. Hosea 3:1-5).

**“Turn ye unto Me, saith the LORD of Hosts, and I will turn unto you...”** God instructs Zechariah to call the nation to repentance; He sees them drifting into the same spirit of apathy and rebellion that caused their fathers to be destroyed (Malachi 3:7-10). He has commanded that His house be built and He expects it to be done. The fact that the people are faced with the opposition of the Samaritans does not mitigate His desires or commandments. Doing the will of God is often met with opposition to believers and resistance from the enemies of God (cf. II Timothy 3:12; Luke 6:22–23; Matthew 5:12; Acts 7:51).

Also notice that the prophet recognizes that the process of reconciliation involves the turning of the sinner to God. God does not turn to the sinner until and unless the sinner

has turned from sin to Him (Isaiah 59:1–2; cf. II Kings 17:13; Isaiah 31:6; Ezekiel 33:11-16; Joel 2:12; Luke 1:16–17; II Corinthians 3:15–16; II Corinthians 5:18–20).

**“Turn ye,”** that is, “to turn back (hence, away) transitively or intransitively, literally or figuratively (not necessarily with the idea of return to the starting point); generally to retreat; often adverbial, again” (*Strong #7725*), The message of repentance or “turning” was the uniform message of the prophets (Isaiah 6:10; 55:6–7; Jeremiah 4:1–2; 5:3; 25:25; Ezekiel 3:19–20; 14:6; 18:30; Daniel 9:13; Hosea 3:5; 5:4; 6:1; 12:6; Joel 2:12–13; Amos 4:6–11; Jonah 3:8–10; Micah 6:6–8; Habakkuk 1:1ff.; Zephaniah 1:6; 2:1–3; 3:1–2; Malachi 3:7). “The message summoning us to ‘return’ to the Lord has ever been the earmark of all of God’s true messengers” (Kaiser).

This preaching is just as needed today as it was then; it is needed by the world and by Christians. It is always time to repent of our sins and to receive the grace and mercy of God (Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:7–10; II Corinthians 7:8–12; Revelation 2:5, 16, 21–22; 3:3, 19). Repentance is always the prerequisite to fellowship with God.

**“LORD of Hosts”** or armies (cf. Joshua 5:14–15), literally a mass of persons organized for war, in this context the armies of heaven (II Thessalonians 1:7–9). The LORD of Hosts is Jehovah God (I Chronicles 17:24; Psalm 24:10; 46:7, 11; 59:5; 89, 103:20–21; II Samuel 7:26–27; Isaiah 13:4, 13; 47:4; 51:15; 54:5; Jeremiah 10:16). It designates the Lord as the ruler over the whole universe including the armies of Israel (Judges 5:14; I Samuel 17:45) and the armies of Heaven (I Kings 22:19; Luke 2:13; Revelation 19:14).

This is the favorite designation of the post-exilic prophets for Jehovah. Of the 261 times it is used in the OT, 91 times it is used by them (Haggai–14 times, Zechariah–53 times, and Malachi–24 times).

**“Be ye not as your fathers.”** Four times in this brief text the prophet references “their fathers” (vv. 2, 4, 5–6). These ancestors Jehovah had taken into the captivity because they were impenitent idolaters, fornicators, murderers, covenant breakers, false witnesses, etc. (Jeremiah 7:3–11; 25:4–9; II Kings 17:13; Nehemiah 9:26–30; II Chronicles 36:14–15). Jehovah says, “They did not hear nor hearken unto Me” (cf. Zechariah 8:14).

This is one of the great lessons that we are to learn from the past (Romans 15:1–4; I Corinthians 10:6–12). It is as Santayana observed: “Those who cannot learn from history are doomed to repeat it.” Zechariah has learned and understood the lessons of the past, as had Daniel and Haggai, Ezra and Nehemiah. God intends for man to learn from His dealings with them in ages past. He is not given to continual repetition. He has revealed Himself in His actions and His words sufficiently for men to discern His righteous and holy character. Zechariah urges the Jews of the restoration to learn from the mistakes of their fathers and the words and threats of the former prophets and heed the example.

**“Evil ways and evil doings...”** Their fathers were evil in both heart and life (Zechariah 7:4–14; I Kings 17:13; Ezekiel 33:11; 36:31; cf. Psalm 141:4; Proverbs 4:23; 12:20; Ecclesiastes 9:3; Jeremiah 3:17; 4:4; 25:5; 26:3, 13; 35:15; Ezekiel 36:31). They were as wicked as those ancient men of the Ante-diluvian world (Genesis 6:5; 8:21). It was then,

as Jesus said of Israel later, “An evil man out of the evil treasure shall bring forth evil things” (Matthew 12:35; Luke 6:45).

“**The former prophets**” are those prophets whom God sent to the nation over the span of their history to turn them away from their sins by warning them that God meant what He said concerning their ultimate captivity in a foreign land (Deuteronomy 28:15-68; Leviticus 26:14-46). Notice that Jehovah says that Israel in rejecting His prophets had not listened to Him. They came in His name with a “thus saith the Lord” but they would not “hear nor hearken” (cf. Zechariah 7:13; Jeremiah 29:19; II Kings 17:14; Nehemiah 9:29-35). It was as Samuel, the first of these great prophets of Israel, said: “And ye have this day rejected your God” (I Samuel 10:19; cf. 8:7).

“**Where are they?**” That is, “look and tell me what happened to your fathers as a consequence of their rebellion and disobedience.” Where are they? Their graves marked the way to Assyria and Babylon (Amos 4:2-3; Jeremiah 9:16; 20:4-10; 29:17-19). God took them just as He said He would. His patience eventually was exhausted and the judgment came upon them. Jehovah finally determined to cease sending prophets which He replaced with Babylonian soldiers. Israel then was like Israel in Jesus’ day, “Ye would not!” (cf. Matthew 23:37; Luke 11:48-50; 13:34).

“**But my words and my statutes...did they not take hold of your fathers?**” The lesson the prophet drives home is that while their fathers may have killed the prophets, they could not kill the Word which God sent them to bear (Isaiah 40:8; I Peter 1:23-25). They could not outlast Him, nor should they expect Him to change His mind (Malachi 3:6). There was a limit to God’s patience and their fathers died in their sin and rebellion (cf. John 8:21, 24; Luke 13:3, 5). In that instance God’s word took hold of them, that is, overtook (cf. Deuteronomy 19:6) them (Lamentations 2:17; cf. Jeremiah 39:5; 42:16; 52:8-11; Psalm 7:5; 18:37; Deuteronomy 28:15, 45). What becomes of the man who resists God’s word (Matthew 21:44; Luke 20:18)? We do not break God’s commandments; they break us!

“**And they returned and said, ‘Like as the LORD of hosts thought to do unto us...so hath he dealt with us.’**” Israel eventually “turned” to God but not in time to avert God’s purposed judgment of their wickedness. Rather, it took the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple and the subsequent captivity to bring the former generation to the acknowledgement of the righteousness of God (Lamentations 1:18). Having regained their “spiritual senses” (MacKay) the remnant prepares to seek God’s mercy (Lamentations 5:11-17; Daniel 9:3-19; cf. Jeremiah 29:10-14; I Kings 8:47-48; Psalm 106:40-48). Zechariah does not recall their stubbornness and the calamity that befell them as a threat of doom, but rather as a challenge to their faithfulness—“do not be like your fathers, do not be men that must be broken before they acknowledge the righteousness of God and His commandments.”

**Zechariah 1:7-17**, "Upon the four and twentieth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Sebat, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the LORD unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying, I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom; and behind him were there red horses, speckled, and white.

"Then said I, O my lord, what are these? And the angel that talked with me said unto me, I will shew thee what these be.

"And the man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, These are they whom the LORD hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth. And they answered the angel of the LORD that stood among the myrtle trees, and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and, behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest. Then the angel of the LORD answered and said, O LORD of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?

And the LORD answered the angel that talked with me with good words and comfortable words. So the angel that communed with me said unto me, Cry thou, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy. And I am very sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease: for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction. Therefore thus saith the LORD; I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it, saith the LORD of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem. Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the LORD shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem."

**"Upon the four and twentieth day of the eleventh month...in the second year of Darius, came the word of the LORD unto Zechariah..."** This is three months after his first address and five months (Haggai 1:15) after the rebuilding of the Temple had been initiated. This second oracle of Zechariah in the eleventh month consists of eight visions (1:7-17; 1:18-21; 2:1-13; 3:1-10; 4:1-14; 5:1-4; 5:7-11; 6:1-8); it follows the third and fourth oracles of Haggai in the ninth month (Haggai 2:10-23). Haggai's oracles are concerned with the holiness and security of the restored people. Zechariah elaborates on that theme in vivid visions. Haggai's final oracle places their hopes in the Messiah typified in Zerubbabel. Zechariah's final oracles vest them in a crowned Joshua, the High Priest, as a type of the Messiah who is King and Priest. The point of all these visions is to stir up in the people a zeal for their glorious future as the people of God, that remnant through whom the Great Redeemer and Deliverer would come.

**"Shebat..."** the Babylonian name for the eleventh month which corresponds to our February. The date on our calendar is February 15, 519 B.C.

**"I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees...behind him were there red horses, speckled, and white."** The Angel of the Lord (1:11) is pictured astride a red horse among the Hadassah, i.e., the myrtle shrubs. Behind him is a contingent of riders on red, white and bay colored horses. The

Angel of the Lord is the Commander of this cavalry corps and they confess that they have executed His command "to walk to and fro through the earth" (1:10-11). Their reconnaissance yields the report that "All is at rest."

**"A man..."** The Angel of the Lord is always the representative of Deity (Exodus 3:2-4; 13:21-14:19; 23:20; Genesis 18:2-4; 13-14; 22:11-15; 32:24, 30; 48:15; Joshua 5:13-15). Some believe Him to be the Word (cf. I Corinthians 10:4; see the article by John Welch in *F&F Vol. 1 No. 1* and notes by Harry Lewis).

**"Red horse..."** Horses themselves are suggestive of war (Deuteronomy 17:6; 20:1; I Kings 4:26; II Chronicles 1:16; 9:24-28; Psalm 20:7). In Revelation 6:4 the red horse certainly symbolizes war and is associated with the black horse of famine and the dun (mousey gray) horse of death (6:5-7), both of which are the consequent results of war. In that same chapter (v. 2) Christ is pictured as a victorious conqueror astride a white horse (cf. Revelation 19:11). However, no meaning is assigned to the colors in this vision.

**"The myrtle trees..."** (Isaiah 41:19; 55:13; Nehemiah 8:15; Zechariah 1:8, 10-11). The myrtle, *Myrtus communis* (Natural Order Myrtaceae), is a very common indigenous shrub all over Palestine. On the bare hillsides it is a low bush, but under favorable conditions of moisture it attains a considerable height (cf. Zechariah 1:8, 10-11). It has dark green, scented leaves, delicate starry white flowers and dark-colored berries, which are eaten...It is mentioned as one of the choice plants of the land (Isaiah 41:19)... It was one of the trees used in the Feast of Tabernacles (Nehemiah 8:15): 'the branches of thick trees' (which see) are interpreted in the Talmud as myrtle boughs; also the 'thick trees' of Ne 8:15 as 'wild myrtle'" (*ISBE*). The myrtle to Isaiah is emblematic of the fortunes of a restored Israel (41:19; 55:3, 13). It is the shrub whose branches were used to commemorate the exodus once Israel arrived in the land (Nehemiah 8:15; cf. Leviticus 23:41-43).

**"In the bottom..."** The location of these myrtles is suggestive of the Valley of the Brook Kidron near Jerusalem (McKay). While it cannot be determined conclusively, it is reasonable that a vision about Jerusalem would be set in the environs thereof. If correct, Jehovah, the Lord of Hosts, is pictured as standing near and watching over the city at the head of His heavenly army (cf. Romans 9:29; James 5:4).

**"And the angel that talked with me said unto me, I will shew thee what these be."** In each of the visions, with the possible exception of the third, there is "the angel that talked with me;" he is often referred to by commentators as the "interpreting angel." His role is to supply Zechariah with a full understanding of the elements of the vision, either by asking questions or answering them.

**"And the man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, These are they whom the LORD hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth."** The Angel of the Lord answers the prophet, I am not sure of the significance of that, except that He is

their commander and Who better would know what they are doing, or are supposed to do.

The Angel of the Lord describes them as “walking to and fro through the earth” (cf. Zechariah 6:7). The language is not the same as that used to describe the “eyes of the Lord” (Zechariah 4:10; I Chronicles 16:9). However, Satan is said to both “walk up and down” through the earth, as well as “to go to and fro” (Job 1:7; 2:12). The words are not intended to describe omniscience or omnipresence, else these attributes are possessed of Satan (consider: Hebrews 2:14; James 4:7; I Peter 5:9; I John 2:13; 3:8; 5:18; cf. Matthew 12:29). Rather, it is the universality of their activity in the kingdoms of men (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; Ephesians 2:2; 6:12; II Corinthians 4:4; I John 5:19). God rules the kingdom of men (Daniel 4:17, 32, 35; Revelation 19:6). However, Satan is always fomenting rebellion against Him (Luke 19:14; cf. Matthew 4:8–9). These horsemen are the angelic host of God which represent God’s activity in the world on behalf of His saints.

**“And they answered...We have walked to and fro through the earth, and, behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest.”** The answer of the “horsemen” indicates that God was not moving at the present against the nations or in the interest of His people Israel. He is nearby, He is among them and watching them. But, all is quiet.

This vision must be understood in light of what the prophet Haggai had prophesied in the four months previous (2:4–7). He had promised renewed blessings under the provisions of God’s covenant with Israel at Moab provided the people returned to building the Temple (Haggai 2:4–5; cf. Deuteronomy 30:1–10). Furthermore, he had assured them that what they were doing was instrumental to the coming of the Messiah (2:6–7, 20–23). They were building, but their circumstances were unchanged and the enemies of Israel still persecuted them (cf. Ezra 5:1-3). Zechariah’s prophecy is intended to reassure them that God will fulfill His promises.

**“Then the angel of the LORD answered and said, O LORD of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?”** The Angel of the Lord intercedes on behalf of Jerusalem and Judah. His query is much like that of the Psalmist who trusting in God’s mercy and help pleads for relief (Psalm 6:3; 13:1–2; 80:4; 90:13; 94:3; cf. Revelation 6:10; Habakkuk 1:2; Psalm 74:10). His pleading here would indicate that the call for repentance issued by the prophets had been heeded (I Kings 8:47–53; Revelation 3:19; Psalm 106:44–48).

**“Thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years.”** This refers to the seventy years of the prophet Jeremiah during which Judah was captive in Babylon (25:11–12; 29:10; II Chronicles 36:22; Zechariah 7:5). It commenced with the captivity of 606 B.C. and ended in 536 B.C. in the first year of Cyrus. However, there was also seventy years of desolations for Jerusalem (Daniel 9:2; cf. Jeremiah 25:11). This began in 586 B.C. with the destruction of Jerusalem and ended in 516 B.C. with the completion of the temple. While the captivity was

ended, there remained a little time until the Temple was restored and then the desolations would be over.

**“And the LORD answered the angel that talked with me with good words and comfortable words. So the angel that communed with me said unto me...”** The response to the plea of the Angel of the Lord is given to the “interpreting angel.” It may be that the Angel of the Lord turned and spoke to the interpreting angel. Such an attribution of speech occurs elsewhere in the Old Testament (e.g. Exodus 3:2, 4; Judges 6:12, 14). His words are said to be “good” and “comforting” words, that is, words that expressed the kindness and mercy of God, words which gave consolation and reassurance that God would remember his promise and relieve Jerusalem (Isaiah 40:1).

**“Cry thou, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts...Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts...”** These words were not just for the angel or for Zechariah; these words were for the nation. He is to “cry,” that is, to preach, proclaim and publish these words. Furthermore, he is to do so “in the name of the Lord.” This is Zechariah’s commission as a prophet.

**“I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy.”** Literally, “I am jealous with great jealousy.” Jealousy in God is seen as a proper reaction to threats against the object of His love, either by external factors (Nahum 1:2; Joel 2:18) or a weakened affection (Exodus 20:5; 34:14; Deuteronomy 4:24; 5:9; 6:15; 32:21; Joshua 24:19; 1 Kings 14:22; Psalm 78:58; cf. Ezekiel 8:1–6). It is not a weak emotion (Zechariah 8:5; cf. Deuteronomy 29:20; Isaiah 42:13; Numbers 25:11; Psalm 79:5). God is determined to protect the objects of His love (Ephesians 5:23–25; II Corinthians 11:2).

**“For Jerusalem and for Zion...”** Zion was originally the City of David which he captured from the Jebusites (II Samuel 5:7; I Kings 8:1; II Chronicles 5:2). The name later came to be attached by the prophets to the Temple Hill (Isaiah 4:5; 8:18; Jeremiah 31:6; Micah 4:7). Eventually, all of Jerusalem was identified as Zion (Psalm 102:21; Amos 1:2; Zephaniah 3:16; Jeremiah 3:14; Lamentations 5:11). The names are used to designate the people and they take on a special Messianic significance in the context of Zechariah (cf. 2:7, 10; 8:2–3; 9:9, 13).

