

***1 Zechariah 7-11 History Before It Happens**

***2 – Chart of OT Books** Another prophetic message came to Zechariah from YaHWeH in 518 B.C. The fourth day of the ninth month would have been in early December. Chislew is the Babylonian name of the month. This message, which comprises the following four messages in chapters 7 and 8, came to the prophet almost two years after **he received the eight night visions and about halfway through the period of temple reconstruction (520-515 B.C.)**. Dr. Tom Constable ¹ ***3 – Chart of Persian Kings**

***4 Zechariah 7** ¹ On December 7 of the fourth year of King Darius's reign, another message came to Zechariah from YaHWeH. ² The people of Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regemmelech, along with their attendants, to seek YaHWeH's favor. ³ They were to ask this question of the prophets and the priests at the Temple of YaHWeH of Heaven's Armies: **"Should we continue to mourn and fast each summer on the anniversary of the Temple's destruction, as we have done for so many years?"**

***4a** Israelites who lived in Bethel, **about 10 miles north of Jerusalem** (cf. Ezra 2:28; Neh. 7:32; 11:31), sent two representatives to ask the priests and prophets in the capital about how they should worship Him (cf. Mal. 1:9). ***4b – Bethel from early 1900's** The names of the two ambassadors were **Babylonian** suggesting they had been born in Babylonia during the Captivity. They wanted to know if they should continue to observe a fast that had become traditional but which the Mosaic Law did not require. **The only fast that the Mosaic Law prescribed was on the Day of Atonement** (Lev. 16:29; 23:27–32).

Since the temple was almost complete, did YaHWeH want His people to continue to fast? The people knew that the captivity would last 70 years, and 68 of these had already past. It seemed to them that fasting over the destruction of the temple might be inappropriate since YaHWeH had enabled them to rebuild the temple and reestablish worship. The question was a reasonable one. "We've done this **for so many years**, we may as well keep doing it." Tom Constable

***5 Zechariah 7** ⁴ YaHWeH of Heaven's Armies sent me this message in reply: ⁵ "Say to all your people and your priests, 'During these seventy years of exile, when you fasted and mourned in the summer and in early autumn, was it really for me that you were fasting? ⁶ And even now in your holy festivals, aren't you eating and drinking just to please yourselves? ⁷ Isn't this the same message YaHWeH proclaimed through the prophets in years past when Jerusalem and the towns of Judah were bustling with people, and the Negev and the foothills of Judah were well populated?' "

¹ Tom Constable, [*Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible*](#) (Galaxie Software, 2003), Zec 7:1.

The point of the first rhetorical question is that the fasts commemorating events associated with the fall of Jerusalem were man-made, not God-ordained. They were not being observed to please YahWeH. James Smith ²

***5a** Evidently the people had turned these events into occasions for self-pity over their physical condition rather than engaging in prayer and genuine spiritual repentance. This also shows us that when we cling to the memory of sin or tragedy in the past, we often do it out of simple self-indulgence. We do it for ourselves, not for YahWeH. Constable/Guzik

Sometimes our “celebration” of loss, can become more for us than for the event we originally mourned! Our remembrance of some loss becomes our identity and we use it to call attention to ourselves.

***6** The Israelites had lost their sincere desire for a loving relationship with God. Zechariah told them that they had been fasting without a proper attitude of repentance or worship. **They fasted and mourned during their exile with no thought of God or their sins that had caused it in the first place.** When you go to church, pray, or have fellowship with other believers, are you doing these things from habit or for what you get out of it? God says that an attitude of worship without a sincere desire to know and love Him will lead to ruin. Life Application Bible

Our self-righteous religious activities often become a source of pride, and our identity! One time, years ago, I was led by the Lord to fast for a week. During that time my boss invited me to lunch and in all the self-righteousness I could muster I said, **“I can’t go with you, I am fasting.”** God asks the question: **“Robert, who are you fasting for? Me or you?”** I was instantly sick to my stomach at my pride! Be assured, God will always point out your heart motives for what you do, especially the “religious-looking” stuff.

***6a** Instead of actively remembering the sin or tragedy of the past, God wants us to focus on active obedience and an active walk with Him. **“There is no need to observe the sad anniversaries of our sins and their accompanying punishment, if once we are assured of God’s free forgiveness. When He forgives and restores, the need for dwelling on the bitter past is over...too many of us are always dwelling beside the graves of the dead past.”** F.B. Meyer

What the Lord wants from us is “pure and undefiled religion”:

***7 Zechariah 7** ⁸ Then this message came to Zechariah from YahWeH: ⁹ “This is what YahWeH of Heaven’s Armies says: **Judge fairly, and show mercy and kindness to one another.** ¹⁰ **Do not oppress widows, orphans, foreigners, and the poor. And do not scheme against each other.**

***7a** Micah 6:6–8 (NLT) ⁶ What can we bring to YahWeH? Should we bring him burnt offerings? Should we bow before God Most High with offerings of yearling calves? ⁷ Should we offer Him

² James E. Smith, [*The Minor Prophets*](#), Old Testament Survey Series (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1994), Zec 7–8.

thousands of rams and ten thousand rivers of olive oil? Should we sacrifice our firstborn children to pay for our sins? ⁸ **No, O people, YaHWeH has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.**

***8 Zechariah 7** ¹¹ **“Your ancestors refused to listen to this message.**

They stubbornly turned away (“pulled away the shoulder”) and put their fingers in their ears to keep from hearing (“made their ears heavy”).

