

AN  
EXPOSITION  
OF  
ZECHARIAH  
THE  
MAN OF VISIONS  
BY  
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“The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever”—Deut. 29:29.

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## Preface

This interesting and instructive exposition of Zechariah was given by the Author in 1925 in The Tabernacle in Kansas City, Mo. in a series of addresses. She gave the same addresses on the Book in August (1930) at the Camp Meeting in Topeka, Kans. They were so captivating and convincing as relating to the restoration of Israel, that several persons gave offerings toward putting the messages in print. We commend this treatise to the studious consideration of our friends. May it arouse us to a deep concern for the Jews, that we may cooperate with God in prayer. We are admonished to pray for the peace of Jerusalem—The Publishers (GRACE AND GLORY).

### **Note from Publisher (Grace Assembly):**

Grace Assembly is privileged to publish and post this commentary on our Web Site, [www.graceassemblysandiego.com](http://www.graceassemblysandiego.com). We believe these commentaries rank among the best for Bible students who desire to learn about the Word of God and the Pauline Revelation. These commentaries were written during the early days of the latter rain outpour of God's Spirit and they continue to provide enlightenment to the reader. These are the original writings of the authors. Grace Assembly has not made any changes or additions to these writings other than format changes for the convenience of the Bible student. In the left hand column we have added the King James Bible version as it applies to the commentary on that page. Where the authors have referred to scripture references without quoting the scripture in the text, we have added the scripture as a footnote. In some places the authors have referred to Bible versions other than the King James. Since Grace Assembly holds to the King James Version as the preserved text, we, therefore, have added in the text the same scripture from the King James Version. We trust these ancillary changes will be helpful to the Bible student.

## Introduction

Zechariah was born in Babylon during the captivity. He was a child of exile, tho' he returned to the land of his fathers when very young. His writings breathe the tender spirit of Jeremiah, which is not surprising, when we remember that the latter was the last prophet previous to the dispersion in Babylon, while Zechariah was the first prophet after the restoration. And tho' Jeremiah had long since passed off the scene, yet his presence and influence were factors in Palestine. The people now knew that he had been a prophet of the Lord; for his words relative to Jerusalem and the captivity had been fulfilled in the most literal way.

Zechariah, the first post-exile prophet, had a wonderful place on the program. His name and lineage are most significant, revealing in their meanings the subject and essence of his prophecies. They tell the story in few words. Zechariah—"Jehovah remembers," is the son of Berechiah—"Jehovah blesses," while the latter is the offspring of Iddo—"the appointed time." We may read it on this wise—in due time, or the set time, Jehovah blesses, because Jehovah remembers His oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

In like manner as Ezekiel and Jeremiah, Zechariah was a priest as well as a prophet. The priestly office was by inheritance because of birth; but the prophetic office was a sovereign call by Jehovah. Zechariah's call must have come to him when he was quite a young man, for so he was addressed—<sup>1</sup>Zech. 2:4. His grandfather Iddo was head of one of the twelve priestly families who returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel, the God-appointed leader of that remnant, and with Joshua the high priest—<sup>2</sup>Neh. 12:4, 16. It is inferred that his father died young; for it appears that he is continually identified with his grandfather Iddo, his father's name being passed over—<sup>3</sup>Ezra 5:1 and 6:14.

Zechariah began his unique and forcible prophecy about 518 B. C. or 18 years after the first company returned from the Babylonish captivity—B. C. 536. This is marked definitely as being "the second year of Darius" (Chap. 1:1), which notation is not accidental, but wonderfully significant. The remnant who had returned to Palestine had become somewhat discouraged and indifferent to the work of building the temple, which latter was stayed for 14 years. Their love had waned and their ardor had cooled. Therefore the reason for the prophet's voice. There was need for the stirring messages of Zechariah and Haggai, contemporary prophets.

These two messenger's prophecies are necessary the one to the other. We might say they complement each other at that time. Zechariah's messages encourage the peoples' faith. They have in them the necessary elements to bring about the spiritual change where Haggai's stirring appeals would have some weight and bring forth results.

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<sup>1</sup> Zechariah 2:4 "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:"

<sup>2</sup> Nehemiah 12:4, 16 "Iddo, Ginnetho, Abijah...Of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam;"

<sup>3</sup> Ezra 5:1 "Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that *were* in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, *even* unto them."

Ezra 6:14 "And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished *it*, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia."

But Zechariah's messages are of greater scope than that of bringing blessing to the people of his day. He had a special ministry there, which he accomplished according to the will of God; but there is far more than that in the ministry of Zechariah. He is a prophet of the last days, speaking in symbol and message of future events. His predictions have not been fulfilled yet; but are due shortly. They refer altogether to the great and marvelous "week" of years, Daniel 9:27, which seven years of stupendous and unparalleled happenings are the theme of all the prophets of the Old Testament; and even the prophets of the New Testament are not silent regarding it. John's book, Revelation, being a symposium of that period.

Zechariah may be fitly termed a prophet of the Restoration of the Jew, even as Ezekiel. We are living close to the fulfillment of both of these great prophetic books. May the Lord not only give us the true interpretation of Zechariah's prophecies, but make our words so vivid, powerful and incontrovertible that the saints will get the vision of the coming glory of the Lord indelibly impressed upon their hearts and live in the power of that great day.

## Zechariah KJV

### Chapter 1

**1:1** 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,

**1:2** The LORD hath been sore displeased with your fathers.

## Zechariah Commentary

### Zechariah's Opening Address

#### Chapter One

“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, Jehovah hath been sore displeased with your fathers. Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Return unto Me saith Jehovah of hosts and I will return unto you, saith Jehovah of hosts”—Chap. 1:1-3, R. V.

The Prophet introduces us to himself. He informs us of his name and his lineage, which is not accidental, we assure you. These names, in their meanings, tell us, as we intimated, of the very essence of his writings. Zechariah also declares the exact date upon which he began to prophesy. It is recorded, hence, emphatically forecasts the very day when these prophecies will begin to be fulfilled in the endtime. These dates have prophetic value, in their reverse order, even as those of Ezekiel, which we have noted in our exposition of his prophecies.