**“And I am very sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease: for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction.”** God’s jealousy is manifested toward the nations that are “at ease,” that are haughty in their comforts and their strength (cf. Amos 6:1). These nations, the Persians in particular, were proudly sufficient and secure (cf. Daniel 11:2). They did not understand that God was the guarantor of their peace and prosperity (cf. Daniel 4:17, 25, 32; Psalm 147:14). They quickly forgot His works and failed to acknowledge Him as the only true God (cf. Romans 1:18–32).

God’s anger against Judah was only for a little while, the seventy years (Lamentations 4:11; Jeremiah 5:10–18). Assyria, Babylon and Persia were his agents in the chastening of Israel; however, they brought “forward the affliction,” that is they exceeded their part as mere instruments and wished to destroy Israel altogether (Isaiah 13:1–18; 14:4–27; Jeremiah 51:1ff; Daniel 8:3–4). The LXX renders the phrase as, “helped for evil;” the

*Vulgate* translates the Hebrew as “they helped forward the evil.” Therefore, rather than be just instruments of God’s wrath, they were cruel and covetous, for which God was “sore displeased” and would punish them severely (Isaiah 10:5–27; Jeremiah 21:7; Habakkuk 2:4–11; Jeremiah 46:28).

**“Therefore...I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it...and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem...My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad...”** The Lord of Hosts has returned to Jerusalem with mercies. In this we should see God’s intent to fulfill His covenant with Israel (Isaiah 55:33; cf. Acts 13:34; Psalm 89). The thought is definitely Messianic.

The prophet announces three things that will be accomplished prior to the Messiah’s arrival: (1) the Temple will be completed (Ezra 6:15; cf. Haggai 2:10–23; Zechariah 3:9; cf. Daniel 9:24–27); (2) Jerusalem would be rebuilt and occupied in security (this reconstruction began under Nehemiah and advanced through the reign of Herod the Great (Nehemiah 2:5; see: *McClintock and Strong*, Vol. IV; *The Life of Flavius Josephus*, p. 1656); (3) the cities of Judea would be repopulated (cf. Zechariah 2:4; by the third century B.C. population density was comparable to pre-captivity times, see: W.F. Albright, *Archaeology of Palestine*, p. 142).

**“The LORD shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem.”** These words should not be understood as a recapitulation, but as a subsequent blessing to follow the three previous promises. Thus, after the Temple is built and both Jerusalem and Judah are re-established then Jehovah would comfort Zion and Jerusalem (Luke 2:25–32; cf. Isaiah 40:1–11). He had more in store for them than a gradual economic and political recovery (Daniel 2, 10–12; Psalm 69:35).

While they could not at that moment discern God’s shaking of the nations (Haggai 2:20–23), He had a plan in place in which He would take the remnant of the faithful (Habakkuk 2:4) and accomplish His eternal purpose of redemption. They could not discern these great purposes from their present circumstances or the apparent outcome of their work (Haggai 2:3–5). We know that there were difficult times yet to come. However, if they would perfect holiness in themselves (Haggai 2:10–19; cf. II Corinthians 7:1); they would receive the fulness of God’s covenant with them (Haggai 2:5).

**“Zion...Jerusalem...”** God’s choice of Zion and Jerusalem is clearly Messianic (see: 2:2). It was from Jerusalem that the Law of the Lord would go forth and in Zion that deliverance would be found by those that call on the name of the Lord (Isaiah 2:2–4; Luke 24:44–49; Acts 1:4–8; cf. Psalm 2:6; 53:6; 69:35; 102:13; Isaiah 1:27; Joel 2:32; et.al.).

**Zechariah 1:18–21**, “Then lifted I up mine eyes, and saw, and behold four horns. And I said unto the angel that talked with me, What be these? And he answered me, These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem. And the LORD shewed me four carpenters. Then said I, What come these to do? And he spake, saying, These are the horns which have scattered Judah, so that no man did lift up his head: but these are

come to fray them, to cast out the horns of the Gentiles, which lifted up their horn over the land of Judah to scatter it.”

**“Then lifted I up mine eyes, and saw, and behold four horns...These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.”** This is the prophet’s formula for transitioning between the visions (1:18; 2:1; 5:1, 9; 6:1; cf. Genesis 31:10; Daniel 8:3). The form is a little different in 3:1 and 4:1. But in each case, the prophet is startled by the sudden appearance of the vision and overwhelmed by contemplation of its significance. He is no finished with one than another is upon him.

**“Four horns...”** Horns are symbols of power or might. They were often employed by the prophets as emblems in their visions (I Samuel 2:1, 10; Daniel 7, 8, Psalm 18:2; 75:10; 89:7, 24; 92:10; 112:9–10; Amos 6:13; Habakkuk 3:4; Ezekiel 34:21; II Chronicles 18:10; I Kings 22:11). The number four is not to be understood as the four empires of Daniel’s vision (2:38–45). Rather, as all the nations of the earth that have withstood and oppressed Israel (cf. Deuteronomy 33:17; Micah 4:13; Daniel 8:3, 6–7, 20). The numeral four has significance in prophecy when associated with the inhabited world—“the four corners of the earth” (Isaiah 11:12; Daniel 7:2; 8:8; 11:4; Zechariah 2:6; Jeremiah 49:36; Revelation 7:1).

**“The horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem, so that no man did lift up his head...”** The horns had “scattered” God’s people through war and deportation (II Kings 25:5; Esther 3:8; Jeremiah 30:11; 50:17; cf. Genesis 11:8). As a result they were thoroughly subdued (Judges 8:28); there was no fight left in them. It is not just the nations that have oppressed Judah, but also Israel. It is all the nations who have so acted: Egypt, Moab, Ammon, Edom, Philistia, Syria, Assyria, Babylon, Persia and, eventually, Greece and Rome. God is stating that he alone rules in the kingdom of men (Daniel 4:17, 25, 32). He is standing for His people and no power on earth shall beset them contrary to His purpose as He has now revealed it. They will be secure in the land till the coming of Messiah.

The names by which Jehovah calls them are the names of Messianic promise: Judah (Genesis 49:10; Jeremiah 31:31; I Chronicles 28:4), Israel (Genesis 32:28; Numbers 24:17–18; Isaiah 11:10–12), Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:1–3; Micah 4:2–3; Daniel 9:25–27; Joel 2:32).

**“And the LORD shewed me four carpenters...these are come to fray them, to cast out the horns of the Gentiles, which lifted up their horn over the land of Judah to scatter it.”** The word rendered “carpenter” may refer to a worker in iron, wood or stone. Primarily it denotes an engraver or an artisan (Exodus 28:11; 38:23; I Samuel 13:19; II Samuel 5:11). The material out of which the horns were made is unspecified; however, it seems likely they were iron (cf. II Chronicles 18:10; I Kings 22:11). The ASV renders the word “smiths,” suggesting metal.

These carpenters or smiths would do two things. First, they would “fray them”—an archaic way of saying “affray” or “frighten.” The carpenters are sent by the Lord to

terrify the horns (cf. Deuteronomy 28:26; Jeremiah 7:33; Nahum 2:11; Zephaniah 3:13). They are going to be turned in fear at the judgments of the Lord. He does not specify what these shall be, but nevertheless, God will frighten them (cf. Deuteronomy 2:25; Exodus 23:27; Joshua 2:9; II Samuel 5:22–24; et.al.).

These “smiths” will drive the horns of the Gentiles out of the land. God promises that the Gentiles will no longer possess the land or remove them from it. The prophet does not say that there will be no Gentiles present in the land, or that they will not continue to have conflicts. The Lord promises that the Gentiles will no longer have the power to remove them from the land before the Messiah comes. They will not overthrow the divine plan, they must go to work and know that God is with them (Haggai 1:13; 2:4–5).

**Zechariah 2:1-7**, “I lifted up mine eyes again, and looked, and behold a man with a measuring line in his hand. Then said I, Whither goest thou? And he said unto me, To measure Jerusalem, to see what is the breadth thereof, and what is the length thereof. And, behold, the angel that talked with me went forth, and another angel went out to meet him, And said unto him, Run, speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein: For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her. Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the north, saith the LORD: for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the LORD. Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon.”

**“Behold a man with a measuring line in his hand... To measure Jerusalem, to see what is the breadth thereof, and what is the length thereof.”** Immediately, a man with a surveyor’s line comes into the prophet’s view. The Hebrew literally signifies a “measuring rope.” It is not the same word as in 1:16, and in view of the vision I am doubtful if it is intended to signify the same thing. Clearly in chapter one the building of the Temple is the concern of the prophet, thus the line mentioned is probably a plumb line (cf. Isaiah 28:17; Amos 7:7–8). Now, it is the future condition of Jerusalem that is before the prophet’s mind because of the promises made in the former visions.

Breadth and length suggest area which is more in keeping with the promise “My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad” (1:17). Hailey and MacKay both see “the man” with the surveyor’s line as representative of the contemporary builders of the Temple and Jerusalem. However, the prophet identifies him as “the interpreting angel” (2:3). I am inclined to think that the angel is sent forward in order to address the doubts and fears the returning remnant had. The activity of measuring Jerusalem would allow for a further revelation on this point. Naturally, to them that which the prophets promised was not readily apparent in that which they could see and even visualize as coming from their efforts (Haggai 2:3–4; Ezra 3:12–13; Nehemiah 7:1–2). The vision is certainly intended to encourage the people. Now, the question to be answered is does the vision pertain to the physical Jerusalem or the heavenly one (Hebrews 12:22).

**“And, behold, the angel that talked with me went forth, and another angel went out to meet him...”** How many characters are there in Zechariah’s dream? It seems to me that there are three: the “interpreting angel” carrying the surveyor’s line, the Angel of the Lord (here called the “another angel”), and the prophet (who by the Angel of the Lord is called “that young man”). **And said unto him, Run, speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein...”** The Angel of the Lord announces God’s assurance that He will rebuild and bless Jerusalem. Certainly, Jerusalem enjoyed a resurgence of growth and eventual prosperity, and this in keeping with prophecy (II Chronicles 36:15–23; Isaiah 44:26; Jeremiah 30:18; 31:38–40; Ezekiel 36:10–11; Micah 7:11). However, the physical city never assumed the size that some believe is suggested by this text.

However, carefully consider what the text actually says. Jerusalem shall be inhabited “**as towns without walls,**” the Angel of the Lord does not say Jerusalem will literally assume such proportions that it cannot be walled. Rather, He is describing the safety and security in which the people are held while they build for Jehovah. He continues this promise, “**For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her.**” Herein is the great lesson for these Jews. Their walls had meant nothing to them seventy years before (II Chronicles 36:19). Once the Glory of God had departed from their Temple, they were defenseless (Ezekiel 10:18; 11:22–23; cf. I Samuel 4:21–22; Matthew 23:38). Yet when the Glory of God was in the midst of Israel they were safe from every enemy (Exodus 40:34–38; 14:19–20). This vision is intended to encourage and embolden the people in their work while their enemies were trying to stop them. They did not need to fear anyone or anything; God was a wall of fire about them and they were secure as long as they were doing God’s will (II Kings 6:13–15; Psalm 104:4; cf. Psalm 50:3; 97:3). The prophecy must be understood from the point of reference of those to whom it was given.

Yet, there is still this reference to “**the multitude of men and cattle therein.**” I believe this should be understood in light of the language of Jeremiah 31:27–30 and Hosea 2:23. God intended to take the remnant and garner from them a harvest of righteousness. Not that any one moment in history there would be a city as large as the one portrayed by the prophet. Remember, these are a people living in the midst of rubble and ruin, surrounded by enemies and hardships of every kind. A prosperous metropolis was not something they could easily visualize.

This next admonition is to those who remained behind in Babylon: **Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the north...for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven.**” Less than fifty thousand Jews are numbered as having returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:64–65). They were a hearty lot and brave. The prophet calls the rest of the remnant to join them in their work. It was God who had scattered them and now it was God who recalled them to the land (Nehemiah 1:8–9; Isaiah 11:11; Jeremiah 19:14; Ezekiel 11:17; 20:34, 41; 22:19–21; 36:24; Zephaniah 3:20; Psalm 106:26–27; 45–48). This prophecy is one that assures them of God’s abiding presence and a successful return (cf. Exodus 33:14–16).

“**Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon.**” It is not any insurmountable obstacle that hinders the remnant’s return. God has called them, now they need to move in faith (Ezra 1:3–6). God’s grace is with them, but they must return of their own will (cf. Ezra 8:21–23). This is not so much a call from danger, though there was danger (Esther 3:8–11), as it is a call from becoming at ease in Babylon (Jeremiah 51:6, 45; cf. Revelation 18:1–4).

**Zechariah 2:8–13,** “After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye. For, behold, I will shake mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants: and ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me.

**“After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you.”** Several questions need to be answered here: (1) what is the significance of the word “after,” (2) Who is it that the Lord is sending unto the nations; and (3) what is the “glory” on which account He is sent? (James Moffat has a good translation of this section.)

It is the Angel of the Lord who speaks, and it is He that the Lord Almighty sends forth for His glory upon the nations. It is obviously judgment time upon the enemies of Israel (v. 9). This removal of the persecuting powers was promised by the prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel (Jeremiah 49:35-39; Ezekiel 32:17-32; Daniel 8:1-27; 11:1-3), and the Angel of the Lord says its accomplishment will validate Him as having come from the Lord of Hosts (cf. 4:9; Deuteronomy 13:1-11; 18:15-22; cf. Galatians 1:8). Judgment upon Persia would be a certain indication that the Messianic hope was still advancing toward completion (See: Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book XI, Ch. 7. ¶ 331).

**“He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.”** The “apple of the eye” is a Hebrew expression for the pupil of the eye (Deuteronomy 32:10; Psalm 17:8; Proverbs 7:2; Lamentations 2:8). Being the most sensitive part and easily injured men are careful to protect it (Psalm 17:8). The expression as used here by the Angel of the Lord reflects the close connection between God and His people. He that lays a hand on to harm Israel has raised their hand against God and that which he treasures most (Psalm 105:13-15; Isaiah 63:9; Matthew 24:45; Acts 9:4).

**“For, behold, I will shake mine hand upon them,”** or “I will raise my hand against them” (NIV). God will signal for their destruction (cf. Isaiah 11:15; 13:1-4; 19:16-17). Anthropomorphically, it is the emblem of His power and justice (I Samuel 5:11; Isaiah 43:13; 50:2; Jeremiah 6:12; 15:6; 25:15; etc.).

Now, because the Angel of the Lord has reassured the inhabitants of Jerusalem of God’s vigilant concern for their welfare and the certain advancement of His Messianic plans of which they are an integral part, He urges them to rejoice and welcome their Redeemer. Different commentators see a division in the text at different places. Hailey makes the whole chapter Messianic. MacKay goes back and forth between the literal Jerusalem and the spiritual Jerusalem noting three divisions between verses five and six and verses nine and ten. I see the transition to the Messianic here at verse ten.

**Zechariah 2:10-13,** “Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD. And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee. And the LORD shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again. Be silent, O all flesh, before the LORD: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation.”

**“I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD.”** Who is it that comes to dwell with them other than the Messiah? “Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall

come, saith the LORD of hosts" (Malachi 3:1). The Messiah would come and dwell among the Jews (Isaiah 7:14; cf. John 1:1-3; 14), after the captivity, after the restoration and after the rebuilding of the Temple.

When He comes **"many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in the midst of thee."** Here we see the inclusion of the Gentiles in the promise to Abraham and their recognition as "my people" (Hosea 1:9-10; Isaiah 19:25; Zechariah 8:7-8; Romans 9:25-26; II Corinthians 6:16). The dwelling "with" goes far beyond just the incarnation, it is the fellowship of God with His own special possession as a result of the justification wrought by Christ at Calvary (Ephesians 1:3-7; Deuteronomy 14:2; 26:18; Titus 2:14; I Peter 2:19).

**"In that day..."** Zechariah uses this phrase 20 times in his prophecy. This is the first. It is clearly Messianic, as a complete study of the book will bear out (particularly the last five chapters). It refers to the first coming of Christ, the incarnation, personal ministry and passion.

**"And the LORD shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again."** This is the only place in the Bible where the term "holy land" is found. It is clearly a passage that is figurative and Messianic. I believe the prophet has in view "the rest for the people of God" (Hebrews 4:6-11; 12:22-29; Matthew 5:5). It is the ultimate rest of the glorified Church of Christ, the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:1-3). Once the Messiah comes the faithful remnant will inherit the eternal holy land.

**"Be silent, O all flesh, before the LORD: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation."** The Angel of the Lord calls the world to be reverent before Jehovah as He rises up from His throne to act in behalf of His people. Our God is an awesome God and His ways are past finding out (Job 9:10; Romans 11:33).

**Zechariah 3:1-10**, “And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD stood by. And the angel of the LORD protested unto Joshua, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by. Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH. For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree.”

“**And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the LORD and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.**” This Joshua is the same mentioned by Haggai the prophet and in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah (Zechariah 6:11; Haggai 1:1, 12, 14; Ezra 2:2; 3:2; 4:3; 5:2; Nehemiah 7:7). He is pictured here in the vision functioning in his capacity as the High Priest (cf. Numbers 16:9; Deuteronomy 10:8; II Chronicles 29:11; Jeremiah 33:18; Ezekiel 44:15). Joshua entered offering sacrifices upon the restored brazen altar after returning from Babylon 20 years prior to this vision (Ezra 3:1–6).