***8a** “. . . while Zechariah may well not have answered the original enquiry directly, he had nevertheless taken up the very essence of ritual in the heart of the worshiper, which was that the outward form of religious activity was useless and lifeless without an accompanying spirit of obedience, confession and repentance.” David Ellis

***8b** “Morality is certainly not piety, but the piety which does not include morality is a mere delusion. It mocks God and insults man.” Talbot W. Chambers

***9 Zechariah 7** ¹² They made their hearts as hard as stone, so they could not hear the instructions or **the messages that YaHWeH of Heaven’s Armies had sent them by His Spirit through the earlier prophets.** That is why YaHWeH of Heaven’s Armies was so angry with them. ¹³ **“Since they refused to listen when I called to them, I would not listen when they called to Me,** says YaHWeH of Heaven’s Armies. ¹⁴ As with a whirlwind, I scattered them among the distant nations, where they lived as strangers. Their land became so desolate that no one even traveled through it. They turned their pleasant land into a desert.”

Note also that again a principle from verse 13 that when we refuse to listen when God is speaking to us, we should not expect that He will listen when we call out to Him in our times of trouble. *****They fasted and mourned during their exile with no thought of God or their sins that had caused it in the first place. The truth is that YaHWeH had warned them over and over through the prophets!**

***9a Isaiah 59:1–2 (NLT)** ¹ Listen! YaHWeH’s arm is not too weak to save you, nor is His ear too deaf to hear you call. ² It’s your sins that have cut you off from God. Because of your sins, He has turned away and will not listen anymore.

Our sin blocks our view of God and make us lose our ability to discern what He’s doing. The lines of communication become murky and obscured. When we ignore the convicting work of the Spirit **(frequently expressed through our spouse, our friends, or even our enemies)**, we offend God. When we choose to ignore or minimize the Spirit’s illumination of our sin that hides God’s face from us.

The whole chapter (8) presents Israel’s eventual restoration and participation in full millennial blessing. Unger

***10 Zechariah 8** ¹ Then another message came to me from YaHWeH of Heaven’s Armies: ² “This is what YaHWeH of Heaven’s Armies says: My love for Mount Zion is passionate and strong; I am consumed with passion for

Jerusalem! ³ “And now YaHWeH says: **I am returning to Mount Zion, and I will live in Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the Faithful City; the mountain of YaHWeH of Heaven’s Armies will be called the Holy Mountain.**”

***11** ***JESUS IS COMING BACK! **Mark 14:60–62 (NLT)** ⁶¹ But Jesus was silent and made no reply. Then the high priest asked him, *“Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?”* ⁶² Jesus said, **“I Am. And you will see the Son of Man seated in the place of power at God’s right hand and coming on the clouds of heaven.”**

***11a** **Acts 1:11 (NLT)** ¹¹ “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why are you standing here staring into heaven? *Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday He will return from heaven in the same way you saw Him go!*”

***11b** **Revelation 1:7 (NLT)** ⁷ **Look! He comes with the clouds of heaven.** And everyone will see Him— even those who pierced Him. And all the nations of the world will mourn for Him. Yes! Amen!

He will restore Jerusalem and the Jewish people!

Zechariah 8 ⁴ “This is what YaHWeH of Heaven’s Armies says: Once again old men and women will walk Jerusalem’s streets with their canes and will sit together in the city squares. ⁵ And the streets of the city will be filled with boys and girls at play. ⁶ “This is what YaHWeH of Heaven’s Armies says: All this may seem impossible to you now, a small remnant of God’s people. But is it impossible for me? says YaHWeH of Heaven’s Armies. ⁷ “This is what YaHWeH of Heaven’s Armies says: You can be sure that **I will rescue My people from the east and from the west. ⁸ I will bring them home again to live safely in Jerusalem. They will be My people, and I will be faithful and just toward them as their God.**”

“‘They will be My people, and I will be their God’ is covenant terminology, pertaining to intimate fellowship in a covenant relationship (Gen 17:7–8; Exod 6:7; 19:5–6; 29:45–46; Lev 11:45; 22:33; 25:38; 26:12, 44–45; Num 15:41; Deut 4:20; 29:12–13; Jer 31:33; 32:38; Ezek 37:27; 2 Cor 6:16; Rev 21:3). Barker

So things in Jerusalem had been bad ... and rightly so; under God’s judgment. But the time for judgment had passed and it was now time for blessing, IF they would obey the Word of YaHWeH and get busy with God’s work!

The promise of a transformed, prosperous, safe Jerusalem seemed a little too fantastic to believe when the city was half-built and the walls wouldn’t be completed for another 60 years. Just because it seemed too big in the eyes of man, it was not too **marvelous** for YaHWeH. As Jesus said, *“With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”* (Matthew 19:26)

1. I AM returning to Mount Zion

2. You can be sure I will rescue My people and bring them back to Jerusalem

3. SO Be strong and finish the task I gave you!

Because of these facts you need to:

***12 Zechariah 8** ⁹ "This is what YaHWeH of Heaven's Armies says: **Be strong and finish the task!** (The foundation had been laid 15 years before) **Ever since the laying of the foundation of the Temple of YaHWeH of Heaven's Armies, you have heard what the prophets have been saying about completing the building.** ¹⁰ Before the work on the Temple began, there were no jobs and no money to hire people or animals. No traveler was safe from the enemy, for there were enemies on all sides. I had turned everyone against each other. ¹¹ "But now I will not treat the remnant of my people as I treated them before, says YaHWeH of Heaven's Armies.

Remember the context of Zechariah and Haggai's prophecies to get the people working on the Temple again.