Darius, was the first king to reign over Jerusalem after the Babylonish captivity of the Jew was ended. He was co-regent with Cyrus on the Medo-Persian throne. We may look at him as a representative character, as much of that time, as well as the people are figurative of last day folk and findings. He portrays Christ as King of the Jews. The seven years of undoubted marvels, the greatest week of years the world has ever witnessed (<sup>1</sup>Dan. 9:27) is the fulfillment of Zechariah's visions and prophecies. Christ will be taking to Himself the reins of government. He must get all the lines in place before He will be able to say, “Get up” to His steeds of conquest. The “eighth month (Bul of the Jewish year) of the second year of Darius” answers in the fulfillment to November, 1934, the second of the seven years of that week of emphasized prophecy. We will have the proof of this statement as we proceed with the exposition.

#### Divine Chastisement Spent

“The Lord hath been sore displeased with your fathers”—V. 2. The prophet begins his message to the Jews abruptly. His words were startling. They were intended to arouse their interest and awaken them to a sense of the guilt of their fathers. The fact of the Lord's displeasure was apparent. It was the cause of the captivity. The proof was manifest also in the desolate land to which they

<sup>1</sup> Daniel 9:27 “And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”

had returned. But tho' the Lord had been angry, His wrath was now turned away. He was ready to bless and restore to them all His favor if they would return to Him with their whole heart. The prophet encourages them in the Name of the Lord of hosts.

“Return unto Me, saith the Lord of hosts and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts”—V. 3.

The threefold repetition of the great Name of the Lord of hosts is not without significance. It has its hint of the Three Persons of the Godhead, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of their fathers, whose gifts and calling are without repentance. Each time the Name is in another connection. The Lord speaks: they are to return unto the Lord; the Lord will return unto them. This revelation of God was often given to His people. It refers undoubtedly to the revelation of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to the nation Israel. They had rejected Him in their attitude to the pre-exile prophets' words, especially Jeremiah, and had been punished for it, as the returned remnant would understand. The captivity in Babylon was now over and Jehovah was inviting His people back to their land and His favor.

But to us these words mean much more; and to the awakened remnant of the Jews, who will later be on the scene, they will have even a greater significance. They will remind them of the attitude of their fathers to the revelation of Jehovah in the Person of Christ, for which they were cast away from their land and His favor. The remnant must repent of their attitude and unbelief and return unto Him. The fathers who rejected the Lord have passed on and even the prophets have gone the way of all flesh, but Jehovah still lives and His words too abide and are witness against the people.

Zechariah's first message encouraged the remnant to draw near to Jehovah. They again began to build the temple and the work was speeded up thru his prophecies and those of Haggai. The temple was finished in short order—<sup>1</sup>Ezra 6:15. Likewise will it be so in the latter day. The remnant will read the prophetic books and their faith and courage will be stimulated and strengthened. They will perceive God's wondrous ways with them. His grace will be manifest and move them as the law was never able to do. They will be overcome with His grace when they understand that He has returned to them with mercies. They will arise and build the temple of the Lord with joy. Their whole life will be dedicated to the service of the Lord. It will not be a half-hearted surrender to Jehovah's rule; but on the contrary. Their consecration will be entire and complete. Jehovah will relent and they will repent. Amen! May it come soon.

<sup>1</sup> Ezra 6:15 “And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king.”

**1:3** 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.

**1:4** 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.

**1:5** Your fathers, where *are* they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?

**1:6** 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.

## Two Chief Divisions

1. Visions of the Night—Chaps. 1 to 6.
2. Predictions of the Day—Chaps. 7 to 14.

### The First Division

Chapters 1 to 6

The Eight Night Visions

Chapter One (CON'T)

“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”—Chap. 1:7, 8.

Here is the beginning of the book proper. Eight startling visions pass in rapid succession before the prophet’s eyes. This happened in one night, three months after his introductory address, which call to repentance was undoubtedly effectual as the visions indicate. The exact date—year, month and day—that these wonderful symbolized prophecies were cast upon the screen, are mentioned. It was emphasized as a day of unusual significance. Furthermore it is marked several other times in the short prophecy of Haggai, a contemporary prophet. He informs us that it was exactly six months afterwards to the very day that the remnant began the work again of building the temple. They were stirred up by God, thru the preaching of the prophet—<sup>1</sup>Hag. 1:14, 15. The same date is also mentioned in three other instances by Haggai as a day of weighty import especially as referring to the latter time. In each case it indicates a separate communication from the Lord—<sup>2</sup>Hag. 2:10, 18, and 20. The second of these messages ends with the following promise, “From this day will I bless you”—

**1:7** 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,

<sup>1</sup> Haggai 1:14, 15 “And the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of the LORD of hosts, their God, In the four and twentieth day of the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king.”

<sup>2</sup> Haggai 2:10, 18, 20 “In the four and twentieth *day* of the ninth *month*, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying... Consider now from this day and upward, from the four and twentieth day of the ninth *month*, *even* from the day that the foundation of the LORD'S temple was laid, consider *it*... And again the word of the LORD came unto Haggai in the four and twentieth *day* of the month, saying,”

(V. 19), while the third announcement is that the Lord will shake the heavens and the earth and overthrow all the kingdoms of the nations in view of the setting up and establishing of the Davidic throne—Vs. 21-23. The latter house was represented at that time by Zerubbabel. This day and year, so emphatically pointed out in these two prophetic books, is a significant date which will have its fulfillment in the second of those eventful seven years of Daniel 9:27. We declare again our positive conviction that Zechariah's visions and prophecies concern that remarkable week of years that is again and again pointed out in Scripture. The prophet Zechariah received a revelation of that period even as truly as did John in the Patmos visions. They are both related to the same time and people and place.

### The Angel of the Lord

#### The First Vision

In the night season Zechariah beheld this imaged prophecy which embraces infinite revelations. I was not a dream. The prophet was not asleep; but in an ecstatic state resembling a trance, wherein all his faculties were in a special sense attuned to the mind and will of God. He was lost to all consciousness of things around him, but acutely conscious of God. The Holy Spirit had complete control of him, spirit, soul and body, when these pictures of divine purposes were passing before him, as moving pictures upon the reel. The first vision was that of a man sitting upon a red horse which stood among the myrtle trees "in the bottom." The latter phrase has been translated in "the deep or depths." Behind the man were other riders upon red, speckled and white horses, a great company, an army as it were, over which the first man was in command.