He is pictured as ministering before **the Angel of the LORD**. Remember, it was this Angel whose glory filled the Tabernacle and whose presence dwelt between the Cherubim (Exodus 14:19–20; 40:34–35; cf. I Corinthians 10:1–4; I Kings 8:11; II Chronicles 7:1; Ezekiel 10:4). This vision is one that reveals some important spiritual realities to Zechariah, Joshua and the people of Israel.

**Satan [is] standing at his right hand to resist him** (cf. Psalm 109:6). The Hebrew name for the devil literally means “Accuser.” The phrase in the text, if rendered literally would read, “The Accuser standing at his right hand to accuse him.” This is one of four OT passages where Satan appears (cf. Genesis 3; I Chronicles 21; Job 1–2). This passage and that in Job justify the name Satan. The other two passages justify Jesus’ designation of him as The Tempter (Matthew 4:3; cf. Genesis 3:13; II Chronicles 21:1; I Thessalonians 3:5; II Corinthians 11:3).

In Zechariah’s vision, Satan stands at the right hand of the accused, Joshua, leveling the charges against him. What these might be are evident from the rest of the vision

wherein we see Joshua clothed with filthy garments (Isaiah 64:6). Zechariah is clearly unfit to “stand before the LORD” (cf. Exodus 29:1–37; 40:12–16; Leviticus 16:23–34) either because of his own sins or the sins of the people (this latter I believe the best interpretation; Satan is accusing Israel and Judah of their sins). However, God accepts them and Joshua their priest because He has forgiven them (I Kings 8:46–53; Nehemiah 1:6; Daniel 6:1–10).

**“And the LORD [the Angel of the Lord] said unto Satan.”** This is reminiscent of the language of Michael to Satan when they disputed over the body of Moses (Jude 9; cf. II Peter 2:11). However, here it is not a case of an angel deferring to what is in God’s authority alone, but the Lord actually rebuking Satan. This again demonstrates that the Angel of the Lord is no mere or ordinary angel.

**“The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan...”** Gesenius (p. 177) observes that the word “rebuke” is often used of God rebuking his enemies especially that He may restrain and deter them from wicked efforts (Isaiah 17:13; 54:9; Psalm 9:6; 68:31; 119:21; cf. Malachi 2:3; 3:11; Psalm 106:9; Nahum 1:4; now see: Jude 9). Thus, in the vision, the accusations of Satan against Israel will not stand (cf. Romans 8:31–34).

**“The LORD...even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem...”** Notice, in responding to Satan, The Angel of the Lord says, “hath chosen Jerusalem.” He does not say, “hath chosen Joshua” (MacKay, p. 100). Joshua is the representative of the people (and they are identified by the city of Jerusalem, cf. Micah 4:8, etc.). Satan’s accusation is his complaint against them that God cannot receive them because they are wicked, rebellious and unrighteous. His words are probably very much like those of the Samaritans against them to the King of Persia (Ezra 4:12–16). However, God has redeemed a remnant of them in order to complete His eternal purpose. Satan’s accusations while rooted in fact, are motivated by his own desire to see mankind destroyed and as lost as he is (Matthew 25:42; cf. Revelation 9:1–11). In light of this vision, one may well understand that there is indeed a Messianic element in the previous vision (Zechariah 1:17).

**“Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?”** God has pulled Israel from the fire of judgment (Amos 4:11; cf. Jude 23). He has spared them from a complete or “full” end (Jeremiah 4:27–31; 5:10–18; 30:11; 46:28; Ezekiel 11:13–21). They were not able to remove themselves from the fire; they certainly would have been utterly destroyed had God not delivered them (cf. Isaiah 1:4–9; 10:22–23; Lamentations 3:22; Romans 9:27–29). Oh how marvelous is the grace of the Lord Almighty (Romans 5:20–21).

**“Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel.”** The word “filthy” signifies that which is “soiled (as if excrementitious)” according to Strong. Gesenius confirms that the root word has a signification derived from excrement (p. 704). The word appears in II Kings 18:27, Isaiah 36:12 and 28:8. It is used to signify the defilement of sin in Proverbs 30:12 and Isaiah 4:4 (cf. Isaiah 64:6 where it is menstrual filth; cf. Isaiah 30:22; Lamentations 1:17; Jeremiah 13:1–11). The imagery is that of extreme uncleanness (Ezekiel 4:12–13; cf. Deuteronomy 14:3; 23:12–

14). No priest would ever appear after this manner in the Tabernacle or Temple, let alone minister at the altar in such a defiled condition (Leviticus 21:6–7; 22:15–16). But, this is symbolic of Israel's sin.

**“And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him...”** MacKay, as does Hailey, thinks these are the angels of heaven or the seraphims (Isaiah 6:1–2). That certainly is in harmony with the character of the vision which is intended to show Zechariah something he could not otherwise see and know, the spiritual realities of Joshua's intercession as High Priest and the decree of divine pardon.

**“And he answered...saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.”** I see in this the ritual of the day of atonement where when the priest had offered the atonement blood, he washed and put on clean clothes before coming out of the Sanctuary clean (Leviticus 16:1–34). The Angel of the Lord declares that Joshua and necessarily the nation are clean, that is, forgiven, pardoned, redeemed from their sins. The change in garments signifies a change in spiritual relationship (cf. Revelation 7:14; Luke 15:22; Matthew 22:11–12). If God has cleansed Him who is to say that he is not clean (Acts 10:15; 11:9). It also signifies a certainty of God completing His plan with them (Ezekiel 36:25–38; Micah 7:18–19; Isaiah 43:25).

**“And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD stood by.”** The prophet now gets in on the action. Being excited by what he sees, he exclaims that they should not forget to place the priest's mitre or turban upon Joshua's head. This turban bore the words “Holiness to the Lord” (Exodus 28:4, 37; 39; 29:6; 39:28, 31; Leviticus 8:9; 16:4). Zechariah wants to see Joshua crowned with this visible symbol of the consecrated relationship that exists between God and priest. Joshua being the symbol of the nation, it would indicate the restored relationship of Israel and Jehovah (Exodus 19:5–6; Deuteronomy 7:6; cf. Isaiah 62:12). The fact that the Angel of the Lord stood by while his request was carried out indicates that God approved and the prophet's conclusion was valid.

**“And the angel of the LORD protested unto Joshua, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts...”** With these words the Angel of the Lord announces to Joshua the significance of his ministry as the High Priest. He gives him an understanding of the spiritual realities which he has glimpsed in this vision and reveals the coming Messiah of whom he as High Priest is a type.

**“If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by.”** If Joshua will be a faithful High Priest (1 Kings 3:14; 11:38; Leviticus 8:35; Numbers 3:7–8) then the Lord will allow him to continue in the office of High Priest and minister before the courts of heaven in the rebuilt Temple (cf. Hebrews 6:19–20; 9:24; Exodus 25:22; Numbers 7:89; Psalm 80:1; 99:1; cf. Ezekiel

10:2; I Chronicles 28:18). We have already identified “these that stand by” as the angels (cf. Exodus 36:8; 1 Kings 6:22–35; Hebrews 9:5; 1 Pt 1:12). These minister on behalf of the saints (Hebrews 1:13–14) and stand before God in heaven for us (Matthew 18:10). Joshua is promised a place in the courts of heaven if he will be God’s man (Psalm 84:10).

**“Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee...”**

The word “fellow” (*Strong* #7453) signifies a friend, companion or intimate. In some passages the word is translated “brother” (Proverbs 18:24). However, who are these brethren? Are they the priesthood or the entire nation? The Angel of the Lord says: **“they are men wondered at...”** The ASV calls them “men that are a sign.” The MKJ calls them “men of symbol.” These men are a sign of something; clearly it is of God’s intent to complete His Messianic plan (Isaiah 55:1–6). While it is tempting to take them as priests, I am compelled to take them as the restored nation Israel because it is forth from them that the Lord says He will bring forth **His Servant the BRANCH**, the Messiah, the Christ (Zechariah 6:12; Isaiah 4:2; 11:1; 42:11; 52:13; 53:2, 11; Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15; Romans 15:8–12). The Messiah is a descendant of David, not Aaron; to take them as the Aaronic house causes confusion, but when we see Him as a King and Priest after the order of Melchizedek then the confusion dissipates (Zechariah 6:12; Psalm 110; Acts 2:33ff.)

**“For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts...”** This is one of the more difficult passages in the book. Since the Angel of the Lord has just introduced the Messiah and the object in view is the remission of sins. It seems that this stone is to be regarded as another reference to Him. That the Messiah should be called a stone in connection with the rebuilding of the Temple and his redemptive work is not out of character with Old Testament symbolism (Psalm 188:22–23; Isaiah 28:16; Matthew 21:42; Acts 4:11; I Peter 2:6). However, what are these “seven eyes”? According to Zechariah these eyes “are the eyes of the Lord which run to and fro through the whole earth” (4:10). The “eyes of the Lord” represent His watchful care in behalf of His people to the completion of His purpose (II Chronicles 16:9; Deuteronomy 11:12; cf. Ezra 5:5; Revelation 5:6). These eyes are upon the “one stone”. God will watch over His Messiah to the end that He completes the purpose for which He is sent (Acts 2:21–25; 4:10–12). God will engrave an inscription upon this “stone.” We are not told what the inscription is; but, we are told the effect **“I will remove the iniquity of the land in that day”** (Daniel 9:24; Jeremiah 31:34; Micah 7:18–19; Zechariah 13:1). Clearly, the engraving has to do with his being the Lord’s anointed, the stone that the Lord has set, that stone which He has elected, the builders might reject this stone, but nevertheless, the Lord will see to it that He becomes the head of the corner. Could the engraving be the same as that on the plate of the fair mitre? (Exodus 28:36; 39:30; cf. Isaiah 23:18; Jeremiah 23:6). **“In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree.”** When God does this according to His eternal purpose and removes iniquity from the

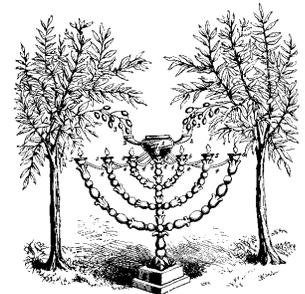
land in one day, it will be a day of blessing, peace and prosperity (1 Kings 14:25; II Kings 18:31; cf. Micah 4:1–4; Joel 1:7, 12; 2:22). It is a proverbial expression for the peace and the blessedness of God's people in the Messianic kingdom. It is similar to the language of Isaiah 2:4 and Micah 4:3 (cf. Psalm 72:6–7; Joel 3:10; Hosea 2:18–23; Zechariah 9:10).

**Zechariah 4:1–14**, “And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep, And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof: And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof. So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord? Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord.

“**And the angel that talked with me came again...**” This is the interpreting angel that has been in each of the visions that Zechariah has seen (cf. 1:9, 14, 19; 2:3; 3:1). “**And waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep...**” The visions of Zechariah seem to have come to him in his sleep much like those of Daniel did (Daniel 2:19; 4:6; 7:1). However, the reference may be to the startling effect of passing from being conscious of one’s normal surroundings to unfamiliar and amazing circumstances of the trance (Acts 10:10; 16:9–10).

“**And said unto me, What seest thou?**” This vision builds on the information revealed in the previous ones. The Temple and Jerusalem will be built; God’s mercy will come to His people; Joshua and Zerubbabel are God’s chosen men to lead the people in this great work.

“**And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold...**” In the vision Zechariah saw a “candlestick” or more correctly a lamp stand (*menorah*). It was made of gold and supported seven “lamps” (small bowls filled with oil and supplied with a wick). At the head or above the lamp stand was a larger bowl which served as a reservoir for the oil which was supplied to each of the lamps by a channel or “pipe.” This reservoir was maintained by oil dripping from the branches of two olive trees, one of which stood on either side of the lamp stand.



“**What are these, my lord?**” Zechariah seeks an interpretation of the vision; he seems to want to know who the two olive trees represent (cf. 4:11). Yet, the Angel has a message which involves more than just the trees, which could not be understood without first explaining the significance of the curious candlestick.

“**Knowest thou not what these be?**” Some have thought (MacKay) that the interpreting angel rebuked Zechariah supposing that he should have recognized and understood the emblems shown to him (cf. John 3:10; Mark 4:10). However, it seems that the angel is leading Zechariah to the conclusion that he cannot possibly understand them without divine assistance (cf. Acts 8:30–31; cf. II Peter 1:20). As Merrill observes, “the intent is not to verify that Zechariah is in ignorance, but to drive home the point that he cannot possibly understand what he has seen without supernatural insight” (p. 135).

The angel divides the vision into two segments. Each segment has its own application, but each is related to the other and the vision forms a united whole. The first segment clearly is intended for Zerubbabel (v. 6). The second segment is less obvious in its application and is, in my judgment, Messianic.

**Zechariah 4:6–10**, “Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it. Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you. For who hath despised the day of small things? For they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth.”

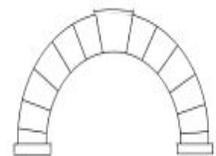
**“This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel ... Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts...”** The Angel of the Lord now speaks an oracle to Zechariah concerning Zerubbabel and the completion of the house of the Lord (4:9). This great task will not be accomplished by human means alone, but with the help of divine means through the work of the Spirit of Jehovah (Haggai 2:5; Isaiah 63:11–14; Exodus 8:19; 31:18; Deuteronomy 9:10; Luke 11:20; cf. Matthew 12:28). God promises divine power to accomplish His purpose as it relates to their part in moving the Messianic scheme of redemption forward (Daniel 9, etc.). This is the same assurance which Hezekiah gave the people when threatened by the armies of Assyria (II Chronicles 32:8). We see that the people carry through and continue working not being intimidated by the threats and opposition around them (Ezra 5:1–5; cf. 6:12–15).

Thus, the people of God building the Temple under the direction of Zerubbabel, Joshua, Haggai and Zechariah seem to be represented by the lamp stand. The power of the Spirit of God is represented by the oil flowing into the lamp stand. Just as the lamp stand would be useless and incapable of delivering light without the oil, so Israel, without the intercession of the Spirit of the Almighty could not complete the task of rebuilding the Temple. The oil in the vision is in abundant and inexhaustible supply. So likewise, the Spirit is in protecting these saints in their work.

**“Who art thou, O great mountain?”** This refers to the obstacles that Zerubbabel would face in the accomplishment of the assigned work. Nothing could successfully stand in the way of God's purpose (Haggai 1:13; 2:4, 21–23). **“Thou shalt become a plain.”** Whatever obstacles Satan raised would be as nothing. It is as the old adage, “No hill for a stepper...” The prophet here is very reminiscent of Isaiah in describing John the Baptist (Isaiah 40:1–4; cf. Luke 3:4–6). His language is also suggestive of the words of Christ in Matthew 17:20 (cf. Matthew 21:21).

**“He shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings...”** The “headstone” (*Strong #7222*) is the capstone of an arch, or the chapter of a column or wall. This is the last stone that is set in the building of arches and walls. The idea is that out of the obstacles facing Zerubbabel he would overcome and finish the work, laying the top-stone, that is, the finishing stone of the Temple wall (Merrill, pp. 145-146). With the setting of that

HEADSTONE



stone there would arise in praise the shouting of the people acknowledging God's favor toward and watch care over their work (cf. Ezra 6:16–21).

**“Grace, grace unto it...”** As the last stone is properly placed and the building completed, the multitude gathered for the occasion will break forth in a jubilant prayer for God's favor to rest upon it. When completed it will have been built by the grace God, and their prayer would be that it would continue under the divine favor. The desire of God's people is that He continues to dwell with them. These Jews understood how God had taken His Presence from the first Temple (Ezekiel 11:23) and in so doing left it to destruction. Unfortunately, the same would happen again (Daniel 9:24–27; Matthew 23:38ff). Hailey sees in this a reference to the church or Messianic Kingdom. However, I struggle with his double fulfillment approach. No doubt there is a type anti-type relationship between the Temple and the Church of Christ (I Peter 2:5, et.al.); however, that is not what the prophet has in view here. He is speaking to Zerubbabel and the nation about what they would accomplish in their lifetime to forward the redemptive plan of God.

**“The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it.”** The Angel of the Lord sets the completion of the Temple within the lifespan of Zerubbabel. He laid the foundation stone (Ezra 3:10–12), and God promises he will finish the job no matter what opposition or obstacles may arise. This he did in the sixth year of Darius the King of Persia, 516 B.C. (Ezra 5:16; 6:13–15). Clearly, the first oracle should be understood in terms of what was to happen in the short term relative to the Second Temple.

**“Thou shalt know...”** (cf. 2:9, 11). The Angel of the Lord broadens His address to all the people (“Thou” is a plural pronoun). He assures them that the completion of the Temple will be another sign to Israel that He has indeed been with them and will certainly complete God's entire redemptive plan (cf. I Corinthians 10:1–4). When the Temple is completed they can be confident that God's Messiah will come.

**“Who has despised the day of small things?”** The day that the foundation of the Temple was laid was the day of small things (Ezra 3:11–13). And, the finished Temple did not begin to compare with the former one (Haggai 2:3). However, God has always chosen the weak, the small and the barren in order to accomplish His eternal purpose and bring glory upon Himself (II Corinthians 12:10; I Corinthians 1:27–29). We need to be careful that we do not behold only with the eye of sight, we must look with the eye of faith (II Corinthians 9:8–11; Philippians 4:19).