***13** Probably the resumption of construction in 520 B.C. (Hag. 2:18) is in view rather than the restoration of the foundation in 536 B.C. (Ezra 3:8). Between these dates the people did little work on the temple, especially between 530 and 520 B.C. Tom Constable

Zechariah 8 ¹² For I am planting seeds of peace and prosperity among you. The grapevines will be heavy with fruit. The earth will produce its crops, and the heavens will release the dew. Once more I will cause the remnant in Judah and Israel to inherit these blessings. ¹³ Among the other nations, Judah and Israel became symbols of a cursed nation. But no longer! Now I will rescue you and make you both a symbol and a source of blessing. **So don't be afraid. Be strong, and get on with rebuilding the Temple!** ¹⁴ "For this is what YaHWeH of Heaven's Armies says: I was determined to punish you when your ancestors angered me, and I did not change my mind, says YaHWeH of Heaven's Armies. ¹⁵ But now I am determined to bless Jerusalem and the people of Judah. So don't be afraid.

***14 Zechariah 8** ¹⁶ But this is what you must do: **Tell the truth to each other. Render verdicts in your courts that are just and that lead to peace.** ¹⁷ **Don't scheme against each other. Stop your love of telling lies that you swear are the truth. I hate all these things, says YaHWeH."**

Even though the work is the main subject, the Lord reminds them that the how they treat each other during the work is very important to Him. They must obey His Word even in the intensity of the work. God's will for us to love one another and treat each other with respect is never set aside because there is a job to do or even an emergency!

***14a Luke 10:38-42 (NLT)** ³⁸ As Jesus and the disciples continued on their way to Jerusalem, they came to a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. ³⁹ Her sister, Mary, sat at the Lord's feet, listening to what he taught. ⁴⁰ **But Martha was distracted**

by the big dinner she was preparing. She came to Jesus and said, “Lord, doesn’t it seem unfair to you that my sister just sits here while I do all the work? Tell her to come and help me.”⁴¹ But the Lord said to her, “My dear Martha, you are worried and upset over all these details!⁴² There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her.”

Finally, the answer to the original question:

***15 Zechariah 8**¹⁸ Here is another message that came to me from YaHWeH of Heaven’s Armies.¹⁹ “This is what YaHWeH of Heaven’s Armies says: **The traditional fasts and times of mourning you have kept in early summer, midsummer, autumn, and winter are now ended.** They will become festivals of joy and celebration for the people of Judah. So love truth and peace.

The original question of continuing the fasts which had been observed for almost seventy years is now addressed directly. Four fasts are named. The fast of the fourth month (cf. 7:5) commemorated the day when a breach was made in the walls of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans on the seventeenth day of Tammuz. The fast of the fifth month (cf. 7:3) commemorated the day the Jerusalem temple burned in 586 B.C. on the ninth day of Av (8:18–19a). The fast of the seventh month commemorated the death of Gedaliah. The fast of the tenth month—the tenth day of Tebeth—commemorated the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem.⁹ In the future God would shower such blessings upon his people that they would forget past miseries. Those fasts would become “joy, gladness, and cheerful feasts.” In the light of this glorious future, God’s people should “love the truth and peace” (8:19b). James Smith

G. Campbell Morgan says of these man-appointed fasts: **“None of these things had been in the purpose of God for His people; they had resulted from their sins. The fasts therefore were the result of their sins.** In jealousy and fury, the outcome of love, Jehovah would put away their sins, and so restore them to true prosperity. In that day, let them still remember and observe, only let the observance be a feast in celebration of God’s grace, instead of a fast in memory of their sin.”

Zechariah 8²⁰ “This is what YaHWeH of Heaven’s Armies says: People from nations and cities around the world will travel to Jerusalem.²¹ The people of one city will say to the people of another, ‘Come with us to Jerusalem to ask YaHWeH to bless us. Let’s worship YaHWeH of Heaven’s Armies. I’m determined to go.’²² Many peoples and powerful nations will come to Jerusalem to seek YaHWeH of Heaven’s Armies and to ask for His blessing.²³ “This is what YaHWeH of Heaven’s Armies says: **In those days ten men from different nations and languages of the world will clutch at the sleeve of one Jew. And they will say, ‘Please let us walk with you, for we have heard that God is with you.’ ”**

“By way of summary . . . we can see the purpose of the Spirit through the prophet in answer to the question concerning fasting. **It was a twofold objective: a present and a future one. For the time then present the Spirit pointed out the sham in the fastings, the need for reality and**

sincerity, the vivid warning from the past sins of the forefathers, and the imperative demand for righteousness in all the relationships of life. With reference to the future, Zechariah was directed to point to a day of glorious promise for Israel when YaHWeH would dwell in her midst, when prosperity and peace would characterize her land, when her dispersed ones would be gathered back to their homeland, and . . . **when her fasts would be turned into feasts, the glory of YaHWeH being so manifest in Israel that all the nations would be drawn to Him through His people.**” Daniel Feinberg

***15a** “We are all clinging to the seamless robe of that *one Jew, Jesus of Nazareth, who because of His work on the cross is the only basis on which anyone may approach God and entreat Him for spiritual blessings.*” James Montgomery Boice

***16 Chapters 9-14:** “The last six chapters are very different...**Obscure though it is in places, chapters 9–14 are the most quoted section of the prophets in the passion narratives of the Gospels and, next to Ezekiel, Zechariah has influenced the author of Revelation more than any other Old Testament writer.**” Joyce Baldwin

***16a** The last six chapters of the book are two messages delivered late in Zechariah’s life. **(In the first eight chapters Zechariah addressed the problems of the Jews of the sixth century. Smith)** These messages point to the Messiah and His second coming. Some of these prophecies were fulfilled before the Messiah came, perhaps by Alexander the Great; others were fulfilled during the Messiah’s time on earth; and others will be fulfilled when He returns. Life Application Bible