We believe we are gazing upon the very same company of people, the living creatures, which we behold in the prophecy of Ezekiel (chap. 1); but in another guise and at a later period. They are seen as the army of heaven in Zechariah's vision. They acknowledge the man, who is the central figure in the vision, by giving their report unto him, which is undoubtedly in order, as we learn from verse 12, that he is none other than "the Angel of the Lord." In other words, It is the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, with His heavenly people, His church, who is portrayed here. The time figured, is as was stated, the very time of which Ezekiel and John are telling us the secrets, the seven years of mighty import as regards the Jews and other nations of the world. Christ will be upon His throne and the greater part of His heavenly people will be with Him at the juncture of the picture. He will be taking to Himself His inheritance, tho' biding His time.

"The myrtle (Hadassim) trees in the bottom" (V. 8), or depths, mean nothing else than the saints on the earth, probably the remnant of the Jews who will be in the tribulation. This was the Jewish name of Esther, as we read of

**1:8** 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.



Mordecai bringing up Hadassah—<sup>1</sup>Esther 2:7. These believers will be in the depths indeed; but we see by the vision the proof of the Scripture that the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear the Lord and delivereth them. In the very midst of His oppressed and afflicted people (tho' their eyes may be holden so that they cannot see Him) yet He will be with them. In all their affliction He is afflicted; and especially will it be so in this case. It will be the time when their punishment should have ceased. Their seven times of prophesied judgment will be over; but the nations will be the cause of the last terrible tribulation upon the Jews. The Lord allows it because of their second time rejection of Him.

The color of the horse upon which the Angel of the Lord rides is not without significance. It is red, the color of blood, judgment and vengeance. It is a rider on a horse of this color to whom a great sword is handed, in order to take peace from the earth so that men should slay one another—<sup>2</sup>Rev. 6:4. The spirit of war is in the hearts of wicked nations; hence, in the language of the streets, the Lord will let them “go to it,” shortly. Men would wipe each other off the earth if He did not hinder them. God will be obliged to protect men in that terrible day of slaughter. Otherwise they would all be destroyed. Man will show up the uttermost of his ruin in that day. His helplessness will be manifested to the limit then. God must save man from himself.

But to return to the vision. The color of the speckled horses might be said to be sorrel. The word that is translated speckled, does not occur as an adjective anywhere else. It probably signifies a mixed color and therefore would indicate that the service of the riders were of various character, such as judgment and mercy, etc. The white would symbolize righteousness. They are mounted and ready to obey the command of their captain, we would judge from this position.

“Then said I, O my lord, what are these. And the angel that talked with me, said unto me, I will show thee what these be”—V. 9.

We are introduced in this verse to another party, apparently, tho' as no other one had been previously mentioned it would appear it was the Angel of the Lord to whom the prophet was speaking. He promises to show or explain the meaning of the riders among the myrtle trees. And in the next verse the explanation is given by the Captain of the horsemen, the Angel of Jehovah,

**1:9** 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*.

<sup>1</sup> Esther 2:7 “And he brought up Hadassah, that *is*, Esther, his uncle's daughter: for she had neither father nor mother, and the maid *was* fair and beautiful; whom Mordecai, when her father and mother were dead, took for his own daughter.”

<sup>2</sup> Revelation 6:4 “And there went out another horse *that was* red: and *power* was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.”

**1:10** 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.

**1:11** 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.

**1:12** 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?

hence, we infer they are the same person. He says, “These are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro thru the earth” (V. 10), therefore we have divinely given answer as to the identity of the riders on the horses. The heavenly hosts will be in the earth at the time figured here to ascertain conditions. They give their verdict of the state of the earth, saying, “We have walked to and fro thru the earth and behold all the earth sitteth still and is at rest” (V.11).

The above is a striking statement. It is butter upon the bread of our interpretation of the prophecy. We are thus given to know in this first vision just at what time the “peace and safety” slogan will be in effect in the earth—<sup>1</sup>1 Thess. 5:3. It will be the time of peace of which the world is so sadly in need, but which will be gained only in the time of greatest danger. Paul declares, It is the lull before the storm, the calm before the cyclone.

The Gentile world is at rest in the vision; but all is not right with the Jews, is what we further learn by the imaged prophecy. A remnant will have returned, even as was the case in Zechariah’s days, but they will still be under the iron yoke of the Gentile powers. And they will be aware of it too; as their degradation and shame, “in the depths” witness. The nations of Europe will be in a confederacy and will lord it over the Jews. It will be the time of which Daniel informs us, when they are in covenant relationship with the revived Roman empire—Dan. 9:27. Those are no doubt the days of the beginning of their sorrows which will culminate with the battle of Armageddon.

“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 three-score and ten years?”—V. 12.

The fact of the presence of the Lord with His earthly people, “standing among them,” is another conclusive proof that this is a vision of the seven-year time of the usurpation of the Gentiles. The Lord will not be with His earthly people, the Jews, until the times of the Gentiles are past. He cannot consistently be arraigned against the united-world powers unless their tenure of office has run out. Christ cannot justly be crowned King of the Jews if there is a ruler of God’s choice, a Gentile king, over them on earth. But there will never be any such man. From the year 1914 on, the times of the Gentiles have been closing. God has other purposes for this world. A new dispensation is dawning and there is no going back to the old things. The day is breaking, a new day with a new regime altogether. Man must get in line with these ordained plans of God. He has an entirely different order for the new age. A new King is already prepared for the new seat of government. A heavenly Kingdom and a heavenly King are due to appear. The Angel of the Lord, whom Zechariah beheld in the vision, is the King of God’s choice. At the time figured in the prophecy He is the anointed

<sup>1</sup> 1 Thessalonians 5:3 “For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.”

Ruler, but is not yet manifested on earth in that executive office. His standing among the myrtle trees on the red horse is typical of the place of Judge over all the scene, and as such He is in sympathy with the believing Jewish remnant. They are in sorrow and rejection because of their former attitude toward Him and He is with them and for them, as His prayer denotes.