**“The plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the LORD...”** I do not see here a transition yet to the Messianic; it is still Zerubbabel and the Second Temple that is in view. Those who had despised the day of small things would see Zerubbabel; they would not live to see the Messiah. The words translated as “plummet” (*Strong* # 68 and #913) are not the usual words used in the Old Testament for that device (cf. II Kings 21:13; Isaiah 28:17; Amos 7:7–8, note the NCV here “tools”). Weirsbe observes that the word literally means “the stone of tin” and may be translated as “the stone of separation” (p. 341). The Jerusalem Bible translates the word as “the

chosen stone." I believe that the reference is still to the headstone of verse 7. This is the stone upon which the eyes of the Lord have been just as they are one that stone which was placed before Joshua (cf. 3:9). It is not the same stone, but it is a stone which God wants placed and over which he has watched (cf. II Chronicles 16:9; Deuteronomy 11:12). The point being, if God is careful to see that Zerubbabel lays the capstone of the Temple, he will surely bring the "stone" upon which He has engraved His eternal purpose to remit sins.

**Zechariah 4:11-14**, "Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof? And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth."

**"What are these two olive trees?"** Again, the method of the angel's interrogation is intended to convince Zechariah and the readers of the prophecy that understanding the vision is dependent upon God revealing it. With the first oracle given, Zechariah is still not sure of the identity of the olive trees, if the oil is the divine power to accomplish God's eternal purpose for the Messianic Kingdom ministered through the Holy Spirit, who are these olive trees from whence the oil flows?

**"These are the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth."** There were two offices under the Mosaic dispensation held by men who were anointed to it: the high priest (Exodus 30:30; Leviticus 8:30; 21:10) and the king (I Samuel 10:1; II Kings 9:1-6). At the time, this would have been the offices held by Joshua (3:1; Haggai 1:1; Ezra 3:2) and Zerubbabel, if there were a king in Judah (Jeremiah 22:29-30; Luke 3:27; Ezra 3:2ff; cf. 1:8-11; 5:14-16). The fact that Zerubbabel is not king, nor will be king is reason enough to conclude that he is not represented by one of the olive trees. This necessarily implies that Joshua is not intended either. Furthermore, since Zerubbabel and the others are included in the imagery of the candlestick and are portrayed as being benefitted by whatever the candlestick represents, it seems illogical and improbable that he be both the recipient and the source of the divine power effecting God's plan (cf. 4:2-3, 12). In a subsequent vision (Zechariah 6:12; cf. Psalm 110:2, 4) the two offices of priest and king will be combined in the coming Messiah whose name is the Branch (cf. Zechariah 4:12). Thus, it seems appropriate to associate these olive trees with Him (Acts 10:38; Luke 4:18; John 15:26-27; 16:7-16). It is the Messiah that stands beside the Lord of all the earth (Acts 7:55-56; Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 1:3, 13; 8:1, 10:12; 12:2; I Peter 3:22). The Messiah and His Kingdom is the focus or goal of all that God is doing with Israel at this time. He is the theme of the prophetic utterances and the rebuilding of the Temple is a significant step forward toward His coming to redeem Israel.

**Zechariah 5:1–4**, “Then I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a flying roll. And he said unto me, What seest thou? And I answered, I see a flying roll; the length thereof is twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits. Then said he unto me, This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth: for every one that stealeth shall be cut off as on this side according to it; and every one that sweareth shall be cut off as on that side according to it. I will bring it forth, saith the LORD of hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name: and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it with the timber thereof and the stones thereof.

**“Then I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a flying roll.”** A “roll” (*Strong #4040*), that is, a scroll which was unwound (Jeremiah 36:2, 4, 6, 14, 20, 21, 23, 25, 27, 28, 29, 32; Ezekiel 2:9,10; 3:1-3; Ezra 6:2; Revelation 5:1). I visualize it like a flying carpet. **“The length thereof is twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits.”** What significance the measurements may have is open to conjecture. In our English units the scroll would measure about 30’ by 15’. It has been observed that these measures are the same as the Holy place in Moses’ Tabernacle and Solomon’s porch in the Temple (I Kings 6:3; Exodus 26:18-22). MacKay suggests that the dimensions were readily recognizable as those of the Sanctuary. These dimensions would suggest that whatever was written on the scroll was “determined by the standards of the sanctuary” (p. 121). This is not unreasonable since all of the visions have had to do with the Temple, the building and the people doing the building.

Though the exact words written on the scroll are not given, the interpreting angel tells Zechariah what the words on the scroll concern: **“This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth.”** A curse is an imprecation an execration, oath or swearing (*Strong #422*). In the OT curses are associated with covenants, in particular the Mosaic covenant (Jeremiah 11:3–4; Deuteronomy 27:26; Nehemiah 9:29; Deuteronomy 21:23; Galatians 3:12–13). This curse is over the “whole earth” which is the same word translated “land” in 5:11 (*Strong #776*). It may refer to either arable soil, a country or the entire planet (Genesis 1:1–2, 10; 12:1, 5). By the figure of speech metonymy, “the whole earth” is mentioned when all that is in the earth or land is intended (Isaiah 54:5; Genesis 11:1).

How this vision is viewed in relation to the vision of the ephah in 5:5–11 will determine our approach and interpretation. I believe the two visions are intended to be understood as one unit. And, as with the previous visions our understanding is to be built upon what we have already learned. In 3:9, the Angel of the Lord promised to “remove the iniquity of the land in one day.” We understood this to be a reference to the death of the Messiah at Calvary (cf. Daniel 9:24). In this vision we see iniquity or sin represented as the land under a curse. The scroll is apparently the law of God (Zechariah 5:4; cf. Exodus 20:7, 15–16). Its going forth “over the whole earth” represents God’s verdict concerning

those that break his commandments—*cursed* (as per Deuteronomy 21:23; 27:26; Leviticus 18:5; Ezekiel 20:11; Nehemiah 9:29; cf. Galatians 3:12–13). The vision of the “flying roll” is intended to convey to Zechariah the condition of the nation under the Law of Moses (II Corinthians 3:6–12; Hebrews 8:8–13; Galatians 3:10). They are cursed, but He has already revealed that he will accept them (3:2, 4, 7).

**“For every one that stealeth shall be cut off as on this side according to it; and every one that sweareth shall be cut off as on that side according to it.”** The Angel of the Lord is enjoining holiness upon the people. He is urging a sanctified life—a restored people in a restored land. Do not miss the message of grace in the words of the prophet. While he has announced the curse, it is a curse that will be meted out to a stubborn and rebellious people and not to a penitent and humble people. The vision must be understood in light of what has already been seen in Zechariah 3:1–10. The Angel speaks from the same perspective as He did in Ezekiel 18:1–32: *“Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.”*

**“It shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it with the timber thereof and the stones thereof.”** This is no temporal judgment carried out by the Sheshbazzar (Ezra 6:11), this is the eternal judgment of God upon the wicked (Jeremiah 43:12; 49:27; Amos 1:14; cf. Genesis 19:24; I Kings 18:38; II Kings 1:10–14; Leviticus 10:1–2; Luke 17:29; Revelation 20:9). God had redeemed Israel from the nations where He had scattered them in order to have a people for His own possession (Haggai 2:10–14; Leviticus 20:7; Zechariah 3:5–7; 8:1–3).

**Zechariah 5:5–11**, “Then the angel that talked with me went forth, and said unto me, Lift up now thine eyes, and see what is this that goeth forth. And I said, What is it? And he said, This is an ephah that goeth forth. He said moreover, This is their resemblance through all the earth. And, behold, there was lifted up a talent of lead: and this is a woman that sitteth in the midst of the ephah. And he said, This is wickedness. And he cast it into the midst of the ephah; and he cast the weight of lead upon the mouth thereof. Then lifted I up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came out two women, and the wind was in their wings; for they had wings like the wings of a stork: and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven. Then said I to the angel that talked with me, Whither do these bear the ephah? And he said unto me, To build it an house in the land of Shinar: and it shall be established, and set there upon her own base.”

**“This is an ephah that goeth forth.”** What, Zechariah saw was a flying “half-bushel basket” with a lid made of lead upon it. The ephah was the standard unit of dry volume in Israel. It was equivalent to ten omers or five gallons dry

measure. In Judah all measurements were to be true and just (Deuteronomy 25:15; Proverbs 11:1; 16:11; cf. Luke 6:38). Thus, that which was in the basket was weighed, measured and judged according to a righteous or just standard (cf. 5:1–4; Daniel 5:27).

**“This is their resemblance through all the earth.”** The contents of this basket resembled the nation Judah. In the previous vision that which was “over the whole earth” or “the whole land” was God’s indictment of Judah under the Law of God as sinners. The basket contains the sins of Israel.

**“There was lifted up a talent of lead.”** The word for “talent” (*Strong #3603*) literally means “a round thing” and may refer to anything from bread to coins. It does not indicate a specific weight. The fact that it was lead indicates that it was heavy and its described use signifies it was designed to keep the contents in the basket.

There was **“a woman that sitteth in the midst of the ephah.”** This woman is said to be **“wickedness.”** She signifies Judah’s sins as adjudicated by God’s divine standard the Law. The Angel of the Lord indicates that He intends to contain these when **“He cast the weight of lead upon the mouth thereof.”**

Next the prophet is shown the fate of Israel’s wickedness: **“Then lifted I up mine eyes and looked, and, behold, there came out two women, and the wind was in their wings; for they had wings like the wings of a stork: and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven.”** The stork is listed among the unclean birds forbidden to the Jews as food (Leviticus 11:13–19). The white colored species has a reputation for being a scavenger (see: ISBE, Easton and Smith). These birds stand at about four feet and have a wingspan of over seven feet. They are migratory (Jeremiah 8:7) nesting in the high trees and roof tops of Palestine and Europe in the spring (Psalm 104:17). No doubt they are strong and magnificent in flight; therefore, they are well suited for the task assigned to them here.

**“Two women,”** one for either side of the basket to facilitate is deportation. But why send two women with stork wings? Kaiser observes that the word for stork literally means “faithful one” (p. 350). The name was given in observation of the strong maternal instinct in the stork and its monogamous mating habits. From this the legend of the stork has arisen. Kaiser also notes that their name is similar to the Hebrew word for *grace*. Whether or not these things determine the choice of the symbol, there is no doubting they represent God’s gracious removal of sin from His people (cf. Psalm 103:13; Numbers 11:12; Isaiah 1:2; Hosea 11:1).

**“Then said I...Whither do these bear the ephah? And he said unto me, To build it an house in the land of Shinar: and it shall be established, and set there upon her own base.”** The vision symbolizes God’s promises through the prophets concerning His mercy in the forgiveness of Israel’s sins through the

Messiah (Isaiah 11:10–11; cf. Isaiah 1:18; Micah 7:19; Psalm 103:2). In the vision they are represented as being carried away to a far and distant place—*Shinar*. This is the ancient name for Babylon where civilization began and rebellion against God took root early (Genesis 10:10; 11:1–10). It had been the land of their captivity (Psalm 137:1, 8; Micah 4:10) and like Egypt becomes a figure for the enemies of God and the wickedness of the world (Zechariah 2:7; Revelation 14:8; 16:9; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21). It is a suitable contrast for Palestine which is now in its restored state a “holy land” (Zechariah 2:12).

“**To build it an house...**” The NCV says, “They are going to Babylonia to build a Temple for it.” MacKay and Kaiser agree. How is it the case? The fact that “**it shall be established, and set there upon her own base**” indicates that there is a clear separation between the remnant and those who are unwilling to return and join in the rebuilding of the Temple. Earlier the Angel of the Lord had called “Zion” to forsake the “daughter of Babylon” (Zechariah 2:7–8; cf. Revelation 18:4). There were many of the dispersed that did not return because they had become comfortable in their surroundings and were at ease in the materiality of the pagan land into which they had come (Jeremiah 51:6, 45). Just as the ancient citizens of Shinar would not do God’s will by filling the earth (Genesis 11:4), so the Jews that did not join themselves to the rebuilding of the Temple were resisting God. The Babylonians built their tower and Temple and so now the unbelieving Jews would build a Temple to wickedness in the land of their captivity rather than join in building the Temple of God which was a critical part of His redemptive plan in preparing the world for the Messiah.

**Zechariah 6:1-8**, “And I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains; and the mountains were mountains of brass. In the first chariot were red horses; and in the second chariot black horses; and in the third chariot white horses; and in the fourth chariot grisled and bay horses. Then I answered and said unto the angel that talked with me, What are these, my lord? And the angel answered and said unto me, These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth. The black horses which are therein go forth into the north country; and the white go forth after them; and the grisled go forth toward the south country. And the bay went forth, and sought to go that they might walk to and fro through the earth: and he said, Get you hence, walk to and fro through the earth. So they walked to and fro through the earth. Then cried he upon me, and spake unto me, saying, Behold, these that go toward the north country have quieted my spirit in the north country.

**“Four chariots out from between two mountains; and the mountains were mountains of brass.”** This vision harkens back to the first vision where the Angel of the Lord stood among the horsemen reporting, “Behold the earth sitteth still and is at rest” (Zechariah 1:11). Now the scene is changed; The Angel of the Lord cries to the charioteers, “Get you hence!” The Almighty is moving against the nations of the earth and in particular those nations that are hindering the completion of His Temple. Judgment is coming.

The chariots (*Strong* #4818) are two wheeled vehicles drawn by two horses. There was a pole to which the horses were yoked, an axel, wheels with six or eight spokes, and a body fastened to the axel and pole. They are instruments of war (I Kings 9:22; I Samuel 8:11–12) and as such they were forbidden to the Hebrew kings (Deuteronomy 20:1–4; 17:16). The power of God is often represented as “chariots” (Isaiah 66:15; Habakkuk 3:8; II Kings 2:11–12; 6:17). These four chariots are distinguished by the horses that draw them—red (*Strong* #122), black (#7838), white (#3835), grisled or dappled (#1261). All of the horses are described as strong [ESV for “bay” (#554)]. What do these colors represent? We cannot be certain since the Angel gives no specifics. However, in the Revelation the white horse represents victorious conquest, the black represents war and its attendant hardships and the pale (dappled?) represents death (Revelation 6:1–8; cf. Ezekiel 14:12–21). The red horses’ destination and whether or not they are seen going out is not revealed. The black and white go north and the dappled go to south. This very likely is intended to represent Syria and Egypt during the days of the Seleucid kings (cf. Daniel 11:1ff; Zechariah 9:13).

These chariots come from the presence of the Almighty (6:5). The entry to God’s presence is represented in the vision by the two mountains of brass. Brass or bronze is an emblem of divine strength (Jeremiah 1:18; Psalm 107:15–16; Daniel 10:6; Micah 4:13). Similarly, two bronze pillars, Jachin and Boaz, were erected in the Temple on either side of the entrance as emblems of the strength and might of the Almighty (I Kings 7:21).

**“What are these, my lord? ...These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth.”** The interpreting angel now interprets the figure with another figure which, granted, is less difficult but does not provide much greater detail. He does not say that they are angels (Hebrews 1:7; Psalm 104:4), but “the four winds of heaven” (Jeremiah 49:36; Daniel 7:2; 8:8; 11:4). Daniel represents these winds as the divine forces that are at work among the nations of men to effect God’s purpose and will. John in the Revelation represents the winds as being restrained by angels from blowing until God gives the command (7:1). Jeremiah represents the Divine power which judges Elam as a scattering wind that blows the nation to the four corners of the earth. Thus, the four chariots represent the four winds which represent God’s divine power in judging the nations. Surely the horses and their startling colors are intended to represent these powers, but their details are not necessary to understanding the message. God is moving against the nations that seek to hinder and destroy His people.

These chariots **“go forth into the north country; and...toward the south country”** (Daniel 11:1–6ff; Jeremiah 1:13–15; 2:36; 9:25–26; Isaiah 30:1–6; 43:1–6). These compass points represent the enemies of the nation Israel. Yet, what nations are specifically intended? Persia is the only remaining force that can be described as being from “the north.” However, Rome and Greece are western powers. But, if one considers the intervening years and the development of the Greco-Syrian Kingdoms, the Seleucid and Ptolemaic dynasties which prevailed in Syria and Egypt respectively, then North and South may very well represent these Kingdoms and the conflicts that will ensue in the intervening years between the completion of the Temple and the coming of the Messiah. North and South are figurative to the extent that they represent the traditional enemies of Israel over time.

**“Then cried he upon me, and spake unto me, saying, Behold, these that go toward the north country have quieted my spirit in the north country.”** It is Persia that that is presently causing Israel trouble. It would then mean much to the workers in Jerusalem to know that God was and had indeed intervened on their behalf and would judge that nation for its wickedness (Ezra 6:1–12; Daniel 7:1–14; 8:3–12). We know that in the midst of the revived work on the Temple that Darius I, the Great ruled that the Jews not be hindered in their work and that the governors beyond the Euphrates give aid to them. The fall of Persia begins with the loss of the battle of Marathon (490 B.C.). The nation begins to fall apart with the revolt of Egypt and the soon after death of Darius I (487 B.C.). In 486 B.C. Xerxes I becomes King of Persia; he initiates the second war with Greece which results in successive defeats at Plataea and Mycale (cf. Daniel 8:6–8). By 480 B.C. Persia is so weakened that her demise is inevitable. Alexander will take Persia with little effort in 331 B.C.

God’s spirit was quieted when His judgments against the nations began to go forth to avenge the wickedness that they had done against the nation Judah (cf.

1:15, 18–21; Ezekiel 5:13; 24:13). The prophet has come full circle in these visions. He began with an indication that the shaking of heaven and earth was not imminent, but that God would be vindicated and he ends in the same way. Zechariah 6:1-8 seems to parallel the development of history that is outlined in Daniel 2, 8 and 10–12 as it pertains to the second and third kingdoms.