The burden concerning the nations: the advent and rejection of Messiah CHs. 9–11

***17 Zechariah 9** ¹ This is the message from YaHWeH against the land of Aram and the city of Damascus, for the eyes of humanity, including all the tribes of Israel, are on YaHWeH. ² Doom is certain for Hamath, near Damascus, and for the cities of Tyre and Sidon, though they are so clever. ³ Tyre has built a strong fortress and has made silver and gold as plentiful as dust in the streets! ⁴ **But now YaHWeH will strip away Tyre’s possessions and hurl its fortifications into the sea, and it will be burned to the ground.**

“Originally the Mediterranean coast had been designated Israel’s territory (Numbers 34:5, 6) and yet it had never been possessed by Israel. Now at last YaHWeH will claim it. Baldwin

***17a** Tyre had trusted in physical fortifications for her defense and in stockpiles of silver and gold for her security. The Assyrians laid siege against Tyre for five years, but never conquered the city. **She had built a 150-foot high wall around the city, which stood on an island just offshore following Nebuchadnezzar’s earlier unsuccessful 13-year siege** (cf. Isa. 23:4; Ezek. 29:18), and she had gained great wealth through commerce. Nevertheless YaHWeH would dispossess her and displace her wealth casting it into the Mediterranean Sea. The parts of the city that would not go down into the water would go up in flames. Alexander destroyed Tyre by building a causeway from the mainland to the island city and leveling it (in 7 months). For accounts of Alexander’s destruction of Tyre, see G. W. Botsford and C. A. Robinson Jr., *Hellenic History*, pp. 314–20; A. A. Trever, *History of Ancient Civilization*, 1:456–59. Tom Constable

This passage “accurately foretells the conquest of the eastern Mediterranean coastlands by Greek armies under the command of Alexander the Great.” James M. Boice

Zechariah 9 ⁵ The city of Ashkelon will see Tyre fall and will be filled with fear. Gaza will shake with terror, as will Ekron, for their hopes will be dashed. Gaza’s king will be killed, and Ashkelon will be deserted. ⁶ Foreigners will occupy the city of Ashdod. I will destroy the pride of the Philistines. ⁷ I will grab the bloody meat from their mouths and snatch the detestable sacrifices from their teeth. Then the surviving Philistines will worship our God and become like a clan in Judah. The Philistines of Ekron will join my people, as the ancient Jebusites once did. ⁸ **I will guard my Temple and protect it from invading armies. I am watching closely to ensure that no more foreign oppressors overrun My people’s land.**

This section is a prophetic description of Yahweh’s march from the north, using Alexander the Great as His instrument, destroying Gentile nations but preserving the Jews. Zechariah later predicted the coming Roman Empire (11:4–14) and the kingdom of Messiah (chs. 12–14). Tom Constable

***18** “As history shows, the agent of YaHWeH’s judgment was Alexander the Great. After defeating the Persians (333 B.C.), Alexander moved swiftly toward Egypt. The Philistine cities are south of Tyre and Sidon, and were also conquered by Alexander the Great in 332-331 b.c. On his march he toppled the cities in the Aramean (Syrian) interior, as well as those on the Mediterranean coast. Yet, on coming to Jerusalem, he refused to destroy it.” Barker/Guzik

***19 Josephus’ account of Alexander’s meeting with the High Priest is fascinating (*Antiquities* 11.8.4-5):** Now Alexander, when he had taken Gaza, made haste to go up to Jerusalem; and Jaddua the high-priest, when he heard that, was in agony, and under terror, as not knowing how he should meet the Macedonians, since the king was displeased at his foregoing disobedience. He therefore ordained that the people should make supplications, and should join with him in offering sacrifices to God, whom he besought to protect that nation, and to deliver them from the perils that were coming upon them; whereupon God warned him in a dream, which came upon him after he had offered sacrifice, that he should take courage, adorn the city, and open the gates; that the rest appear in white garments, but that he and the priests should meet the king in habits proper to their order, without the dread of any ill consequences, which the providence of God would prevent. Upon which, when he rose from his sleep, he greatly rejoiced; and declared to all the warning he had received from God. According to the dream he acted entirely, and so waited for the coming of the king.

And when he understood that he was not far from the city, he went out in procession, with the priests and the multitude of the citizens. The procession was venerable, and the manner of it different from that of other nations. It reached to a place called Sapha; which name, translated in Greek, signifies a *prospect*, for you have thence a prospect both of Jerusalem and of the temple; and when the Phoenicians and the