### The Angel Interceding

Here is a view of Christ that is very precious. He is shown interceding for Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, the places which the Jews love and which He loves. Mordecai, in the book of Esther is a type of Christ in this character—a compassionate Man, one with His people in all ages. Esther figures the believing remnant of the very time to which Zechariah’s prophecy points. When Mordecai perceived the evil which Haman, type of anti-Christ, sought to perpetrate toward the Jews, he “cried with a loud and bitter cry” (Esther 4:1) before the king’s gate. This circumstance portrays the same Man and the same truth visioned here by Zechariah. The Angel of the Lord cries, “How long, O Lord of hosts, wilt thou not have compassion on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah” (*“how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah,” KJV*)—V. 12. It is Jesus, blessed Jesus whom we behold here. He is still the same tender, compassionate Man as when He wept over the city of Jerusalem in the days of His earthly pilgrimage, saying, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, x x how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathers her chicken under her wings and ye would not” (*“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem... how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!” KJV*)—Matt. 23:37. Even on the cross He prayed for them, “Father forgive them. They know not what they do” (Luke 23:34). And when He ascended to the Father, His earthly people were still the subject of His intercession until they stoned Stephen and shut up the door of mercy to themselves. Then He sat down upon the Father’s throne as the Mediator of His heavenly people, His Body, and He is there still we infer, as His Church is still here. But when the due time, appointed of the Father comes, He will arise to the help of the Jews again. Then He will pray for them. He will intercede effectually. His prayer will be heard and answered, like as the vision indicates.

**1:13** And the LORD answered the angel that talked with me *with* good words *and* comfortable words.

The answer with good and comfortable words is not addressed directly to the prophet, but to the interpreting angel which is plainly the meaning here. “The angel which talked with me said, Cry thou, saying, Thus saith the Lord of Hosts; I am jealous for Jerusalem and Zion with a great jealousy. And I am sore displeased with the nations that are at ease; for I was but a little displeased and they have helped forward the affliction”—V. 14-15.

I was but a little displeased, Jehovah explains. That was true as regards the Babylonish captivity. It was but a moment as it were, that He was angry with

**1:14** 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.

His people. It is true now, even tho' for nineteen centuries Israel has been scattered, it is only for a moment to Him, as it is written, "For a small moment have I forgotten thee. In overflowing wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee" (*"For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer."* KJV)—Isa. 54:7. His displeasure with His earthly people is never final, as the entire Bible witnesses. Listen to the weeping prophet's testimony regarding them; "I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have scattered thee; but I will not make a full end of thee. I will correct thee with judgment and will in no wise leave thee unpunished" (*"though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished."* KJV)—Jer. 30:11.

The nations have helped forward the affliction of the Jews during these years of their dispersion. This is a fact which is incontrovertible. From the very beginning of the times of the Gentiles the above accusation may be uttered against them. The history of the Jew loudly proclaims it. The nation's guilt is written in Israel's blood, as one of the Jewish race has said. God has punished His earthly people by casting them out of their homeland; but He has not ordered the Gentiles to whip them further. In fact He will not allow them to do this without taking a hand in the affair Himself. It is as in the matter of a father reluctantly chastising his child for a misdemeanor when in comes a neighbor who begins to whip his son more severely than the parent. Immediately we might expect trouble. The father would cease punishment of the child and turn his hand against the stranger who had dared to interfere.

We have a striking illustration of the above attitude of the nations toward the Jews, in the words of Cain in response to the edict of the Lord against him. "Behold, Thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth and from Thy face shall I be hid and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth and it shall come to pass that every one that findeth me shall slay me. And the Lord said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain lest any finding him should kill him"—Gen. 4:14-15.

Cain represents the Jews. He killed his brother Abel and was cast out of the presence of God, even as the Jews who rejected and killed their Messiah and Kinsman-Redeemer. They have been cast out of their land. God has set a mark upon them and He forbids the nations to hurt or molest them. These will not go unpunished if they smite or destroy His ancient people. Every nation which has persecuted the Jews have suffered in turn. History witnesses to the downfall of all such. They should be warned of this fact today when anti-semitism is again

in evidence. It is spreading everywhere, even in countries that were formerly favorable to the Jews. The causes of this are various and differ in different lands; but this one cause, Satan, is back of all the second causes. The devil hates the Jew. He stirs the nations' ire and they do not know that he is putting his own enmity and envy in their bosoms against God's chosen, elect nation. It is true that not all of the Jews living today will come into their inheritance; but they are Abraham's seed. And a third of them will be refined as silver is refined. They will repent and turn to the Lord and He will protect and defend them. They will be the nucleus of His Kingdom upon the earth.

But we say, The Lord does not hold the nations guiltless of their attitude of hatred, evidenced even now toward the Jew. He has warned them by the prophets again and again; but only the presence and prayers of the overcoming church, indwelt by the mighty Holy Spirit, has controlled the situation heretofore. But when the church has been taken then will the full deluge of the desolator be manifested. This will mark the beginning of Jacob's trouble.

"I was very sore displeased" (V. 15), we hear Jehovah say. He is referring to His anger against the nations who have been afflicting His people and especially is this the case in relation to the years of tribulation. The judgment of the nations will be dreadful, because they will afflict the Jews so sorely in those days. This very vision refers to that time as we noted. It speaks of the end of the captivity of the Jews. God's punishment of them will be over, but then the nations rise up to chastise them further. But it is woe to them. He will watch over the believing remnant, Yes, He will be with them in the fire and it shall not consume them. The Lord will miraculously preserve His ancient people and the nations shall yet see that He will choose Zion and fulfill all His Word regarding it. Then follow the further good and comfortable words which were spoken to the angel, "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"—V. 16.

These promises might be said to have had a fulfillment when the Jews were allowed to return in the time of Zechariah and Haggai; but that was just an earnest of a far greater fulfillment. The details of these marvelous happening are given in the fourth and fifth vision and also in the latter chapters of the book. The Lord says He has returned to Jerusalem with mercies. It is as tho' it was a fact at that time, because there was a measure of fulfillment, and also because the vision takes us on to that day of full consummation. Zechariah was in the day of the Lord in his spirit even as John in the Patmos visions. Jehovah's literal return to His people when He has gathered them out of all lands whither He had scattered them, is promised here.