**Zechariah 6:9-15**, “And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Take of them of the captivity, even of Heldai, of Tobijah, and of Jedaiah, which are come from Babylon, and come thou the same day, and go into the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah; Then take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest; And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both. And the crowns shall be to Helem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and to Hen the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of the LORD. And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the LORD, and ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you. And this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God.

“**And the word of the LORD came unto me.**” This next section is a revelation to the prophet after the night visions have ended. When this revelation was made to the prophet we do not know, but presumably it was soon after the night visions and before the “fourth year of Darius” (cf. 7:1). Clearly what the prophet is instructed to do must be understood in light of what the Angel of the Lord has told and shown to him.

“**Take of them of the captivity...**” The original decree of Cyrus provided for Jews to make offerings for the Temple and to bring them to Jerusalem (Ezra 1:1–4). The decree of Darius reinstated the decree along with the death penalty upon any who hindered the Jews in the fulfilling of the original edict (Ezra 6:1-12). This text indicates that there were Jews coming to Jerusalem after the initial return led by Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:1–70) and before that led by Ezra (7:1). Here an expedition with offerings under the leadership of **Heldai**, of **Tobijah**, and of **Jedaiah** from Babylon. These men are only mentioned here and are not found by these names in any of the listed returnees.

“**The house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah...**” Josiah may have been one of the returnees on this occasion that had a house in Jerusalem (Haggai 1:4); he may have been the smith who was inspired to make the crowns (cf. Exodus 31:1–4; 38:22–23); or he may have been one of the priests responsible for such collections (Ezra 8:33).

“**Then take silver and gold, and make crowns.**” This is a crown of royalty (II Samuel 12:30; Esther 8:15; Psalm 21:3; Song 3:11) and not to be confused with the turban of the High Priest (Exodus 28:36; 39:30; Leviticus 8:9) which is called a crown in Exodus 29:6. The word is plural in the Hebrew, two being suggested by the two distinct

materials chosen for its composition. The duality of materials suggests the duality of the offices held by the one who wears these unique crowns.

**“Joshua the son of Josedech,”** the high priest, is the same as he who returned with Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:2; 3:2, 9; 4:3; 5:2; Nehemiah 7:7; 9:4; 12:1–8), and which appeared in the vision in Zechariah 3:1–10. It is important to recognize that he is a Levite and son of Aaron.

**“Behold the man whose name is the BRANCH.”** There is no doubting who this **“BRANCH”** is, the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth (Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15; Isaiah 11:1; 53:2; Acts 13:22–23; Romans 15:8–17). The word branch (*Strong #6779*) is from a Hebrew word that means a sprout; it is the same word as in 3:8 (also Jeremiah 23:5 and 33:15; Isaiah uses synonyms of the word). The significance of the **“BRANCH”** is that it shall sprout out of the Davidic lineage in fulfillment of the promise to David (II Samuel 7:12; Psalm 89; Isaiah 55:3; cf. Acts 13:34–38).

**“He shall grow up from his own place.”** This refers to the fact that He will be of the house of David (II Samuel 7:12; Matthew 22:42). This may have been somewhat obscured by the choice of Joshua for this object lesson. However, the selection of Joshua puts the emphasis where God wants it, on the priestly office. Yet, He makes it clear that the foregoing prophecies of the Messiah are being respected and will be observed. Zerubbabel could not have satisfied the parameters necessary for the object in the lesson. Furthermore, to have used Zerubbabel may well have caused some to erroneously conclude that he was the Messiah (cf. Jeremiah 22:29–30).

**“He shall build the temple of the Lord.”** It is evident that Zerubbabel cannot be the intended object (Zechariah 4:9). Zerubbabel could not function as priest under the law (Hebrews 7:14; cf. II Chronicles 26:16–21), just as Joshua could not function as King. Therefore, the Temple in view here is not the Temple which Zerubbabel would build. It is not a physical temple at all (Revelation 21:22). Rather, this is the heavenly Temple, the redeemed people of God among whom He dwells (Matthew 12:6; cf. John 2:19–22; I Corinthians 3:9–17; I Peter 2:4–5; Matthew 16:18; II Peter 2:1–10; Ephesians 2:20–21). Clearly, this object lesson is Messianic in application.

**“He shall bear the glory.”** This is not the divine glory which Messiah possessed in heaven (John 17:5; Philippians 2:8). Rather, this is a glory (*Strong #5375*) that is conferred upon Him (cf. Isaiah 46:1). It is attendant with His coming into His reign. When did Messiah enter into glory? He entered “glory” upon His resurrection (Hebrews 2:9; John 12:37–41; 17:24 Luke 24:46; Matthew 19:28; Mark 10:37; Hebrews 1:3; 8:1; Jude 1:25).

**“He shall sit and rule upon his throne, and he shall be a priest upon his throne”** (Hebrews 7:14; 8:1–17; Psalm 110:1, 4; Acts 2:34; Jeremiah 22:30; Genesis 14:18). Again, this must be Messianic (cf. Hebrews 7:12), Joshua cannot possibly act in the capacity of King for at least two reasons: (1) he is of the

wrong tribe and family (Genesis 49:10; II Samuel 7:12), and (2) God had forbidden any more kings reigning in Judah (Jeremiah 22:30).

**“The counsel of peace shall be between them both.”** The word “counsel” (*Strong* #6098) means a plan or purpose (Ezra 4:5; 10:8; Nehemiah 4:15; Micah 4:12; Ezekiel 11:2). The BBE renders the phrase, “between them there will be a design of peace.” The NASV (95) translates: “the counsel of peace will be between the two offices.” The dual offices of the Messiah as a Priest/King will result in peace (Ephesians 2:14–17; cf. Hebrews 7:2; Romans 5:1–10). The mediatorial reign of Christ as Sovereign of the Universe has as its design to effect reconciliation to God (II Corinthians 5:17–21).

**“And the crowns shall be to Helem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and to Hen the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of the LORD.”** These men will be remembered for their faith (cf. Matthew 26:13; Mark 14:9). Perhaps they had organized this collection returning to Babylon with the inspiring message of the prophet (cf. 1:1; 7:1; cf. Ezra 7:9) and stirring their brethren up to give to the beautification of the Temple (cf. Ezra 6:15). We do not know what they necessarily did that caused God to want to remember their faith, but they must have been men of incredible faith (cf. Exodus 38:8; Luke 2:36–37).

**“They that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the Lord...”** This points not to the Jews of the dispersion, but to the Gentiles who would be admitted to Messiah's New Jerusalem (Acts 2:39; Ephesians 2:13). The sense is not that the Messiah will come and the gentiles will be included if they obey. This would happen despite what the Jews may or may not do (John 1:11–13). Rather, the sense is, they would reap the blessings of that Kingdom to themselves by their obedience of faith (Matthew 8:11; Luke 13:27–30). The fulfillment of this prophecy would be one more indication that the God truly had sent His Angel unto His people.

**Zechariah 7:1-8**, “And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Darius, that the word of the Lord came unto Zechariah in the fourth day of the ninth month, even in Chisleu; When they had sent unto the house of God Sherezzer and Regemmelech, and their men, to pray before the Lord, And to speak unto the priests which were in the house of the Lord of hosts, and to the prophets, saying, Should I weep In the fifth month, separating myself, as I have done these so many years? Then came the word of the Lord of hosts unto me, saying, Speak unto all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying, When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, even to me? And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did not ye eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves? Should ye not hear the words which the Lord hath cried by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and in prosperity, and the cities thereof round about her, when men inhabited the south and the plain?”

“**In the fourth year of king Darius...**” That is, 518 B.C., two years after Zechariah's first revelation (1:1, 7).

**Chisleu** is the Babylonian name for the ninth month of the Hebrew calendar which began with the new moon of December (Nehemiah 1:1; Zechariah 7:1).

“**When they had sent unto the house of God Sherezzer and Regemmelech, and their men, to pray before the Lord...**” These men came to Jerusalem to ask a question of the priests concerning fasting (cf. Deuteronomy 17:8–10; Malachi 2:7). [For questions about discrepancies between the versions on this text see: Merrill (p. 182) and Kaiser (pp. 364–365).]

“**Should I weep in the fifth month, separating myself, as I have done these so many years?**” The question pertains to fasting (cf. 8:19). The particular fast in view here according to the Mishna was one established in the Captivity in memory of the destruction of the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar (cf. Jeremiah 52:12; II Kings 25:8–9). The only fast required by the law was that on the day of atonement (Leviticus 16:29, 31; 23:27–32; Numbers 29:7; Jeremiah 36:6). Thus, this fast was one that began in connection with the calamity of the captivity and had persisted based upon tradition and not commandment.

“**And seventh month ...**” A fast similar to that in the fifth month was also established in the seventh month according to Jewish tradition to commemorate the assassination of Gedaliah the Governor of Judea installed by Nebuchadnezzar (Jeremiah 40:7–41:18; II Kings 25:25–26). This fast was established in the same month as the Feast of Trumpets (Numbers 29:1–6) and the Feast of Tabernacles (Numbers 29:12–38).

“**Did ye at all fast unto me, even to me?**” Zechariah answers their question, but redirects it toward the real issue which is their motive in fasting. Jehovah had required only one fast, that of the Day of Atonement; in it the individual was to afflict the soul which would result in righteousness (cf. Isaiah 58:1–8; Jeremiah 14:10–12; Leviticus 23:23–32; 16:29–34). Fasting, rending the garments, the putting on of sackcloth and throwing dust in the air were all outward manifestations of what was occurring in the heart because of mourning for sin (cf. Acts 9:6–9; 22:23; II Chronicles 34:27; Jonah 3:5–10; Esther 4:1–4; Daniel 9:3; Joel 2:12–14; Matthew

6:16–18). Under the Law fasting was a liberty, the appropriateness of which was established by the circumstances, and the efficacy of which was established by the genuineness of the remorse.

The prophet does not reject the rationale behind a fast commemorating the destruction of Jerusalem or the death of Gedaliah and their subsequent flight into Egypt which resulted in hardship and misery. However, the prophet exposes the original motives as being “unto themselves” and not “unto Me.” Their “fast” was one which mourned their losses, their hardships, their sorrows and never once their sins (Matthew 5:3–4).

**“Did you not eat for yourselves and drink for yourselves?”** A reference to their greedy selfishness and unconcern for their suffering brethren in the captivity (Laetsch), or an indication that their fasting had no more affect upon God than did their eating (Wright; cf. Amos 5:21–27), or that their purposes in fasting were as selfish as their purposes in eating and that God was not the object of it (Kaiser). It was all outward show without inner content (Merrill).

**“Hear the words which the Lord hath cried by the former prophets.”** The answer to their question was found in what God had spoken to before the Captivity. Had Judah listened to God through the prophets there would never have been an occasion for any fasting at all regarding the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. God is not interested in fasting or sacrifices. God desires obedience (Matthew 12:7; Hosea 6:6; Micah 6:6-8).

**“Should ye not hear the words which the Lord hath cried by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and in prosperity, and the cities thereof round about her, when men inhabited the south and the plain?”** Zechariah is again calling the people to learn the lessons of history. Because of Israel’s sin the people had been carried away captive, the land left decimated and unattended for seventy years. When the “former” prophets preached what Zechariah now preaches the land was lush, inhabited and productive. Had the people hearkened to the words of the prophets none of these things would have happened. Therefore, there is no need to commemorate the loss of the city by a fast, rather there needs to be a true fast that indicates mourning for the sins that led to this destruction.

**Zechariah 7:8–14**, “And the word of the Lord came unto Zechariah, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and chew mercy and compassion every man to his brother: And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart. But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear. Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the Lord of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the Lord of hosts. Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cried, and they would not hear; so they cried, and I would not hear, saith the Lord of hosts: But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not. Thus, the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned: for they laid the pleasant land desolate.”

**“And the word of the Lord came unto Zechariah, saying...”** There is secondary principle at work here. God’s truth does not change. Zechariah did not have a “new” revelation (Deuteronomy 13:1–11; 18:15–22). His message of holiness and genuine contrition of heart was the same as God had always required.

**“Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts...”** ASV, “Thus hath Jehovah of Hosts spoken, saying...” Pulpit Commentary: “The Lord hath always so said, and saith so now...” As Jehovah is saying now, even so He had said through the prophets before the exile. What He required then He requires now; what He requires now He required then.

**“Execute true judgment.”** God wanted them to behave with justice, fair and equitable dealings, toward one another (Jeremiah 7:5; Ezekiel 18:8–9; 22:12–13; Micah 3:2; 6:8–12; Isaiah 5:23; Amos 5:24). How they behaved in their dealings with one another had much to say about the character of their hearts and their attitude toward the Almighty (I Samuel 24:13; Leviticus 19:15; Deuteronomy 16:20; Psa 33:5). This was a constant theme of the prophets (Isaiah 58:3–10; Jeremiah 23:11–14).

**“Show mercy and compassion.”** Have a tender heart which is easily moved to compassionate acts (Hosea 6:6; Micah 6:8). God does not want a people that cannot be moved by the suffering of others.

**“Oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor.”** It is common that the strong oppress the weak (Jeremiah 5:28; 7:6; Ezekiel 22:29; Amos 4:1; 5:11–12). The widow, the orphan, the alien and the poor are often that element in society which is least able to defend or to adequately provide for self. God has always protected these vulnerable groups from abuse (Exodus 22:21–22; Deuteronomy 10:18–19; 15:7–11; 24:14–18). God’s people are sympathetic to their plight and alleviate their burdens and treat them fairly (James 1:26–27; I Timothy 5:1–10; James 2:1–13).

**“Let none of you imagine evil against your brother in your heart”** (cf. 8:17; Isaiah 32:7–8; Micah 2:1; Psalm 36:4; Hosea 7:6–7; Jeremiah 6:13; 29:23). Here is a passage that sets aside the notion that the Law was concerned only with externals; it is hypocrites that are concerned only with externals. Zechariah makes it clear that what is in the heart determines what is in the life (cf. Matthew 15:1–11).

**“Yea they made their hearts as an adamant stone,”** i.e., “as hard as flint.” Israel was stubborn and would not repent. God repeatedly appealed to them and delivered to have them only return again to their sins and idolatry (Isaiah 6:8–13; Jeremiah 6:16; 7:23–24; Nehemiah 9:26–30; Daniel 9:3–15).

**“As He cried and they would not hear; so they cried and He would not hear.”** There comes a time when God’s patience runs out and judgment is the consequence of impenitence (Isaiah 1:10–15; 59:2; Jeremiah 7:16; 11:1–11, 14; Ezekiel 8:18; Micah 3:1–4).

**“But I scattered them with a whirlwind.”** God sent the disobedient into captivity and exile (Ezekiel 36:16–20; Deuteronomy 4:27; 28:64; Jeremiah 25:11–12; II Chronicles 36:21) Therefore, why fast over Jerusalem? Rather, repent and do the will of the Lord which is all He has ever desired.

**Zechariah 8:1-17**, "Again the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury. Thus saith the LORD; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the LORD of hosts the holy mountain. Thus saith the LORD of hosts; There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof. Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If it be marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of this people **in these days**, should it also be marvelous in mine eyes? saith the LORD of hosts. Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness. Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Let your hands be strong, ye that hear **in these days** these words by the mouth of the prophets, which were **in the day that the foundation of the house of the LORD of hosts was laid**, that the temple might be built. For **before these days** there was no hire for man, nor any hire for beast; neither was there any peace to him that went out or came in because of the affliction: for I set all men every one against his neighbour. **But now** I will not be unto the residue of this people **as in the former days**, saith the LORD of hosts. For the seed shall be prosperous; the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things. And it shall come to pass, that as ye were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel; so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing: fear not, but let your hands be strong. For thus saith the LORD of hosts; As I thought to punish you, when your fathers provoked me to wrath, saith the LORD of hosts, and I repented not: So again have I thought **in these days** to do well unto Jerusalem and to the house of Judah: fear ye not. These are the things that ye shall do; Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates: And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith the LORD."

**"Again the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts..."**

This chapter is a continuation of the sermon on fasting begun in chapter seven. It is composed of a series of ten statements which begin with "Thus says the Lord Almighty" (8:2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 14, 19, 20, 23). These ten statements are divided into two groups each introduced by the phrase, "Again the word of the Lord Almighty came to me saying" (8:1, 18). The first group contains seven sayings and the last group contains three sayings. McKay observes, "The use of the numbers 3, 7 and 10 points to the completeness of the Lord's promises and provisions" (p. 154).

**"I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury."**

God uses this term (*Strong #7068*) to describe Himself to Israel as the God who will not bear any rival who is the sever avenger of all departure from Himself (Psalm 78:58; cf. Exodus 20:5; 34:14; Deuteronomy 4:24; 5:9; 6:15). The term is used here to describe the zealous love Jehovah has for "Zion" (Zechariah 1:14) which is like unto that which a husband has for a wife (cf. Numbers 5:14; Genesis 30:1). Here the Lord is affirming His great love for His people and assuring them that there is nothing or no one that will interfere or deter His plans for blessing them and using them in His great redemptive

purpose (Ezekiel 36:5–7; Joel 2:17–18; Nahum 1:2).