Chaldeans that followed him, thought they should have liberty to plunder the city, and torment the high-priest to death, which the king's displeasure fairly promised them, the very reverse of it happened; for ***20 Alexander, when he saw the multitude at a distance, in white garments, while the priests stood clothed with fine linen, and the high-priest in purple and scarlet clothing, with his mitre on his head having the golden plate on which the name of God was engraved, he approached by himself, and adored that name, and first saluted the high-priest.** The Jews also did all together, with one voice, salute Alexander, and encompass him about: whereupon the kings of Syria and the rest were surprised at what Alexander had done, and supposed him to be disordered in his mind. However, Parmenio [Alexander's second-in-command] alone went up to him, and asked him how it came to pass, that when all others adored him, he should adore the high-priest of the Jews? To whom he replied, "I did not adore him, but that God who has honored him with that high-priesthood; for ***21 I saw this very person in a dream, in this very habit, when I was at Dios, in Macedonia, who, when I was considering with myself how I might obtain the dominion of Asia, exhorted me to make no delay, but boldly to pass over the sea thither, for that he would conduct my army, and would give me dominion over the Persians; whence it is, that having seen no other in that habit, and now seeing this person in it, and remembering my vision and the exhortation which I had in my dream, I believe that I bring this army under divine conduct, and shall therewith conquer Darius, and destroy the power of the Persians, and that all things will succeed according to what is in my own mind."** And when he had said this to Parmenio, and had given the high-priest his right hand, the priests ran along by him, and he came into the city; and when he went up into the temple, **he offered sacrifice to God, according to the high-priest's direction, and magnificently treated both the high-priest and the priests.** And when the book of Daniel was showed him, wherein Daniel declared that one of the Greeks should destroy the empire of the Persians, he supposed that himself was the person intended; and as he was then glad, he dismissed the multitude for the present, but the next day he called them to him, and bade them ask what favors they pleased of him: whereupon the high-priest desired that they might enjoy the laws of their forefathers, and might pay no tribute on the seventh year. He granted all they desired: and when they entreated him that he would permit the Jews in Babylon and Media to enjoy their own laws also, he willingly promised to do hereafter what they desired: and when he said to the multitude, that if any of them would enlist themselves in his army on this condition, that they should continue under the laws of their forefathers, and live according to them, he was willing to take them with him, many were ready to accompany him in his wars.

Alexander in some ways pre-shadowed the entry into Jerusalem of the real King of Kings, Jesus Messiah of Israel:

***22 Zechariah 9** ⁹ Rejoice, O people of Zion! Shout in triumph, O people of Jerusalem! Look, your king is coming to you. **He is righteous and victorious, yet He is humble, riding on a donkey— riding on a donkey's colt.**

Perhaps Zechariah saw in Alexander's visit a small fore-gleam of the coming of Jesus Christ to the holy city, for in the very next verse (9:9) he predicts Christ's arrival in Jerusalem. This was fulfilled on "Palm Sunday" when Jesus rode into the city (Matt. 21:4–5; John 12:12–16). Alexander came for war; Jesus came with peace. How did they treat Him? Zechariah 13:7 tells us He was to be arrested (Matt. 26:31) and smitten. He was sold for the price of a slave (Zech. 11:12; Matt. 27:3–10). The result: He was wounded in the house of His friends (Zech. 13:6) and pierced on the cross (Zech. 12:10). What a tragedy that the "City of Peace" should reject her "Prince of Peace" and crucify Him. Warren Wiersbe ³

***22a John 12:12–15 (NLT)** ¹² The next day, the news that Jesus was on the way to Jerusalem swept through the city. A large crowd of Passover visitors ¹³ took palm branches and went down the road to meet Him. They shouted, "Praise God! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of YahWeH! Hail to the King of Israel!" ¹⁴ Jesus found a young donkey and rode on it, fulfilling the prophecy that said: ¹⁵ **"Don't be afraid, people of Jerusalem. Look, your King is coming, riding on a donkey's colt."**

***23** This Messiah-King is **lowly**, but this isn't indicated by the animal he rides. He doesn't ride the triumphant stallion of a conquering general, but the customary mount for royalty, coming in peace. This was quite a contrast to the conqueror Alexander the Great. **This seems to be a Hebrew expression of speech emphasizing that the animal is purebred – a truly magnificent, royal mount. David Guzik**

***23a** **"Even though the Evangelists saw fulfillment of verse 9, they did not go on to quote verse 10, which may indicated that they were conscious of having only a partial fulfillment."**
Joyce Baldwin

Zechariah 9:9 belongs to the first coming of Jesus, but Zechariah 9:10 belongs to the Second Coming of Jesus, when He comes in power and glory to reign over this earth for 1,000 years. In that day there will be an enforced righteousness, and He will no longer allow war (Isaiah 2:4).
David Guzik

***24 Zechariah 9** ¹⁰ I will remove the battle chariots from Israel and the war-horses from Jerusalem. I will destroy all the weapons used in battle, and **your king will bring peace to the nations.** His realm will stretch from sea to sea and from the Euphrates River (The most remote eastern boundary of the Promised Land.) to the ends of the earth. ¹¹ Because of the covenant I made with you, sealed with blood, I will free your prisoners from death in a waterless dungeon. ¹² Come back to the place of safety, all you prisoners who still have hope! I promise this very day that I will repay two blessings for each of your troubles.

³ Warren W. Wiersbe, [*Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1993), Zec 9:9.

***24a Psalm 110:1 (NLT)** ¹ YaHWeH said to my Lord, “Sit in the place of honor at My right hand until I humble your enemies, making them a footstool under Your feet.”

This speaks of the time many refer to as the *millennium*, the thousand-year reign of Jesus on this earth (Psalm 72, Isaiah 2:2-4, Isaiah 11:4-9, Jeremiah 23:5-6, Luke 1:32-33 and 19:12-27, Matthew 5:18).

God would extricate the daughter of Zion from the pit of sin for the sake of “your covenant blood.” ***24b** The Sinai covenant was sealed with blood (Exod 24:5ff.); so also was the new covenant (Matt 26:28). The messianic context suggests that it is the latter which is in view. On the basis of the shed blood of Jesus, God would redeem His people from the bondage of sin. James Smith

***25 Zechariah 9** ¹³ Judah is my bow, and Israel is my arrow. Jerusalem is my sword, and like a warrior, **I will brandish it against the Greeks.** ¹⁴ YaHWeH will appear above His people; His arrows will fly like lightning! The Sovereign YaHWeH will sound the ram’s horn and attack like a whirlwind from the southern desert. ¹⁵ YaHWeH of Heaven’s Armies will protect His people, and they will defeat their enemies by hurling great stones. They will shout in battle as though drunk with wine. They will be filled with blood like a bowl, drenched with blood like the corners of the altar. **On that day YaHWeH their God will rescue His people, just as a shepherd rescues His sheep.** They will sparkle in His land like jewels in a crown. ¹⁷ How wonderful and beautiful they will be! The young men will thrive on abundant grain, and the young women will flourish on new wine.