"My house shall be built" (V. 16), He declares. What can feeble men do to prevent such a consummation when the due time arrives and the Architect is

**1:15** 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.

**1:16** 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.

on hand? What are Britain's edicts, or the Arab's interests in the land or temple-site when God takes hold of the situation. Complications and unexampled complexity are as nothing to Him. They will vanish at His Word even as surely as the darkness flees when the sun arises in the morning. This old world will find that it can have no rest until the footsore, weary, wandering Jew finds rest in the land of His fathers. And even then the rest can only come when these good and comfortable words are a reality to them and Jehovah is again in the midst of His people. He further adds:

“A line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem”—V. 16. The bounds of the city which it will occupy in its restored condition shall be marked off. The plan will immediately be put into effect and the building of the city and all that pertains to it, will be according to Jehovah's blue-print. Jerusalem and the temple shall be built on a far grander scale than before and all the land shall manifest the effects of the, presence of the Lord among His people. The promised seasons of refreshing shall come when fellowship is restored between them. Hence the prophet is exhorted to “Cry yet again, saying, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, My cities shall be inhabited, thru prosperity shall yet be spread abroad”—V. 17. Observe this fact—Jehovah claims these cities. They are peculiarly His, even as is the land of Palestine. And Israel are His people, and the nations had better leave hands off of Jehovah's property. Finally as the climax of the good and comfortable words, He says, The Lord shall yet comfort Zion after her long night of sorrow. He shall yet choose Jerusalem, as shall be manifest shortly to the Gentiles, amazement and chagrin. This latter phrase as to the Lord's choice of Jerusalem as His city, is the first of a threefold reference (chaps 2:12 and 3:2) to the inspired words of <sup>1</sup>Isaiah 14:1.

**1:17** 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.

Now there was undoubtedly a measure of comfort and encouragement afforded the remnant by this message from the Lord; but that is far short of its full significance. As we said, so we reiterate, These predictions in vision and message given in this book of Zechariah were relative to the distant future when given; but they are near to come now. The proof is before our eyes of the truth of the above statement. The Jew himself is the witness of the verity of these prophecies—His activity at the present writing; the purpose of heart manifest among them, even in their unbelief, to attain to the national hope of their homeland; the seeking for the old paths by so many among them and their finding of the Savior: these are all proof that God is again turning toward them in mercy. The age-long scales are falling from their eyes. They will shortly arise and be baptized, like Saul their pattern in this respect, and wash away their sins calling upon the name of the Lord—<sup>2</sup>Acts. 9:18. Then they too will preach Christ

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 14:1 “For the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob.”

<sup>2</sup> Acts 9:18 “And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.”

in the synagogue that He is indeed the Son of God. “And Jehovah will comfort Zion. He will comfort her waste places. He will make her wilderness like Eden and her desert like the garden of Jehovah. Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody” (*“For the LORD shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.” KJV*)—Isa. 51:3.

## Four Horns and Four Carpenters

### The Second Vision

“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 showed 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”—Chap. 1:18-21.

The second of these night visions is a continuation of the comforting assurances of blessing contained in the first, or at least it is closely connected with it. The teaching concerns the Gentile nations against whom the Lord is “sore displeased.” They have been cruel and destructive to Judah and they shall be cast down and destroyed. The first scene had passed away and no doubt the prophet was absorbed in what he saw; and lost in thought, he lifted up his eyes again and there is another scene before him. Not only are these moving picture messages flashed upon his physical sight; but his spiritual vision is illuminated and he understands the meaning of these glorious sights. He beholds “four horns” and the answer is given immediately. “These are the four horns which have scattered Judah, Israel and Jerusalem”—V. 19.

Horns in scripture invariably symbolize power, oftentimes so interpreted by the inspired writers themselves—Dan. 7:7, 8 and 8:8, 9; also Rev. 13:1 and 17:3, 22. Likewise in this case. They refer to kingdoms. The number four is also significant. It is the world number, and in this place symbolizes the world powers which have set themselves against the ancient people, and land of Jehovah, and still continue doing so, even unto the present day as is plainly evident in the world.

Daniel, the prophet, emphasizes the number “four” in two instances which it may be profitable to consider for further light. In chapter 2 there is the great dream-image portrayed. It was composed of “four” different metals—gold, silver, brass and iron. These symbolize four world powers, as all reputable

**1:18** Then lifted I up mine eyes, and saw, and behold four horns.

**1:19** 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.

Bible teachers agree. These four kingdoms—Babylonish, Medo-Persian, Grecian and Roman—have successively ruled over the Jews during these 2520 years of Gentile times, whether in greater or lesser degree. And the Lord holds the nations which comprised those kingdoms responsible for all the sorrow, devastation and suffering which has befallen His earthly people. The latter empire, the Roman, is symbolized by the iron; its very end phase, “iron and clay.” The latter kingdom is still in existence, in a somewhat disrupted condition. It will be revived and continue until the Stone falls from heaven, smiting the feet and grinding the whole image to powder—<sup>1</sup>Dan. 2:34.

Daniel’s second reference to “four” is found in chapter 7. We see four mighty, ferocious beasts, the last one, having “ten horns;” just as the legs of the image ended with feet having “ten toes.” Therefore we have the key to these “four horns” which Zechariah beholds in the second vision. But here they have an added significance. They refer to the “revived” Roman Empire which will be in existence during the time of Jacob’s trouble, Dan. 9:27. It will have its restoration in the beginning of Judah’s restoration. These two purposes line up together in their fulfillment. The four elements found in the previous kingdoms which ruled over the Jews during the times of the Gentiles, will be found in this last empire. That is, there will be the boastful, proud, arrogant phase of the Babylonish empire, with the overspreading, ponderous, slow but sure elements found in the Medo-Persian kingdom; while the agile, cunning, cruel, tigerous quality of the Grecian kingdom will be most manifest, and not lacking; but rather hidden will be the powerful, brutal, weighty phase found in the Roman empire of the former days, as notice Rev. 13. We say all these elements will be found in the confederacy of European nations, which latter is even now coming into existence. It answers to the four horns of Zechariah’s vision. We see the great fulfillment of this prophecy before our eyes. The restoration of Rome keeps step with the restoration of the Jew. It is marvelous to behold the stately steps of Jehovah on the program of world events. The revival of Rome cannot come without the revival of the Jew. They both must be actually in existence at the same time; and the hour is at hand for them both to appear. The revived Roman empire will attempt to resume its former domination over the restored Jewish kingdom and the Lord will allow it for almost seven years because of the continued unbelief of His people. But when the horns begin again to fray, so that no man dare lift up his head, as they have done and will do, the Lord will come to the help of His earthly people. They will be broken and contrite and will cry unto Him in their distress and He will hear and deliver.