**“I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem.”** [On “Zion” see McKay p. 155.] The prophet returns to the theme of the earlier chapters (cf. 2:4–5). The return of Jehovah to Zion is His fellowship with them in the Messianic Kingdom (Zephaniah 3:15, 17). McKay observes that verbs “return,” “dwell,” and “call” are all in the perfect tense describing a future certain event as if it had already occurred (see: pp. 155, 77–78). This language in verses one through five refers to the future, the greater glory which God will bestow upon the latter house in the days of Messiah (Haggai 2:1–9).

**“Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain.”** This is a description of the remnant and the character of those who shall enter into the kingdom of Messiah (cf. Matthew 5:1–21; Acts 2). The reference to a mountain takes us back to Daniel 2:44–45, Isaiah 2:2–3; Micah 4:1–4. They are “holy” because they are set apart to God (I Corinthians 1:2; 6:9–11; John 17:17–19; II Timothy 2:21; Hebrews 2:10–11). Again, these are attributes of the people that will dwell in this “city” and on this “mountain.” The then present city and Temple Mount being symbols of the dwelling place of God (Deuteronomy 12:5; I Kings 9:3; 14:21; II Chronicles 6:20).

**“Yet old men and old women... The city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof.”** This is a promise of the blessings of peace and tranquility to be had in the Messianic kingdom. It is similar to the phrase found in Zechariah 3:10.

**“Should it also be marvelous in mine eyes?”** That God should accomplish all these promises for Jerusalem would seem impossible to some recipients of the prophecy, but the doubts of men are no reason that God should doubt. Jehovah will cause all that has been promised to occur. This is not only assurance of the greatness of salvation, but also of the certainty of the salvation.

The question arises has this ever occurred in the literal, temporal history of Israel? I am confident that Jerusalem in the time of Christ would have appeared to the satisfaction of that generation (and Zechariah’s generation) to have received these blessings in full measure. However, it could always be argued that things could have been better (which is the point). Obviously, nothing material will satisfy the expectations of the Messianic Kingdom.

**“I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem.”** Verses seven and eight continue to look forward to the Messianic hope. God was gathering His people even at that moment, the righteous remnant. From them a great harvest of righteousness was made on the Pentecost following the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (Acts 2). The Jerusalem in view here is not the earthly Jerusalem but the Jerusalem wherein righteousness dwells (see notes on chapter two).

**“They shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness.”** The Jews shall again be the people of God in this new Jerusalem. The basis of their restoration to Him was their repentance toward God, a holy life lived in faith that God would send His Messiah (cf. Matthew 3:1–12; Luke 3:1–18).

**“Let your hands be strong.”** Having the hands strong is the same as taking good courage for any enterprise (Judges 7:11; II Samuel 2:7; Ezekiel 22:14). In this context the prophet is still urging them to finish the Temple (Zechariah 7:1; cf. Ezra 6:13–15; Haggai 1:1; Zechariah 1:1). This sermon is intended to assure the builders that God will keep all his promises to the faithful. This admonition is repeated in verse 13.

**“Ye that hear in these days these words by the mouth of the prophets, which were in the day that the foundation of the house of the Lord of hosts was laid, that the temple might be built.”** Because they have heard these words, they are to look forward with comfort to the future, and do what their calling requires. The prophet is urging them to continue on in their work of building the Temple and serving God according to the law and receive the blessings God had promised them when faithful to Him (Deuteronomy 30:1ff). Zechariah distinguishes himself and Haggai from the “former prophets” (Zechariah 1:4; 7:7, 12), those before and during the captivity.

**“For before these days there was no hire for man...Neither was there any peace to him that went out or came in because of the affliction...”** This is a description of the conditions that existed in Judah as a result of the curse of the law upon their disobedience that resulted in their captivity (cf. Haggai 1:8–11; 2:15–19).

**“But now I will not be unto the residue of this people as in the former days...I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things.”** Because they are listening to the prophets God can give them the promises which came through Moses in the Law (Leviticus 28:3–8; Haggai 2:19). There is no reason not to understand this as God’s promising to bless the land with bounty and peace.

**“As ye were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel; so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing.”** Israel restored to the land in faithful obedience was now ready to begin to influence the world again in bringing men to Messiah when he comes. The prophet is going back to the Abrahamic promise of Genesis 12. [Note here as well that the prophet recognizes that the restoration has accomplished reunification of the Twelve Tribes.]

**“In these days...”** Throughout this context the prophet makes a distinction in time which is essential to understanding the prophecy. “These days” (v. 9) are contrasted with “the former days” (v. 11) which are “before these days” (v. 10), obviously the days of the captivity and those early days of the restoration when they left off building (v. 10). “These days” are the days in which “the foundation of the Temple was laid” (v. 9). “These days” are “now” (v. 11). However, in the next section of the sermon, Zechariah shall speak of what “shall yet come to pass” which he shall refer to as “those days” (v. 23).

**“These are the things that ye shall do.”** In order to receive the blessing this is what God expected of them (cf. Deuteronomy 28–30; Proverbs 8:18–19; Isaiah 1:16–20; Jeremiah 22:3). Here the prophet restates the principles of righteousness and holiness which God expects of his people (Zechariah 5:3–4; 7:8–14). The blessings and favor of God are not unconditional even though unmerited (cf. Jude 4; II Peter 2:20–22).

**Zechariah 8:18–23:** “And the word of the Lord of hosts came unto me, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts; therefore love the truth and peace. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; **It shall yet come to pass**, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities: And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts: I will go also. Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts In Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; **In those days it shall come to pass**, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.”

**“The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth...”** These fast were instituted as memorials of events associated with the destruction of Jerusalem and the captivity. The fast of the fourth month commemorated the breaching of the wall of Jerusalem (II Kings 25:3; Jeremiah 39:2). The fast of the fifth month commemorated burning of the city of Jerusalem and the razing of the walls (II Kings 25:8–9; Jeremiah 52:12–14). The fast of the seventh month was not the Day of Atonement, but the fast instituted to mourn the assassination of Gedaliah and the exodus to Egypt (Jeremiah 40:7–41:18; 42:19–43:13). The fast of the tenth month commemorated the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar (II Kings 25:1–2; Jeremiah 39:1; 52:6–7).

**“The fast...shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts.”** The prophet is not re-visiting his previous rebuke concerning these fasts. That is not the issue before his mind now. These four fasts represent the total destruction of the nation and all the sorrow that had come upon them for their sins. Out of this great tragedy God would yet bring the Messiah who would deliver them from their sins and remove every cause of mourning (Isaiah 61:1; Luke 4:18).

**“And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts.”** Indicating the eagerness with which men would seek the Lord. When the salvation brought in by the Messiah should occur men will eagerly seek it out with great joy.

**“Ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.”** Here the Abrahamic promise comes in again indicating that the nations will come in by virtue of the Jew (Romans 1:16; 2:9–10; 11:1–36; Ephesians 2:1–22).

**Zechariah 9:1-17**, "The burden of the word of the Lord in the land of Hadrach, and Damascus shall be the rest thereof: when the eyes of man, as of all the tribes of Israel, shall be toward the Lord. And Hamath also shall border thereby; Tyrus, and Zidon, though it be very wise. And Tyrus did build herself a strong hold, and heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets. Behold, the Lord will cast her out and he will smite her power in the sea; and she shall be devoured with fire. Ashkelon shall see it, and fear, Gaza also shall see it, and be very sorrowful, and Ekron; for her expectation shall be ashamed; and the king shall perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited. And a bastard shall dwell In Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines. And I will take away his blood out of his mouth, and his abominations from between his teeth: but he that remaineth, even he, shall be for our God, and he shall be as a governor in Judah, and Ekron as a Jebusite. And I will encamp about mine house because of the army, because of him that passeth by, and because of him that returneth: and no oppressor shall pass through them any more: for now have I seen with mine eyes. Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is Just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth. As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even today do I declare that I will render double unto thee; When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man. And the Lord shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south. The Lord of hosts shall defend them; and they shall devour, and subdue with sling stones; and they shall drink, and make a noise as through wine; and they shall be filled like bowls, and as the corners of the altar. And the Lord their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land. For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty! Corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids."

**"The burden of the word of the Lord in the land of Hadrach, and Damascus shall be the rest thereof."** *NIV*, "The word of the Lord is against the land of Hadrach and will rest upon Damascus." According to *Gesenius*, "Hadrach" is a "proper name of a city and a region of the same name, situated to the east of Damascus." The *ISBE* says, "It may be safely identified with Hatarikka of the Assyrian inscriptions, against which Assur-dan III made expeditions." (See: McKay p. 176.)

**"When the eyes of man, as of all the tribes of Israel, shall be toward the Lord..."** *NKJ*, "For the eyes of men and all the tribes of Israel are on the Lord." *Amplified*, "For the Lord has an eye upon mankind as upon all the tribes of Israel." If the first reading be followed then the heathen as well as, Israel are looking with interest upon what Jehovah is doing. However, if the second reading be followed, then Jehovah has His eye upon the nations as well as Israel (Daniel 4:35). The latter seems more in line with the prophecy as a whole (Zechariah 1:11-12; 6:8; 9:8).

**"Damascus...Hamath...Tyrus and Zidon...Ashkelon...Gaza...Ekron... Ashdod..."**

**Philistines...** These cities represent the traditional enemies of the Jews within their borders (Genesis 15:18). All of these cities were subjected to conquest by Alexander the Great. Tyre was utterly destroyed (Ezekiel 27:26–36; cf. *Antiquities of the Jews*, XI, viii, 317, 320, 325, 340–341).

**“Tyrus did build herself a strong hold, and heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets “** (Job 27:16; Ezekiel 28:4–5; 1 Kings 10:21, 27).

**“And I will take away his blood out of his mouth, and his abominations from between his teeth.”** *Amplified*, “I will take out of the Philistines’ mouth and from between his teeth the abominable idolatrous sacrifices eaten with the blood.” *MKJV*, “And I will take away his bloods out of his mouth, and his idolatries from between his teeth.” After the Greek conquests of the five city-states of the Philistines, they no longer remained as a discernible power or influence among the Hebrews.

**“He that remaineth, even he, shall be for our God, and he shall be as a governor in Judah, and Ekron as a Jebusite.”** After the divine judgment upon the Philistines there will remain a remnant that shall be accepted into the commonwealth of Israel, the Messianic kingdom, the church. The word “governor” may refer to a friend or trusted mentor (Proverbs 16:28; 17:9; Micah 7:5). The Jebusites were long time allies of the Jews having been absorbed into the nation since the days of David (cf. II Samuel 24:23ff). In the Messianic Kingdom there will be a remnant from among these nations that will believe on the Messiah (cf. Acts 6:5; 8:40; 11:19–20; 21:3–4; 27:3).

**“And I will encamp about mine house because of the army... And no oppressor shall pass through them any more: for now have I seen with mine eyes.”** The House to which the prophet refers may be the Temple in Jerusalem, or he may refer to the people that worship in that House. The latter seems more likely (Numbers 12:7; I Chronicles 17:14; Isaiah 56:5, 7; Jeremiah 12:7). God’s eyes were over His people and He was protecting them in the developing world events (Psalm 34:15; I Peter 3:12). While Israel and Judah were not unaffected by the changes in world powers they nevertheless were not overwhelmed or decimated by the ravages of the “wars and rumors of wars” (Exodus 12:12, 23; Isaiah 28:15; Ezekiel 5:17). However, the Messianic reign is depicted as time when the nations are judged and oppressors do not pass through any more (Joel 3:17). If the “house” of this text is the faithful remnant then the prophet is promising their preservation until the arrival of their Messiah. Either view is not without difficulties.

**“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.”** The faithful are told to rejoice at the coming of their Messiah. He is described to them in His character as being “just” (*Strong* #6662) and “lowly” (*Strong* #6041) (cf. II Samuel 23:3; Isaiah 11:1–5; Jeremiah 23:5–6; 33:15, 18). This king brings salvation with Him (cf. Romans 3:23–25). This particular prophecy is quoted and applied to Christ by Matthew and John (Matthew 21:1–11; Mark 11:1–10; Luke 19:29–38; John 12:13–19). This is not the manner in which one would expect a king to be proclaimed (1 King’s 1:43–45; Esther 6:6–9; Jeremiah 17:25). “The ass in eastern countries is a very different animal from

what he is in Western Europe. The most noble and honorable amongst the Jews were wont to be mounted on asses. (With us the ass is a symbol of stubbornness and stupidity, while in the East it is especially remarkable for its patience, gentleness, intelligence, meek submission and great power of endurance... The ass was the animal of peace as the horse was the animal of war; hence the appropriateness of Christ in his triumphal entry riding on an ass" (*Smith's Dictionary*). From the earliest mention of the Messiah in the Scriptures, He is identified with the common people (Genesis 49:10–11).

**"And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim..."** The nature of the Messiah's Kingdom is not of war and carnage like the nations (John 18:36; Ephesians 2:17). Yet, He shall have dominion over all the nations (Daniel 7). Notice again the reunification of Israel as a subtle theme in the book—Jerusalem and Ephraim.

**"By the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water..."** What blood and what covenant? The prophet Ezekiel refers to "thy covenant" and clearly has in view the Mosaic covenant (16:61). This, indeed, was a covenant made by blood (Exodus 24:6–8; Hebrews 9:19–21). However, there was no deliverance for Zion by the blood of this covenant (Hebrews 10:1–4; Galatians 3:10–12). According to Ezekiel God would remember His covenant with Israel and make yet another covenant, this one everlasting (16:60–63). This is of course the New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31; Hebrews 8:8–13).

**"Pit wherein is no water..."** The pit seems to be an allusion to a dry cistern used as a prison or dungeon (cf. Genesis 37:22; Jeremiah 38:6). This is the condition wherein Zion had been held, but would be freed by the blood of their covenant (Ezekiel 16:59). This must refer to the remission of sins by the blood of Christ.

**"Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope."** Israel has hope through their covenant if they will turn to the "strong hold," that is, accept their Messiah (cf. Psalm 40:2). If they will accept their Messiah God will give them a double blessing (Isaiah 61:7).

**"When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim..."** Israel was never able to withstand Greece nor made any effort to do so. As a matter of fact, according to Josephus the Jews surrendered without a whimper. There is no reason in the midst of this Messianic language to look for a temporal conflict with Greece. The prophet is indicating God will use this redeemed nation as His agent in subduing the world—described under the figure of Greece—unto Himself. This Jehovah began to do on Pentecost (Acts 2).

Some see the near term history of Israel in these verses (McKay and others). While they recognize that the conflict must be spiritual, I believe they fail to account for the victory that is portrayed in these verses—especially in light of what we do know about the Maccabean period. Granted the saints were worn out and ultimately possessed the Kingdom, but that was during the days of the fourth beast, not the third which is Greece (Daniel 7:18–27).

**"They shall devour."** This is the description of the victory that the Messianic nation shall have in its conquest of the world. We do not look for this fulfillment in the military successes of

Israel, but in the spiritual victory of the preaching of the Gospel to the “Jew first and also to the Greek.”

**“And the Lord their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land.** The exaltation of the people of God over the nations is described (Malachi 3:17). However, this is not with military strength or might. They are raised up as an ensign, that is as a signal or beacon to call the nations unto the Messiah (*Strong* #5264, perhaps the same as #5261; cf. Isaiah 11:10, 12; 40:3; 62:10; Romans 15:10–12). The imagery in these concluding verses describes the victory of true religion over vain philosophy and false religion.

**“In that day...”** This phrase appears 20 times in the book. The majority of times in the last three chapters (2:11; 3:10; 9:16; 11:11; 12:4, 6, 8, 9, 11; 13:1, 2, 4; 14:4, 6, 8, 9, 13, 20, 21). In each case, it indicates a Messianic moment.

**“Corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids.”** This is another figure describing the peace, prosperity and joy of the Messianic Kingdom—the true satisfaction with God’s blessings that can only come by serving Him (Psalm 16:11).

**Zechariah 10:1-7**, “Ask ye of the Lord rain In the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to everyone grass in the field. For the idols have spoken vanity, and the diviners have seen a lie, and have told false dreams; they comfort in vain: therefore they went their way as a flock, they were troubled, because there was no shepherd. Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds, and I punished the goats: for the Lord of hosts hath visited his flock the house of Judah, and hath made them as his goodly horse in the battle. Out of him came forth the corner, out of him the nail, out of him the battle bow, out of him every oppressor together. And they shall be as mighty men, which tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets In the battle: and they shall fight, because the Lord is with them, and the riders on horses shall be confounded. And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them; for I have mercy upon them: and they shall be as though I had not cast them off: for I am the Lord their God, and will hear them. And they of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as through wine: yea, their children shall see it, and be glad; their heart shall rejoice in the Lord.”

“**Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain...**” The significance of the “latter rain” lies in its relation to the “former rain” (Deuteronomy 11:14; Leviticus 26:4; Jeremiah 5:24; Hosea 6:3; Joel 2:23; James 5:7). In order for a bountiful harvest both the former and the latter rains were necessary. The early rains secured the planting and the latter rains finished the crops. To the people of the restoration who had built the Temple, they had witnessed the “former rain” of their return and the completion of the Temple according to the word of God’s prophets. Now, they needed to trust and depend upon God to send them the full blessing of the Messiah in order to complete the promised harvest (cf. Proverbs 16:15).