***25a** Yahweh would “stir up” the sons of Zion against the sons of Javan or Greece. In the second century before Christ the Seleucid kings sent huge armies again and again to put down the rebellions of the Jews in Palestine. The sons of Mattathias, known as the Maccabees, using guerrilla tactics inflicted enormous losses on these Greek armies (9:13). Yahweh of hosts would be a shield over **His** people in that day. **The historical records are full of examples of God’s special interposition on behalf of the Maccabees in their struggles against the Greeks.** James Smith

***26 Zechariah 10** ¹ **Ask YaHWeH for rain in the spring**, for He makes the storm clouds. And He will send showers of rain so every field becomes a lush pasture. ² **Household gods give worthless advice**, fortune-tellers predict only lies, and interpreters of dreams pronounce falsehoods that give no comfort. **So My people are wandering like lost sheep; they are attacked because they have no shepherd.**

“A modern parallel is the renewed interest in magic, spiritism and other survivals of primitive times. The more widespread modern equivalent is to ignore God altogether and tacitly to assume that no problem is beyond man’s unaided power to solve.” Tom Constable

Ancient Israel had no irrigation system, and relied on rain to water their crops. In a time of drought, nothing grew – so Israel relied on both the *former rain* (falling in autumn) and the **latter rain** (falling in spring).

Messiah Is Coming! Zechariah 10:3–11:17

Zechariah 10 ³ **“My anger burns against your (lit. “the”) shepherds, and I will punish these leaders (Lit. he-goats).** For YaHWeH of Heaven’s Armies has arrived to look after Judah, His flock. He will make them strong and glorious, like a proud warhorse in battle.

He would “visit” His wrath upon the “he-goats” (Isa 14:9; Ezek 34:17). **The reference is probably to the Greek rulers who dominated Israel during the intertestamental period.**
James Smith

***26a** Though God is displeased with Israel’s shepherds, He will raise up the perfect shepherd from and for Judah. **John 10:14–16 (NLT)** ¹⁴ “I am the good shepherd; I know My own sheep, and they know Me, ¹⁵ just as My Father knows Me and I know the Father. So I sacrifice My life for the sheep. ¹⁶ I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them also. They will listen to My voice, and there will be one flock with one shepherd.

***27 Zechariah 10** ⁴ **From Judah will come the cornerstone**, the tent peg, the bow for battle, and all the rulers. ⁵ They will be like mighty warriors in battle, trampling their enemies in the mud under their feet. Since YaHWeH is with them as they fight, they will overthrow even the enemy’s horsemen.

“This verse constitutes one of the most far-reaching and meaningful Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament in which the seer summarizes a number of declarations by the former prophet [i.e., Isaiah], setting forth the character and ministry of Israel’s Redeemer-King.” Unger

Jesus is the cornerstone: the foundation, measure, and standard (Isaiah 28:16, Psalm 118:22-23, Matthew 21:42, Acts 4:11, 1 Peter 2:4-5).

***27a** **Isaiah 28:16 (NLT)** ¹⁶ Therefore, this is what the Sovereign YAHWEH says: “Look! I am placing a foundation stone in Jerusalem, a firm and tested stone. It is a precious cornerstone that is safe to build on. Whoever believes need never be shaken.

***27b** **Psalm 118:22 (NLT)** ²² The stone that the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone.

Zechariah 10 ⁶ “I will strengthen Judah and save Israel; I will restore them because of my compassion. It will be as though I had never rejected them, for I am YaHWeH their God, who will hear their cries. ⁷ The people of Israel will become like mighty warriors, and their hearts will be made happy as if by wine. Their children, too, will see it and be glad; their hearts will rejoice in YaHWeH. ***28** ⁸ **When I whistle to them, they will come running, for I have redeemed them.** From the few who are left, they will grow as numerous as they were before. ⁹ Though I have scattered them like seeds among the nations, they will still remember Me in distant lands. They and their children will survive and return again to Israel. ¹⁰ I will bring them back from Egypt and gather them from Assyria. I will resettle them in Gilead and Lebanon until there is no more room for them all.

In the 20th Century, many Jewish people were gathered back to the land of Israel, and in 1948 Israel became a nation again – after more than 2,000 years of not being a nation. Does the 20th Century gathering of Israel fulfill this prophecy? It fulfills it in part, but only in part – because Israel will be gathered again in belief, not in rejection of YaHWeH and His Savior. The gathering began in unbelief, but will end up in belief and trust in Jesus. David Guzik

***28a** “. . . even after Israel had been restored to the land after the Babylonian exile, the prospect of a regathered, reunited nation still appeared in Zechariah 10:9–12. The importance of this passage and its late postexilic date should not be lost by those who interpret the promise of the land spiritually or as a temporal blessing which has since been forfeited by a rebellious nation due to her failure to keep her part of the conditional covenant. **On the contrary, this hope burned brighter as Israel became more and more hopelessly scattered.**” Walter C. Kaiser Jr., *Toward and Old Testament Theology*, p. 255.