Israel are indestructible as the centuries have proven. The bush may burn; but it is not consumed as the Jew before our eyes is the evidence. All the nations of the world, we have not a doubt, have at some time in their history

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel 2:34 “Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet *that were* of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.”



afflicted Israel. They made deep and long furrows upon their back. Canaanite, Philistine, Midianite, Edomite, Amalekite and other small powers alone and also united with the great kingdoms, Egypt, Syria, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome plowed upon them; but where are these great powers? They have passed as ships in the night; but Israel, the nation of destiny remains. They did not prevail over them.

But some one may ask, What does the peculiar designation of the chosen people “Judah, Israel and Jerusalem” in verse 19 signify? It refers to the whole nation, which for a specified time has been rent asunder and divided. The ten tribes were taken away first, but Judah (Benjamin also) continued for some time after: but which later was also scattered when Jerusalem, the city and religious centre of the nation, was overthrown by the Gentiles. They all shared the same fate, being destroyed and scattered by the horns of the Gentiles, hence are all included in the same hope of restoration and blessing. The twelve tribes of Israel will no longer be two separate kingdoms; but will be one, under their one King and Lord, the true Son of David, and Son of God.

The four Carpenters, which Zechariah beholds simultaneously with the horns, are now our subject. Literally the word means “workmen,” or “smiths,” as see R. V. The Hebrew word denotes a “cunning workmen or artificer in wood or stone or metal” as a Hebrew has interpreted. The Prophet is deeply interested in these skilled workmen as his question implies. What come these to do? They probably were visioned with their tools in their hands ready for work. The answer comes immediately and may be thus interpreted. These carpenters or smiths have come to fray and scatter the horns which have scattered Judah so that no man did lift up his head. “They shall cast out the horns of the Gentiles which lifted up their horn over Judah to scatter it”—V. 21.

It is “tit for tat,” to speak plainly. As the horns have done to Judah in the way of horning and hurting this chosen nation, so shall it be done to them. But who are these Carpenters? whom do they represent, is the question? The number “four,” as set over against the “four” horns, is suggestive of a counter-acting power, and teaches that for every enemy of the people of God there is a friendly power able to destroy it. In the vision the “four carpenters” being presented together, even as the “four horns,” might suggest, as some one has intimated, the breaking down of the four world empires by the succeeding one, each in his turn. For instance, Cyrus, of the Medo-Persian dynasty cast down the Babylonish empire. Alexander of Greece frayed the Persian: while Rome, coming on after, cast down the Grecian power. Rome, the most terrible, tho’ used as the “smith” in relation to the preceding “horn” still exists as the fourth “horn.” It never was frayed by an opposing or successive power. The fourth “carpenter” still waits to do his deadly work when Rome revives, which is the next thing on the program.

**1:20** And the LORD shewed me four carpenters.

**1:21** 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 there is another application of the “four carpenter” which we believe is the true interpretation. As the four horns represent not only each of the successive Gentile powers in order; but the last or fourth in its revival form, having all the elements of all the preceding ones; likewise the carpenters represent not only the power manifested in the destruction of each of the previous four world dynasties, but all the power. It will be needed and will be found sufficient to destroy and cast down the mightiest empire of all former time, the devil-filled and devil-energized, usurping kingdom of united nations. The latter confederacy is shortly scheduled to appear. It will usher in the time of Jacob’s trouble of which the prophets ring the changes. They suggest phase upon phase of its horrors as well as its importance and place. It will be the climax of all the sorrow and suffering of Israel—the last “great tribulation which has never been known from the beginning of the world until now, no nor ever shall be” (*“For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.” KJV*)—Matt. 24:21.

We have reference to this epochal hour in the vision of Daniel, chapter seven. “After this I saw in the night vision and behold a fourth beast dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly, and it had great iron teeth. It devoured and broke in pieces and stamped the residue with his feet. It was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns” (*“After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.” KJV*)—Daniel 7:7. In verse 24 of same chapter we learn that these latter signify “ten kings,” or “kingdoms.” Daniel tells us further of this terrible beast with the ten horns. He was deeply interested. He says, “I considered the horns and behold there came up among them another, a little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots, and behold in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth speaking great things”—Daniel 7:8.

This surely was a most fascinating, if fearsome, vision to Daniel, but very instructive to us who are living down here in the end of the ages. It speaks of some special events of the very same time to which all these visions of Zechariah, point. The beast with the horns represents the united world powers of those days which will be spreading itself as the green bay tree in its pride and ruthless cruelty when “the carpenters” shall appear. The “horn of the Gentiles,” with all the strength of all the other powers, which will be confederate with it, shall finally and forever be broken down, its power dissolved and cast out by the coming of the mighty world Conqueror Himself, the Lord Jesus Christ, with His Church, seen as an army—Rev. 19:11-21. That united company will be irresistible in might, unexampled in grandeur and glory, unparalleled in majesty and number. They will drive terror to the hearts of all who view their mighty

march down from the corridors on high. Habakkuk gives us a glimpse of this coming. His words are unsurpassed for beauty and sublimity of expression. He views them as one figure and that as of God; but it is the advent of Christ and His people which he sees. He tells us “God came from heaven and the Holy One from Mt. Paran. His glory covered the heavens and the earth was full of His praise. His brightness was as the light. He had horns coming out of his hands and there was the hiding of his power. Before him went the pestilence and burning coals at his feet. He stood and measured the earth. He beheld and drove asunder the nations, and the mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow. His ways are everlasting. I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction, and the curtains of Midian did tremble. Was the Lord displeased against the rivers? Was thine anger against the rivers? Was thy wrath against the sea that thou didst ride upon thine horses and thy chariots of salvation? Thy bow was made quite naked according to the oaths of the tribes, even thy Word.

“The mountains saw thee and they trembled, the overflowing of the water passed by. The deep uttered his voice and lifted up his hands on high. The sun and the moon stood still in their habitation; at the light of thine arrows they went, and at the shining of thy glittering spear. Thou didst march thru the land in indignation; thou didst thresh the heathen in anger. Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine Anointed, (Christ). Thou woudest the head out of the house of the wicked (anti-Christ), by discovering the foundation unto the neck”—Habakkuk 3:10-13.