“**For the idols have spoken vanity...**” If this first part of the chapter is connected to last of the preceding one, then the thought goes back to 9:12. The prophet is pleading that the remnant embrace their Messiah, the just and lowly King who shall come unto them riding on the ass’ colt. It is as if he is asked: “Why should we turn to the Messiah?” His answer: “Because the idols have spoken lies and the diviners have revealed falsehood” (Jeremiah 2:8; 10:14–18; 51:17–19; I Kings 9:6–9; Isaiah 42:17). Israel in the past had turned away from Jehovah and followed idols into captivity.

“**Therefore they went their way as a flock, they were troubled.**” “They” is the nation Israel, Judah and Samaria. The text literally says: “for this they have wandered like a flock” (*Strong #5265*, see: MKJV, NASV). The reference is to the captivity of both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms (Jeremiah 10:21).

“**There was no shepherd.**” David the first king was taken from the sheepcotes of Israel to “shepherd” God’s people (II Samuel 5:2; Psalms 78:70–71). The king was to care of God’s people (cf. Numbers 27:16–17; II Chronicles 18:16). The kings of Judah and Israel had become wicked despots who feared neither men nor God (Ezekiel 34). They are pictured by the prophets as evil shepherds over God’s flock. Their Messiah would a shepherd like David (Ezekiel 34:23–24). With the destruction of the nation God removed the wicked shepherds and put an end to an earthly succession of the Davidic kingdom (cf. Jeremiah 22:29-30).

**“Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds, and I punished the goats.”** Still following the figure of a shepherd as a king, the prophet now shows that God's wrath was turned against the wicked shepherds into whose hands the flock had come (Jeremiah 23:1–2). The kings were removed, punished and even killed at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar. These “goats” were the rams and he-goats in the flock that should have naturally cared for the ewes and lambs (Jeremiah 50:8). These must be the princes and chiefs (Isaiah 14:9) in Israel that supported the wickedness of the kings (Ezekiel 34:17ff).

**“The Lord of hosts hath visited his flock the house of Judah, and hath made them as his goodly horse in the battle.”** Judah upon repentance is now likened unto a war horse (cf. Job 39:19-25). Upon their repentance the house of Judah is restored to honor and is ready for use in God's Messianic plan (Isaiah 55:3; Psalms 89; II Samuel 7:12).

**“Out of him came forth the corner.”** The antecedent of “him” is the nation Judah. The remnant of Judah will be the source of the “corner” (Matthew 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; Ephesians 2:20; I Peter 2:6-7), the “tent peg” (*Strong* #3489, Judges 4:21–22; 5:26; Ezra 9:8; Isaiah 22:20–25), the “battle bow” (Zechariah 9:13) and the “oppressor” (*Strong* #5065, Isaiah 60:17; Psalms 110:2; 2:6-10; cf. Zechariah 9:8).

**“And they shall be as mighty men...”** [See; footnote in NIV on the word “together” in verse 4]. The house of Judah will be victorious. Not the Maccabees over their oppressors, but the remnant Jews who keep faith with God (Zechariah 9:12).

**“And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them; for I have mercy upon them.”** The returning remnant who put their trust In Jehovah and His Anointed will be placed in the Messianic Kingdom, inherit the land (cf. Matthew 5:3, 5, 9–10).

**“And they of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man.”** The Messianic hope is not limited to Judah only, but it is extended to Ephraim, the house of Joseph, also (Jeremiah 3:18; Ezekiel 37:16, 19; Amos 5:1–6, 15).

**Zechariah 10:8-12,** “I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them: and they shall increase as they have increased. And I will sow them among the people: and they shall remember me in far countries; and they shall live with their children, and turn again. I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; and place shall not be found for them. And he shall pass through the sea with affliction, and shall smite the waves in the sea, and all the deeps of the river shall dry up: and the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the scepter of Egypt shall depart away. And I will strengthen them in the Lord; and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the Lord.

**“I will hiss (*Strong* #8319) for them, and gather them.”** Hissing generally indicates a sign of derision (Jeremiah 19:8; Job 27:23; I Kings 9:8); however, it is used to indicate a signal for calling others to oneself (Isaiah 5:26; 7:18). Here Jehovah is going to gather the remnant whom He has redeemed. The remnant of Ephraim seems to be particularly in view (which may include the Gentiles).

**“I have redeemed them.”** This is the redemption (*Strong #6299*) which the Messiah brings (Luke 1:68; 2:38; 24:21; Romans 3:24; Galatians 3:13; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; Hebrews 9:12, 15; I Peter 1:18; Rev 5:9; 14:3–4).

**“They shall increase as they have increased.”** They shall increase again as they have increased before (*Amplified*). See: Ezekiel 36:10–11. This is a promise of prosperity, security and strength in the Messianic Kingdom.

**“I will sow them among the people”** (cf. Hosea 2:23). Not as scattering them in exile, but as unto Himself for a righteous harvest (cf. Deuteronomy 30:1). Some do not see the evangelization of the world through the instrumentality of the Jews, but I do not understand why (Zechariah 8:23).

**“I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt...and place shall not be found for them.”** The Messianic Kingdom is described in terms which show that it is not a literal return to Palestine that the prophet foresees. The Kingdom is a universal one which cannot find a country in Canaan (Hebrews 11:13-16).

**“And he shall pass through the sea with affliction, and shall smite the waves in the sea, and all the deeps of the river shall dry up: and the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the scepter of Egypt shall depart away.”** Egypt and Assyria were the two captors of Ephraim, their traditional enemies. They stand here for the enemies of the Messianic Kingdom. The Kingdom of Christ will not be established without oppressors and enemies, but God will deliver the Kingdom and destroy all its enemies (Hebrews 12:22–29; cf. Isaiah 11:10–16).

**“And I will strengthen them In the Lord; and they shall walk up and down in his name.”** That is, walking in the strength of the Lord (cf. Micah 4:5).

**Zechariah 11:1-17**, "Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars. Howl, fir tree; for the cedar is fallen; because the mighty are spoiled: howl, O ye oaks of Bashan; for the forest of the vintage is come down. There is a voice of the howling of the shepherds; for their glory is spoiled: a voice of the roaring of young lions; for the pride of Jordan is spoiled. Thus saith the LORD my God; Feed the flock of the slaughter; Whose possessors slay them, and hold themselves not guilty: and they that sell them say, Blessed be the LORD; for I am rich: and their own shepherds pity them not. For I will no more pity the inhabitants of the land, saith the LORD: but, lo, I will deliver the men every one into his neighbor's hand, and into the hand of his king: and they shall smite the land, and out of their hand I will not deliver them. And I will feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock. And I took unto me two staves; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bands; and I fed the flock. Three shepherds also I cut off in one month; and my soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me. Then said I, I will not feed you: that that dieth, let it die; and that that is to be cut off, let it be cut off; and let the rest eat every one the flesh of another. And I took my staff, even Beauty, and cut it asunder, that I might break my covenant which I had made with all the people. And it was broken in that day: and so the poor of the flock that waited upon me knew that it was the word of the LORD. And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the LORD said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was priced at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the LORD. Then I cut asunder mine other staff, even Bands, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel. And the LORD said unto me, Take unto thee yet the instruments of a foolish shepherd. For, lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land, which shall not visit those that be cut off, neither shall seek the young one, nor heal that that is broken, nor feed that that standeth still: but he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in pieces. Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock! the sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened."

**"Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars."** Lebanon was a valuable store of natural resources for Judah: Naval stores (Ezekiel 27:5), building materials (I Kings 5:6-14; 7:1-3; Ezra 3:7), wildlife and husbandry, etc. It was a strategic base for military operations (I Kings 9:19; II Chronicles 8:6). It was a military objective in periods of conquest (II Kings 10:23; Isaiah 37:24; 14:8; Habakkuk 2:17). The destruction of Lebanon is a common figure in the prophets to describe judgment upon the Jewish economy (Isaiah 2:13; 10:34; 33:9; Jeremiah 22:6-7).

The route via the Lebanon Mountains into the valley of Jezreel was the logical and strategic route into Palestine for conquest. Any enemy approaching from the East or the North and West via land would choose such a route. The Assyrians, Syrians and Babylonians had all entered the land through Lebanon and Jezreel. The Roman conquest in A.D. 70 is described by Josephus as following this route (*Wars of the Jews*, III, iv, 1ff).

**"Howl, fir tree; for the cedar is fallen; because the mighty are spoiled: howl, O ye oaks of Bashan; for the forest of the vintage is come down** (cf. Isaiah 2:13; Ezekiel 27:6; I Kings 6:34;

II Chronicles 3:5; Isaiah 41:19; 55:13; 60:13; Psalms 29:5; 104:16; Isaiah 14:8; 37:24). There are some varieties of oak in eastern Palestine that are worthy of this Hebrew name which means “strong” (*Strong* #437). The cedar (#730) the tallest of the trees in Palestine reaches heights in excess of 70 feet and up to a girth greater than 5 feet. The fir tree (#1265) is the cypress which is used in ship building, house structure and musical instruments (II Samuel 6:5). It is not to be confused with our Southern American variety. Lebanon was also a great region for growing grapes. Deforestation was a sad consequence of war (Isaiah 14:18; Deuteronomy 20:19–20). Here it signifies approaching judgment

**“There is a voice of the howling of the shepherds; for their glory is spoiled: a voice of the roaring of young lions; for the pride of Jordan is spoiled.”** The prophet employs language that shows the effects of the judgment upon the Jewish system. The forests, pastures, fields, wildlife and flocks are personified as howling and mourning because the forest is cut down. It is not the literal deforestation that the prophet sees but the felling of the nation. The question is: when does this occur? In that the restoration has taken place and the Messianic kingdom is assured to the remnant in the preceding two chapters, the national calamity in view must be that of A.D. 70 when Jerusalem fell according to the prophecy of Daniel and Jesus (Daniel 9:24-27; Matthew 24; Luke 21:20; 19:42-44). This seems to be borne out by the prophecy of the two shepherds which follows.

**“Thus saith the Lord my God; Feed the flock of the slaughter. Whose possessors slay them, and hold themselves not guilty: and they that sell them say, Blessed be the Lord; for I am rich: and their own shepherds pity them not. For I will no more pity the inhabitants of the land, saith the Lord: but, lo, I will deliver the men every one into his neighbor's hand, and into the hand of his king: and they shall smite the land, and out of their hand I will not deliver them.”** The nation is now described under the figure of a flock in the care of wicked shepherds who would have it slaughtered. The “possessors” or owners seem to be the ones in authority over Judah—the priests, prophets and governors that should have been protecting them, but were rather spoiling them (Ezekiel 34:1-10). The post-restoration history of Judah is one which reveals a return to the corruption of the past (cf. Malachi 1:1 ff). What Jehovah will do in this attempt is final. If the nation is not redeemed by His intercession there will be no further attempt made. He says, “I will not deliver them,” (Luke 20:9–18).

**I will deliver the men every one into his neighbor's hand, and into the hand of his king...** (John 19:15). See Josephus for a complete account of how internal strife contributed to the calamity of A.D. 70.

**“And I will feed the flock of slaughter... and I fed the flock.”** Zechariah gets himself a flock to tend (Jeremiah 13:1; 19:1; Ezekiel 4:10–11; 12:4–6; Hosea 1–3). The prophet now stands as a representative of the Messiah, the Shepherd/King (Ezekiel 37:15–28; 34:11–31).

**“Even you, O poor of the flock...”** The “poor (*Strong* #6041) of the flock are those to whom Jesus said the gospel was preached (Luke 4:18; Matthew 5:3). These are they that went into the kingdom before the scribes and Pharisees (Matthew 21:32; 11:12). Jehovah sends the

Shepherd/King Messiah unto Judah in order to fulfill all his promises to them and redeem them (Psalms 40:17; Matthew 9:36; 15:14; Mark 6:34).

**“And I took unto me two staves; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bands.”** The shepherd traditionally carried two staves, each with a specific design for the work of caring for the flock (cf. Psalms 23:4). “Beauty” (*Strong* #5276) would more correctly be rendered “Grace” or “Favor” indicating God’s care or protection of His people, specifically the covenant renewed at the time of the restoration (Zechariah 11:10; cf. 8:11–12). The name of the other was “Bands” or “Bindings” (#2254) which would signify the national unity which had contributed to the success of the restoration (Zechariah 11:14; 8:13–17; cf. Psalms 133:1).

**“Three shepherds also I cut off in one month...”** Based upon what is said above in v.v. 4–6, these are the hirelings into whose hands the flock had come (cf. John 10:12–13). Because they failed to properly care for the flock, they were destroyed (*Strong* #3582; cf. Ezekiel 34:1–10). Who might these three be? Some have suggested that the three anointed offices of the nation—prophet, priest, king—are intended. These were the hands unto whom the people had been committed for their care and guidance—all three had failed; all three fleeced the flock! Others suggest a symbolic three signifying that with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 there was absolutely no vestige of Jewish authority left (Matthew 24:29–35; Luke 19:42–44; 21:21–27; Daniel 9:24–27).

**“And my soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me. Then said I, I will not feed you that that dieth, let it die; and that that is to be cut off, let it be cut off; and let the rest eat every one the flesh of another.”** In the KJV this is construed as referring to the corrupt hireling shepherds. However, the NIV attributes it to the flock: “The flock detested me, and I grew weary of them.” This is certainly a vivid description of the people’s treatment of the Messiah (John 6:66; Matthew 21:9, 15; 27:25; John 19:6; cf. Psalms 81:11–12). “Loath” (*Strong* #7114) means to grieve or mourn, to be troubled (Num 21:4; Judges 10:16; Job 21:4). Whereas the word “abhorred” (#973) actually means “to loath or abhor” and only appears here in the Old Testament.

**“And I took my staff, even Beauty, and cut it asunder, that I might break my covenant which I had made with all the people.”** The NIV translates “people” as “the nations.” Palestine had been under God’s watchful eyes (Zechariah 9:8), an emblem of His providence and determined purpose (Zechariah 3:9; 4:10). Now that His covenant is broken, they are free to “pass through” and do as they will in the land (cf. 11:1–3).

**“And it was broken in that day: and so the poor of the flock that waited upon me knew that it was the word of the Lord.”** However, the efforts of the Shepherd do not effect the salvation of the whole flock. We are not to construe His words as despair over what cannot be overcome (Isaiah 59:1–2). There are some in the flock that are saved, the poor (v. 11; cf. Matthew 24:14–22, 32–33). Yet, the turning of these few will not abate the destruction that is due the nation (cf. Jeremiah 15:1–10; Ezekiel 14:11–21), the cup of their iniquity is full.

**“And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast**

**it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was priced at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord."** Now, the Shepherd/King asks the nation to value the work He has done on their behalf. The value they set on the Messiah is thirty pieces of silver, the value of an ox-gored slave (Exodus 21:32). Thus, by their estimate they reveal their contempt for the Shepherd and betray the cause of their rejection unto judgment. The Shepherd in turn displays His contempt by casting it "to the potter" (*Strong #7993*; cf. Genesis 37:20; Exodus 22:31; Isaiah 2:20; II Kings 9:25–26; II Kings 17:20). Zechariah may have been waiting for the potter in the Temple and simply walked up to him casting the money at his feet. There may have been a potter associated with the Temple since there would have been a need for pots (Leviticus 6:28). However, the significance of this action can only be determined from the New Testament application (Matthew 26:14–15; 27:3–10; Luke 21:20–22; Acts 1:15–20).

The quotation of this text in the New Testament is fraught with difficulties. First, the words are attributed to Jeremiah and not Zechariah (Matthew 27:9). There is no quotation in Jeremiah that parallels or otherwise might be associated with this text. However, many of the scrolls in which Zechariah would be found begin with the Book of Jeremiah. Therefore, the Apostle is citing the roll upon which it would be found according to custom and practice. A matter the Jews (his principle audience) would understand. Next, there is the problem that Matthew's use of the prophecy does not constitute a quote of the Zechariah passage so much as an accommodation. Zechariah is working out an object lesson in which the rejection of the Messiah is portrayed. Matthew is, by the Spirit, relating the facts as they occurred to revelatory drama. There is no denying that what happened and what was prophesied bears a remarkable parallel. There was the insulting value that the leaders placed upon their Messiah and the identity of that price with that valued in the prophetic drama—30 pieces of silver. There was the involvement of the Temple with what became of the money. And, there is the fact that the potter actually received the money in exchange for a field.

**"Then I cut asunder mine other staff, even Bands, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel."** The Shepherd now finalizes the judgment upon Judah by breaking the other staff, "Bands." This staff represented the political and fraternal cohesion of nation. God was unleashing the external forces and stirring up internal strife which would bring the nation down.

**"And the Lord said unto me, Take unto thee yet the instruments of a foolish shepherd. For, lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land, which shall not visit those that be cut off, neither shall seek the young one, nor heal that that is broken, nor feed that that standeth still: but he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in pieces. Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock! The sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened."** Having rejected the Shepherd/King their Messiah, God will give them a foolish shepherd (Proverbs 1:7; 10:8, 10; 12:15; 14:3), that is, a shepherd that will rend and destroy the flock for his own selfish purposes.

There are six attributes of the foolish shepherd: (1) he does not seek the lost; (2) he does not care for the young; (3) he does not heal the injured; (4) he does not take care of the

healthy; (5) he is selfish, taking care of only himself; (6) he will be cruel (cf. Ezekiel 34:1-10; Isaiah 40:11). There is a divine judgment of the foolish shepherd: he is worthless. And, there is an appointed end: "it is blow for blow and an eye for an eye." That which the shepherd should have used for the preservation of the flock strength and ability will be taken from him. This entire eleventh chapter should be considered in light of Jesus own description of Himself as the "Good Shepherd" (John 10:1-39).