Zechariah 10 ¹¹ They will pass safely through the sea of distress, for the waves of the sea will be held back, and the waters of the Nile will dry up. The pride of Assyria will be crushed, and the rule of Egypt will end. ¹² By my power I will make My people strong, and by My authority they will go wherever they wish. I, YaHWeH, have spoken!”

***29 Zechariah 11** ¹ Open your doors, Lebanon, so that fire may devour your cedar forests. ² Weep, you cypress trees, for all the ruined cedars; the most majestic ones have fallen. Weep, you oaks of Bashan, for the thick forests have been cut down.

***29a** In view of what follows in verses 4–14, verses 1–3 seem to be a description of the devastation of Palestine due to the rejection of the Messiah. This prediction had an initial fulfillment in the Roman destruction of Jerusalem and the scattering of the Jews in A.D. 70. Its complete fulfillment, however, lies in the future, specifically the destruction that will overtake the land and its people in the Tribulation. Tom Constable

“These verses might have described the Babylonian invasion if they had been written earlier; but that was past history by Zechariah’s time. There is nothing in the history of the people that a comprehensive destruction of the land can refer to prior to the terrible destruction ordered by Vespasian and his successor Titus.” James Montgomery Boice

***30 Zechariah 11** ³ Listen to the wailing of the shepherds, for their rich pastures are destroyed. Hear the young lions roaring, for their thickets in the Jordan Valley are ruined. ⁴ This is what YaHWeH my God says: “Go and care for the flock that is intended for slaughter. ⁵ The buyers slaughter their sheep without remorse. The sellers say, ‘Praise YaHWeH! Now I’m rich!’ Even the shepherds have no compassion for them. ⁶ Likewise, I will no longer have pity on the people of the land,” says YaHWeH. “I will let them fall into each other’s hands and into the hands of their king. They will turn the land into a wilderness, and I will not rescue them.”

***30a** In this message, God told Zechariah to act out the roles of two different kinds of shepherds. The first type of shepherd demonstrated how God would reject his people (the sheep) because they

rejected him (4-14). The second type of shepherd demonstrated how God would allow **His** people to fall into the clutches of evil shepherds (15-17). (See Ezekiel 34 for a detailed portrayal of the evil shepherds of Israel.) The flock of sheep being fattened for butchering represented the people feeding on their own greed and evil desires until they were ripe for God's judgment. Life Application Bible

***31 Zechariah 11** ⁷ So I cared for the flock intended for slaughter—the flock that was oppressed. Then I took two shepherd's staves and named one Favor and the other Union.

"Favor symbolizes the favored status of Israel as the chosen people of God. Union symbolizes the internal harmony of the people that was lost at the time of the siege of Jerusalem." (Boice)

Zechariah 11 ⁸ I got rid of their three evil shepherds in a single month. But I became impatient with these sheep, and they hated me, too. ⁹ So I told them, "I won't be your shepherd any longer. If you die, you die. If you are killed, you are killed. And let those who remain devour each other!" ¹⁰ **Then I took my staff called Favor and cut it in two, showing that I had revoked the covenant I had made with all the nations.** ¹¹ **That was the end of my covenant with them.** The suffering flock was watching me, and they knew that YaHWeH was speaking through my actions.

***31a** Zechariah here pictures the Messiah as He uses the two staves of the shepherd (Ps. 23:4), one called *Grace* (Beauty) and the other *Union* (Bands). **When Israel sold her Messiah (v. 12), then God's day of grace was about to come to an end for the nation.** No longer was she united in YaHWeH; the nation would have to be broken. In A.D. 70 Rome invaded Israel, and Jerusalem was destroyed. See Matt. 23:37–39 Warren Wiersbe

Notice that even after God gets rid of the three evil shepherds, the people kept right on sinning without them.

"The best explanation is probably the oldest, which sees the three shepherds not as three individuals but as three classes of individuals, namely: the prophets, priests, and kings of Israel." (Boice) The offices of prophet, priest, and king were taken away from Israel after the Roman conquest of Judea and have never been restored – because they are now fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Next the Good Shepherd abandons the flock (national Israel) to its fate. "The one that dies, let it die." The reference may be to those who died in the plagues which swept through Jerusalem during the Roman siege in A.D. 69–70. "The one that is cut off, let it be cut off." Many would die in violent conflict with the Romans. "And let the rest eat each one the flesh of another." Because of famine many in the besieged city of Jerusalem in A.D. 69–70 turned to cannibalism according to the accounts of Josephus. James Smith

***32 Zechariah 11** ¹² And I said to them, **"If you like, give me my wages, whatever I am worth; but only if you want to."** **So they counted out for my wages thirty pieces of silver.** ¹³ And YaHWeH said to me, "Throw it

to the potter”—this magnificent sum at which they valued me! So I took the thirty coins and threw them to the potter in the Temple of YaHWeH.

Zechariah is “play-acting” this prophecy, employing himself as a shepherd over a flock. Now he asks his employer for his wages, Zechariah speaks sarcastically here. **Thirty pieces of silver** was not an insignificant amount, but **it was the price of a slave (Exodus 21:32)**. It was the lowest they could pay, and it said to Zechariah “we think of you as a slave.” To offer him this wage was the equivalent of telling the Shepherd that they could buy a common slave who would be as useful to them as He had been. This speaks prophetically of Jesus, who was contemptuously betrayed for **thirty pieces of silver** (Matthew 26:15 and 27:3) – the price of a slave. David Guzik