Yes, we say that Habakkuk saw the coming of the carpenters; but in another guise, another form. He saw them as God Himself, in their destructive fury and conquering march. His description is a poem in prose. He further informs us that he was so overcome by the awesome glorious vision of that heavenly army that his “belly trembled and his lips quivered. Rottenness entered into his bones” (*“When I heard, my belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice: rottenness entered into my bones,”—Habakkuk 3:16 KJV*). He begged that he “might rest in the day of trouble when the Lord cometh unto the people to invade them with His troops” (*“might rest in the day of trouble: when he cometh up unto the people, he will invade them with his troops.” KJV*)—Hab. 3:16. There will be nothing left of the “four horns” when these four carpenters wreck their “house of cards,” for so will all their united power appear in the eyes of the Omnipotent Jehovah, and so will it fall at His rebuke. For “in His Times (Jewish times), He will show who is the only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords” (*“Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;” KJV*)—I Tim. 6:15. The Child that was born and the Son that was given shall be manifested as “the Wonderful Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6) “whose goings forth are from of old” (*“whose goings forth have been from of old” KJV*)—Mic. 5:2.

## JEHOVAH A WALL OF FIRE

### The Man with the Measuring Line

#### Chapter Two

#### The Third Vision

#### Chapter 2

**2:1** I lifted up mine eyes again, and looked, and behold a man with a measuring line in his hand.

**2:2** 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.

**2:3** And, behold, the angel that talked with me went forth, and another angel went out to meet him,

**2:4** 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:

“I lifted up mine eyes 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”—Chap. 2:1, 2.

This third vision, even as the second, stands closely related to the first. “The good and comfortable words” which were the answer of the Lord to the intercession of the Angel of Jehovah on behalf of Jerusalem and the cities of Judah (Chap. 1:13) have a double message for Israel. First, Jehovah is jealous for Jerusalem, and is sore displeased with the nations who are at ease and who have helped forward the affliction of Israel—Chap. 1:14, 15. Second, Jehovah has returned to His house with mercies. “My house shall be built, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem”—Chap. 1:14-16.

Notice against whom His displeasure is aroused—“the nations who are at ease” (“*with the heathen that are at ease:*”—Chap. 1:15). This is another proof that these visions have their fulfillment in the seven years of usurpation when the nations have achieved their overmastering ambition and apparently brought in the millennium of peace and prosperity.

But to continue as to the relation of the third vision to the first and the second. The man with the measuring rod figures the amplification and realistic stretching forth of the good words as to the enlargement of the land of Palestine and the city of Jerusalem when the Lord has returned to His people with mercies, after the work of the carpenters of the second vision has been finished.

The man whom Zechariah sees in the third vision, answered the prophet’s question, “Whither goest thou?” He says, “To measure Jerusalem, to see what is the breadth thereof, and the length thereof”—V. 2. Then the interpreting Angel is seen going forward from the prophet, by whose side he had been standing, in the way of the measuring man. He appears to desire to ascertain the meaning of the symbolism that he might impart it to the prophet. He is met on the way by “another angel” (V. 3) who says to him, “Run and speak to this young man and say, Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls by reason of the multitude of men and cattle therein. For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire and will be the glory in the midst of her”—V. 4-5.

The man with the Measure in his hand represents the same Man whom the prophet beholds in the first vision upon the red horse who was standing

among the myrtles—Ch. 1:8. In verse 11, he is identified as the Angel of Jehovah, who is the Angel of the Covenant, the Second Person of the Godhead, the very same one who became flesh and tabernacled among us. But in the first vision He is found among the many sons that he has brought to glory waiting to bring forth more and fuller results of his work of redemption, as we before noted in our explanation of that vision.

There is no doubt a reference in Zechariah's third vision to Ezekiel's vision in chapter 40. He views a man with "a line of flax in his hand and a measuring reed" (Ezek. 40:3). He was going forth on the same errand to measure Jerusalem, the earthly city, which is to be restored. We know this One whose appearance is like that of brass, is none other than the Angel of Jehovah, hence, why is not He the same One shown in Zechariah? Both visions point to the same time and the same event.

The "Young man" mentioned in verse 4, is none other than the Prophet himself. The Angel in attendance upon the Man with the line, gives the message to the interpreting Angel to communicate to Zechariah. It is all of a joyful character, and has a twofold aspect.

First: Jerusalem shall be restored and enlarged, extending far beyond the boundaries of its former dimensions. It must needs be so because of the multitude of men and cattle that will be a part of it. The phrase, translated "towns" or villages, (R. V.) may also be designated plains, an open country, where there is nothing to prevent the inhabitants from spreading out. The same terms are used in <sup>1</sup>Ezekiel 38:11 describing a people dwelling in peace and prosperity "without walls, bolts and gates." It is in contrast to "walled cities." It denotes a condition of safety and confidence. There will be nothing to cause fear, is the thought.

The former prophets all emphasize the same thing in reference to the marvelous increase of the people and the extent of the boundaries of the city and land, after the restoration of the Jew. Isaiah is forceful and positive in his statements of the marvelous increase of the people. He says he hears the children of the restored land say, "The place is too strait for me. Give place, (or make room) for me that I may dwell" (*"The place is too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell."* KJV)—Isa. 49:19, 20. The limits of the city and the land shall be undefined and hence may be continually extended as the people multiply. Jerusalem shall resemble a succession of villages upon the open land.

But here is the best of all the promises, even greater than the enlargement and prosperity promise: "For I, saith Jehovah, will be unto her a wall of fire

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<sup>1</sup> Ezekiel 38:11 "And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates,"

**2:5** 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.

round about and will be the glory in the midst of her”—V. 5. Here is the reason, expressed most beautifully and comprehensively, that Jerusalem will need no walls about her. It will be perfectly safe from all danger, for the Lord will appoint salvation for walls and bulwarks—<sup>1</sup>Isa. 26:1. But it is He Himself, as He asserts later by Zechariah, that will be the wall of fire, a perfect defence to those within that inner circle, but destructive fire to those without. This promise has never been fulfilled. It is really an announcement of the visible presence of the Lord in the midst of His people, the Jews. The shekinah glory will return to the city of Jerusalem. In fact no doubt the whole of Palestine will be covered with the cloud of glory by day and the pillar of fire by night. The heavenly host above, in the throne and round about the throne of the Lamb (<sup>2</sup>Rev. 4:5) will no doubt be the protection to the earthly city, and country. They will be above, within the cloud which will reach down and envelope the people on earth. Wondrous union will be manifested between the heavenly host and the city and its earthly counterpart.