It seems that this shepherd was found in the person of the Roman emperors to whom the Jews turned over Christ (John 19:5-16). This is certainly the "people of the prince that shall come" in Daniel 9:26 who wrought the destruction of Jerusalem.

**Zechariah 12:1–14**, “The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him. Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it. In that day, saith the LORD, I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness: and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the people with blindness. And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength in the LORD of hosts their God. In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem. The LORD also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify themselves against Judah. In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them.

And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.

“**The burden...for Israel...**” In 9:1 it was for the nations and wicked Judah. Now, it is for the people of God (1:19; 8:13; cf. 11:14). This is an oracle designed to assure them of God’s completion of His promise in view of the rejection of the Messiah portrayed in chapter eleven (11:8-14).

“**The Lord which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him...**” The prophet reminds the faithful remnant, Jerusalem and Judah, who the Lord is (Psalms 104:2-4; Isaiah 40:18-24; 42:5–6; Amos 4:11–13; 5:8–9). He has it in His power to accomplish all and whatever He has said. Furthermore He will preserve and protect His faithful saints (Zechariah 2:5).

“**I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling...**” “Trembling” is “reeling” or “staggering” (*Strong #7478*). A cup from which the wicked drink prior to going down in judgment is

a common figure used by the prophets (Psalms 75:7–8; Isaiah 51:17–21; Jeremiah 25:15–16; 51:7; Ezekiel 23:32–34; Revelation 14:10; 16:9). Here Jerusalem itself, the people of God, is the cup; they are the occasion of the fall of the nations (Acts 2:33; 3:18; 4:26–28; I Corinthians 2:8). All who come against her will stagger and fall.

**“Judah and Jerusalem...”** This is the people of God, Zion, that holy remnant that has chosen to serve Him faithfully (cf. 1:12, 14, 16, 17, 19, 21; 2:2, 4, 12). Clearly the prophet is taking us up to the coming of the Messiah. Thus, this Judah and Jerusalem may be identified with the Church of Christ (Galatians 4:26; 6:16; Romans 11:26–27).

**“In that day”** anchors this entire last section of the book in the events associated with the Messiah’s first coming (2:11; 3:9–10; 9:16; 11:11). There is no reason now to believe that the prophet has taken us a consideration of what shall happen at the end of the world.

**“I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone.”** God will make the His people like an immovable rock; all who try to move it shall be destroyed (cf. Daniel 2:44–45; Hebrews 12:25–29; cf. Isaiah 2:2–3; Micah 4:1–2). Though the entire world gathers against Christ and His faithful remnant they will not be overthrown in accomplishing God’s eternal purpose.

**“I will smite every horse of the people with madness...”** The horse is an emblem of war. However, a blind horse with an insane rider is no threat on the battlefield. It is another image of God overthrowing those that align themselves against the Messiah and His people.

**“And I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah...”** God is still watching and caring for His people (3:9; 4:10; 9:1, 8; 12:4). When His eyes are upon anything or anyone His purpose relative to them is accomplished (cf. Deuteronomy 11:12; II Chronicles 16:9; Psalms 34:15; Proverbs 22:12). The difficulty in this text is determining the significance of a distinction between Judah and Jerusalem. In 8:15 there does not seem to be a distinction, either name indicates the remnant people who have repented and chosen the Lord. The KJV seems to unite the two in 12:2 in this siege. In 12:5–6 the captains of Judah are encouraged by the citizens of Jerusalem and in turn prevail over the “people.” This is language designed to show how God’s people in their trials encourage one another and spur each other on to overcome (Hebrews 10:32–39).

**“And they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem.”** All agree the language here if taken literally certainly does not describe what happened to Judah and Jerusalem in the inter-testamental period (Daniel 11:32–35). However, it is an apt description of the unshakeable kingdom which Haggai and Zechariah announced (cf. Haggai 2:20–23). Jerusalem “shall still remain in its own site” (Moffat) or “on that which is under her” (cf. I Corinthians 3:10–17; Matthew 16:18–20).

**“The LORD also shall save the tents of Judah first...”** God’s protection will extend to every citizen of the holy nation—to the weak, to the poor and to the feeble (Jude 21–25; Luke 22:32; I Peter 5:10). God is the wall around His people (Zechariah 2:5). There is equality among the citizens of Zion and the same care for one another (Romans 2:11; Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 3:25; James 2:1, 9; I Peter 1:17; I Corinthians 12:25–26).

**“He that is feeble among them at that day shall be as the house of David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the Angel of the Lord before them.”** The prophet is describing how God empowers His people with the strength of faith (I Corinthians 16:13; Hebrews 10:35–39; 11:32–40). David the ruddy shepherd took down Goliath through faith (cf. I Samuel 17:31–37). It is doubtful that the prophet intends to affirm anything of the deity of the Messiah, but rather the restored fortunes of the House of David through the Messiah (Acts 15:15–17; Amos 9:11–12).

**“I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications.”** Zechariah now describes the conversion of Israel. The “spirit of grace and of supplications” refers not to the Holy Spirit, but to a disposition that recognizes the deep need for favor and mercy (Matthew 5:3–10; Psalms 34:18; 51:17; 145:18; Isaiah 61:1; 66:2). These are they that could “call upon the name of the Lord and be saved” (Acts 2:21–22; Romans 10:12–13).

**“They shall look upon me whom they have pierced.”** There must, in order for this conversion to take place, be recognition of what was done to the Messiah (cf. John 19:34, 37; Acts 2:22–36).

**“The mourning of Hadadrimmon”** is a reference to the death of the last good king of Judah: Josiah (2 Kings 23:29ff; II Chronicles 35:20ff). A reference to one of the villages of the Megiddo valley where annual mourning for Josiah may have been conducted (II Chronicles 35:24) Laetsch identifies it with Rummane north of Nazareth and NW of Taanek (pp. 484-485). The lamentation of Judah for her Messiah will surpass that mourning.

**“And the land shall mourn,”** that is, the people shall mourn their guilt in the death of Christ (Acts 2:22, 36, 38). Once again, the theme of this prophecy, return ye unto me comes to the fore. Theirs is the mourning as for a firstborn child (Jeremiah 6:26; Amos 8:10). Not that Christ was the only begotten, but that their sorrow for their part in his death would be of the deepest sort.

**“David...Nathan...Levi...Shemei...every family apart, and their wives apart...”** This would be no professional mourning (Ecclesiastes 12:5; Matthew 9:23; Mark 5:38; Jeremiah 9:17; Amos 5:16), but a genuine rending of the heart (Joel 2:13; II Chronicles 34:7). This mourning would involve all Israel from the greatest to the least.

**Zechariah 13:1-9**, “In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land. And it shall come to pass, that when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of the LORD: and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied; neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive: But he shall say, I am no prophet, I am an husbandman; for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth. And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones. And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.”

**“In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.”** This is the day when “they shall look upon me whom they have pierced” (12:10). Thus, in piercing the Messiah they opened the fountain (*Strong #4726*) “for sin and uncleanness.” This was the fountain of His blood (Hebrews 8:12; 9:14–15; 10:1-4; 1 John 1:7; 2:1–2; Ephesians 2:12-22). It was “in that day” that that which had been only promise and prospective was now realized in fact.

**“House of David...”** This is certainly a reference to the Messianic, (Isaiah 7:13; 22:22; Amos 9:11–12; Acts 15:16–17).

**“And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.”** Certain things coincide with the opening of this fountain: (1) the cutting off of the names of the idols, (2) the passing out of the land of the prophet and the unclean spirit. The passage is difficult and we may not be satisfied with any explanation. Whatever explanation we give must be consistent with the “day” that is before us, the day of an open fountain, that is, the dispensation of God's grace.

With the death of Christ and His exaltation to the right hand of God, there was the overthrow of idolatry (cf. I Thessalonians 1:9; 1 John 5:21; Galatians 5:20; Acts 15:28–30; 17:16–30; 21:25; I Corinthians 10:14-21; Colossians 3:5; II Corinthians 6:15–16). Which took along with it the false prophet and the unclean spirit (Colossians 2:14–15). This is one explanation.

However, the death of Christ ushered in a period of time in which there was a significant conflict between the powers of heaven and the powers of Satan that manifested itself in supernatural

ways (Matthew 12:28; 10:1; Mark 16:17–20; Acts 16:18; 19:13–15; Luke 8:26–36). The church was endowed temporarily with spiritual gifts (I Corinthians 12–14) for this conflict unto the end that the final revelation of God's truth might be made known for all time. After which, these would cease. This is a second explanation.

My own explanation is this: the prophet has before his mind the Shepherd/King who upon his arrival brings in a final revelation for the people of God. There will no longer be any consorting with soothsayers, augers, oracles or diviners (cf. I Kings 22:22). Rather, there would be one prophet, the prophet of Deuteronomy 18 and Acts 3:22–26. Those who believe this prophet will no longer fear or hearken after any other prophets (Matthew 17:5; Hebrews 1:1–2).

**And it shall come to pass, that when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of the Lord and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied; neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive: But he shall say, I am no prophet, I am an husbandman; for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth.** This passage is a play on Deuteronomy 18:9–22 and Deuteronomy 21:18–21 which combines the prohibition against hearkening unto diviners with the parental judgment against a rebellious son. If the above exegesis is correct, Zechariah may be extolling the character required by Jesus in Matthew 10:32–40 and Luke 12:49–53.

**And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.** If we take these words with the previous verses, this constitutes the false prophets' denial of the Messiah and their confession of their consorting with idols. However, it seems more likely to associate them with the next verse and apply them to Messiah (cf. John 20:24–29).

**Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.** This verse is applied to Christ (Matthew 26:31; Mark 14:27). It is the Shepherd/King who will redeem the nation, but was rejected (11:12–13; 12:10). "The sword" was Rome (cf. Acts 2:23; cf. Romans 13:1ff). Notice that the Shepherd, who is a man, is the "fellow" (Strong #5997) of the Lord of Hosts (cf. John 5:18; 10:24–38).

**"And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God."** After the smiting of the shepherd and the scattering of the sheep, God would gather the "third part," leaving the "two parts" to be cut-off. This is the remnant that believed and is saved. However, their redemption would not be without affliction. We know that after the establishment of the church many of the saints were persecuted and died (Acts 8, 9, 12, etc.). These persecutions were the refining fire through which they passed (I Peter 1:6–7; 4:12–16). The prophet echoes the words of Hosea (Hosea 2:1, 23; Romans 9:25–26; I Peter 2:9–10).

**Zechariah 14:1-21**, "Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light. And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one. All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses. And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited. And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the LORD shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour. And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance. And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague. And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD'S house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and see the therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.

**“Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.”** This “day of the Lord” is the same day that was described in 12:2, 9 and 13:7-9. It is the day in which the Messiah is killed and it appears that the enemies of God have overthrown the Kingdom of God but it will not be so. Daniel prophesied that there would be enemies that would make war with the saints (Daniel 7:21).

**“The city shall be taken...”** Staying in context demands that we understand the city to be the spiritual Jerusalem, the Messianic Kingdom. Thus, the picture is of the enemies of God gathered against His Christ (Psalms 2; Acts 2:23; 4:25–28). It is a picture of apparent success for the enemies of God, Who steps forward to finish His eternal purpose and set Christ immovable upon His holy hill of Zion (Hebrews 12:22–28).

**“The residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.”** The word “residue” (*Strong #3499*) is sometimes translated “remnant” and refers to the faithful in Israel that accept the Messiah. The prophet promises here that in that day in which they smite the Shepherd (13:7) the “remnant,” the “little ones,” “the third part” will still inherit the kingdom (Acts 1:6; Luke 24:21). The enemies of God will not prevail!

**“Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.** Just as God fought for Israel when they confronted their enemies in the conquest of the land, God fights for His people now (Exodus 14:14; Deuteronomy 1:30; 3:22; 20:4; Hebrews 13:5–6).

**“And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives”** (cf. Isaiah 14:25; 49:11; Amos 4:13). In the day the Shepherd is smitten and the Kingdom appears to be defeated the Lord, not the Messiah, shall stand upon the Mount of Olives. The significance of the Mount of Olives as the escape route for the righteous may be determined from I Samuel 15:30–16:4. It was the route which David took in the rebellion of Absalom. At that time the loss of the kingdom seemed imminent to David, but God did not allow it. The Mt. of Olives is where the glory of God stood when it departed from the Temple in the vision as seen by Ezekiel (11:23). The sight of God’s departure is a fit place for His return to receive the remnant.

**“And half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.”** The cleaving of the Mount of Olives is a figure for the redemption of the remnant. This cannot possibly be interpreted literally to refer to the Second Coming of Christ.

**“Unto Azal,”** which literally means “to join, to connect together” (*Gesenius* p. 74). Some think this to be the name of a village near Jerusalem. However there is no evidence of such a village. Others think it Beth-ezel which is thought to have been on the side of Olivet opposite Jerusalem (Micah 1:11). The word is also used metaphorically to mean descending from a noble stock or lineage (*ibid.*). None of these satisfy. What then does the prophet mean? The Pulpit Commentary suggests a solution based upon the meaning of the word. Understanding Azal to mean “joining” suggesting union, the figure portrays a way of escape that brings all the

remnant together into one place, a fit symbol of the church (I Corinthians 12:25; Ephesians 4:4).

**And the Lord my God shall come and all the saints with thee.** This coming of the Lord, again, is not of the Messiah at the end of the age, but of the Father with the angels (Deuteronomy 33:2–3; Acts 7:53; Hebrews 2:2; Galatians 3:19; Daniel 4:13, 17, 23; 8:13) in firmly setting the kingdom in place (Luke 24:4–8; Acts 1:10–11; Hebrews 12:22; 1:4–14; 2:5–9; I Peter 1:12; 3:22; II Timothy 3:16; 5:21).

**“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark.”** This is typical “day of the Lord” language (Joel 2:2, 10; Acts 2:20). The day before the prophet is the “day of the Kingdom” (Matthew 26:29; Luke 22:16, 29–30). It is a dark day because it is a day attendant with affliction. It is a day of light because it is a day that is full of hope.

**“One day which shall be known to the Lord.”** (See: Acts 1:7).

**“It shall be in that day that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem.”** The living water was the gospel of salvation (John 4:10, 13–14; 7:37–38). The Church is the “pillar and ground of the truth” (I Timothy 3:15; Revelation 1:20). From Jerusalem went forth the Gospel into all the world (Colossians 1:6, 23).

**“The former sea and...the hinder sea.”** The Dead Sea and the Mediterranean Sea are the two seas which the prophet means. However, what do they represent? Some say the two covenants (Hebrews 9:15). Others say the Jews and the Gentiles (Mark 16:15; Romans 1:16).

**“In summer and in winter,”** shows that this cleansing water is always flowing. It is universal in application and constant in time.

**“One Lord and His name one.”** The basis of unity in the New Testament (Ephesians 4:4ff).

**“All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses. And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.”** Jerusalem will be exalted as a plain that extends from Geba to Rinmon. “From Geba to Beersheba” expressed the whole extent of the kingdom of Judah, just as “from Dan to Beersheba” described the whole length of Palestine (II Kings 23:8). Rimmon is a town in the southern portion of Judah (Joshua 15:3) allotted to Simeon (Joshua 19:7; I Chronicles 4:32) about 13 miles southwest of Hebron. This describes not only the exaltation, but ultimate growth, success and security of god's people under their Messiah.

**“And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem.”** God smote the enemies of His people with literal plagues in order to demonstrate His power and to deliver them from their hands (cf. Genesis 12:17; Psalms 89:20–26; Exodus 9:14; 12:23; I Corinthians 10:10; II Kings 19:20–36). The overthrow and defeat of these enemies is likened to such a plague. As it was with the building of the Temple so it now is: “Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts” (Zechariah 4:7). God is a wall of fire around His people (Zechariah 2:5).

**“And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together gold and silver, and apparel, in great abundance. And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague.”** God shall give them a complete spoiling of the enemy (cf. II Kings 7:1–11). He will plague them and their beasts destroying all that comes against His people.

**“And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations... shall even go up from year to year to worship the King...and to keep the feast of tabernacles.”** The godly remnant of the Gentiles shall be included in Judah and Jerusalem. They are pictured as keeping the Feast of Tabernacles which was a feast to celebrate the deliverance from captivity and entrance into the Land of promise (cf. Nehemiah 8:13-18).

**“And it shall be, that whoso will not come up... even upon them shall be no rain.”** Rain represents the blessings of God (Deuteronomy 11:14; Leviticus 26:4; Jeremiah 5:24; Hosea 6:3; Joel 2:23; James 5:7). If the defeated enemies of God persist in their rebellion then they have nothing but cursing and plagues from them.

**“In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, Holiness Unto The Lord; and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and see the therein.”** Jerusalem shall be established in holiness and security. The imagery of the OT institutions is used convey the sanctification of God's people achieved through the ministry of Messiah (Ephesians 5:25–27). Every pot shall be clean in the sense of the rituals of the Temple (cf. Leviticus 6:28; 11:32–33; 15:12; Haggai 2:13). Even the horses will be as clean as priests that stand before the altar (Exodus 39:30). There is nothing that defiles in the holy city of Jerusalem.

**“And in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts.”** Even a Canaanite shall be clean (cf. Zechariah 9:6; Exodus 23:27–28; 33:2; 34:11–16).