***32a Matthew 27:3–10 (NLT)** ³ When Judas, who had betrayed him, realized that Jesus had been condemned to die, he was filled with remorse. So he took the thirty pieces of silver back to the leading priests and the elders. ⁴ “I have sinned,” he declared, “for I have betrayed an innocent man.” “What do we care?” they retorted. “That’s your problem.” ⁵ Then Judas threw the silver coins down in the Temple and went out and hanged himself. ⁶ The leading priests picked up the coins. “It wouldn’t be right to put this money in the Temple treasury,” they said, “since it was payment for murder.” ⁷ After some discussion they finally decided to buy the potter’s field, and they made it into a cemetery for foreigners. ⁸ That is why the field is still called the Field of Blood. ⁹ **This fulfilled the prophecy of Jeremiah (Not Zechariah?) that says, “They took the thirty pieces of silver— the price at which he was valued by the people of Israel, ¹⁰ and purchased the potter’s field, as the YaHWeH directed.”**

***33** This is a problem because clearly Zechariah records the passage mentioned in Matthew 27:9-10. There are generally three solutions offered for this problem:

- Some think it is an error but not by Matthew – an early copyist made a mistake. Perhaps Matthew wrote *Zechariah*, but an early copyist put *Jeremiah* instead.
- Some think that Jeremiah spoke this prophecy and Zechariah recorded it. This may be the word spoken by Jeremiah, but *recorded* by Zechariah.
- Some think that Matthew refers to the *scroll* of Jeremiah, which included the book of Zechariah. David Guzik

***33a** “The fulfillment of this prophecy in Matthew 27:3–10 is proof enough that the money was flung down in the temple and immediately taken up by the priests to purchase a field *of a potter* for a burying ground for the poor.” Unger

Zechariah 11 ¹⁴ Then I took my other staff, Union, and cut it in two, showing that the bond of unity between Judah and Israel was broken. ¹⁵ Then YaHWeH said to me, ***34** “Go again and play the part of a worthless shepherd. ¹⁶ **This illustrates how I will give this nation a shepherd who will not care for those who are dying, nor look after the young, nor heal the injured, nor feed the healthy.**

The flock of Israel rejected their true Shepherd and smote Him (13:7), but they accepted the false shepherd, the “idol shepherd”—Antichrist. Jesus predicted this in John 5:43. Daniel 9:27 tells us that after the church has been raptured, the leader of Federated Europe (the ten kingdoms of Dan.

7:7–8) will make a covenant with the Jews to protect them for seven years. Jerusalem will have three and a half years of peace, a false peace that will be the prelude to three and a half years of awful tribulation. During those first three and a half years, the two witnesses of Rev. 11:1ff will be giving God’s message; and Rev. 11:4 relates them to the two olive trees of Zech. 4. In Zechariah’s day, the two olive trees represented Joshua the high priest and Zerubbabel the governor, through whom the Spirit was working. But the final application is to the two witnesses in the last days.
Warren Wiersbe

***34a** This foolish shepherd is allowed and appointed by God as judgment because His people forsook the true Shepherd. This was fulfilled in Israel’s rejection of Jesus. They rejected the Good Shepherd (John 10:1-18) but received another shepherd (John 5:43).

John 5:43 (NASB95) ⁴³ “I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you will receive him.

***35 Zechariah 11 Instead, this shepherd will eat the meat of the fattest sheep and tear off their hooves.** ¹⁷ “What sorrow awaits this worthless shepherd who abandons the flock! **The sword will cut his arm and pierce his right eye. His arm will become useless, and his right eye completely blind.”**

However the ultimate fulfillment must be the Antichrist who will make a covenant with Israel but then break it and proceed to persecute the Jews (Ezek. 34:2–4; Dan. 9:27; 11:36–39; John 5:43; 2 Thess. 2:3–10; Rev. 13:1–8). Perhaps the whole collective leadership of Israel from Zechariah’s time forward culminating in Antichrist is in view. Merrill

This confirms that the **worthless shepherd** is ultimately fulfilled in the Antichrist.

***35a Revelation 13:1–10 (NIV84)** ¹ And the dragon stood on the shore of the sea. And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name. ² The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority. ³ **One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was astonished and followed the beast.**

⁴ Men worshiped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshiped the beast and asked, “Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?” ⁵ The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months. ⁶ He opened his mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling place and those who live in heaven. ⁷ He was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them. And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation. ⁸ **All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.** ⁹ He who has an ear, let him hear. ¹⁰ **If anyone is to go into captivity, into captivity he will go. If anyone is to be killed with the sword, with the sword he will be killed. This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of the saints.**

***36 2 Thessalonians 2:9–12 (NIV84)** ⁹ The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, ¹⁰ and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing.

***36a** “With this climactic scene the first prophetic burden describing the first advent and rejection of Messiah, the Shepherd-King (chapters 9–11) comes to a close. The way is thus opened for the second burden and the second advent and acceptance of Messiah, the King (chapters 12–14).” Unger

Because the people rejected the true Shepherd (the Messiah of Israel), God would reject them.

Many times people ask about “the unpardonable sin” spoken of in 1 John 5:16. They fearfully wonder if they have ever committed it. Is it murder? Is it adultery? Is it some other heinous crime? **No, the only “unpardonable sin” is the rejection of God’s gift of the true and good Shepherd.** If you for long enough shut your eyes and ears to God’s way; if you for long enough turn your back on the messages God is sending you; if you for long enough prefer your own ideas to the truth which God is seeking to put into your mind, in the end you come to the place where you cannot recognize God’s truth and beauty and goodness when you see it! You become so blind and deaf that repentance is impossible because you have lost all sense of sin. **Please! Don’t let yourself come to that place! Turn to your good Shepherd today and find forgiveness and cleansing.**

“There is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved!” (Acts 4:12)