All Scripture teaches the visible revelation of the Lord of glory, “when all flesh shall see it together” (*“and all flesh shall see it together:”*—Isa. 40:5 KJV). It will be the very same Jesus which was seen going away in a cloud that shall return with a cloud. He will establish God’s rule over the earth and shall sit upon the throne of His father David—<sup>3</sup>Luke 1:32. “And Jehovah will create over the whole habitation of mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud of smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night; and upon all the glory shall be a defence,” or as another translation says, “Over all, the glory shall be as a canopy. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat and for a place of refuge and for a covert from storm and from rain” (*“And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.”* KJV)—Isa. 4:5, 6.

#### A Call to Israel

**2:6** 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.

“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”—Vs. 6, 7.

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 26:1 “In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will *God* appoint *for* walls and bulwarks.”

<sup>2</sup> Revelation 4:5 “And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.”

<sup>3</sup> Luke 1:32 “He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:”

The land of the north is seen to be Babylon which in reality is in more of an eastern direction from Palestine, so-called because like the Assyrian before, it always invaded Jehovah's land from the north. This passage is a composition taken from many different Scriptures. We read in Isaiah 48:20, "Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans: with a voice of singing declare ye, tell ye this; utter it, even unto the end of the earth: say ye, Jehovah hath redeemed His servant Jacob" (*"Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say ye, The LORD hath redeemed his servant Jacob."*—Isa. 48:20 KJV). It is almost an exact quotation from the solemn words of Jeremiah, "Flee out of the midst of Babylon and save every man his life. Be not cut off in her iniquity. x x x My people, go ye out of the midst of her and save yourselves every man from the fierce anger of the Lord" (*"Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity... My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the LORD."*—Jeremiah 51:6, 45 KJV)—Jer. 51.

The above words of Jeremiah had a partial fulfillment after the return of the captivity from Babylon. A remnant had come back to Palestine; but far the larger number remained in the land of their exile. Many had grown prosperous there, and hence their love for Jerusalem, and all for which it stood, had grown cold and they were content to dwell with "the daughter of Babylon" (V. 7). Hence the exhortation to flee had its reference, in that day, to those who loved their ease and worldly possessions more than Jehovah. But there is a far greater significance to these striking words of exhortation for the captivity of the latter days. They voice the emphatic call that will shortly go forth to the Jews to come back to Palestine. They are hearing it in a sense ever since the land was opened to them as a people; but it will be a more insistent call as the days go by, and the time of their restoration is a certainty.

Babylon, as regards its former estate, has passed away. The prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah concerning its literal destruction have been fulfilled in the minutest detail. Jeremiah predicted its ascendancy and also its doom and both events are now history. Yet some would tell us that literal Babylon shall rise again to its former grandeur, and be destroyed at the second advent of Christ. The fact that the above mentioned prophecies link the last great judgement with the final deliverance and salvation of Israel, gives some ground for the claim. And we admit that there is a further basis for this hypothesis as regards literal Babylon, at the present time, in the marvelous transformation developing in the Mesopotamian region, the country of Babylon. It is more familiarly known now as "Irak." It is called the cradle of the human family; for it was here that Adam came into life, fresh from the Creator's hand. Here all the noted events, all the births and deaths recorded in Genesis happened. It was in this ancient land that the Ark rested upon Mt. Ararat, and here Abraham was born and was called out

2:7 Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest *with* the daughter of Babylon.

of this country to seek another. It is the second of the two most famous districts emphasized in Scripture, whose cities, Babylon and Jerusalem, are noted as the GREAT CITIES—<sup>1</sup>Rev. 16:19 and 21:10. These two great cities stand in contrast, as it were. The one, Babylon, represents all that is “great” in the old creation, in every aspect—religious, moral, beautiful, alluring, grand, prosperous and satisfying. The other, Jerusalem, represents the new creation and all that is great in that respect—goodness, morality, kindness, grandeur, beauty, satisfaction, love and light. In one sense Babylon can never arise. She has lost her glory already; but in another sense she may come up to shine and dazzle the eyes of the world for a short season and then to disappear forever. In this latter case it is antitypical Babylon that shall arise, and be destroyed at the coming of the Lord. It is the revival of Rome to which these prophecies now point.

The former time, when the call came to depart out of Babylon, and met with only a partial response, it was a foreshadowing of the future, when the Lord shall lift up his hand the second time to recover His people from the different points of the earth, whence they have been scattered in the last captivity, which has continued nineteen hundred years already. “And then they shall no more say, Jehovah liveth which brought up the Children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, but Jehovah liveth which brought up and led the seed of the House of Israel out of the north country and from all countries whither I had driven them, and they shall dwell in their own land” (*“Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land.” KJV*)—Jer. 23:7, 8.

This latter regathering of Israel is almost at hand. It awaits its consummation at the time of the revival of Rome, the anti-typical Babylon. The nations of Europe whose tenure of office is over, but who will insist on confederating and holding the sceptre of rule in their hands regardless of the edict of God against them; and for the Jews, shall come under the wrath and judgment of God. He is calling His people even now to come out from the midst of these nations; but the call will grow as we said more insistent as the days go by.

“For thus saith the Lord of hosts: After the glory hath He sent Me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye”—V. 8.

**2:8** For thus saith the LORD of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.

<sup>1</sup> Revelation 16:19 “And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.”

Revelation 21:10 “And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,”



Here is unfathomable, divine mystery. Who can solve it except by divine illumination? THE LORD sending My LORD unto the nation. Here are even two Lords as David also noted—<sup>1</sup>Ps. 110:1. It is the mystery of the Triune God revealed to mankind. The Second Person of Deity became a Man; He tabernacled in tenement of clay being in subjection to His Father above. He was sent by God as an emissary of Peace on a mission of love to the world. The phrase “after the glory” has been variously interpreted; but it appears to simply mean that the judgments which shall fall on the nations are the display of the glory of God as also the grace displayed in the deliverance and salvation of His people Israel. The words which follow in Zechariah seem to substantiate this interpretation.

“For behold I will shake Mine hand upon them and they shall be spoil to their servants; and ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me. Sing and rejoice O daughter of Zion: for lo, I come and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord.”—V. 9, 10.

The hand of the Lord expresses His almighty power. He shall literally “wave” his hand and the most formidable of His enemies shall flee. The same word is used in <sup>2</sup>Isaiah 11:15 and 19:16. Israel’s foes, which are Jehovah’s also, shall lick the dust. They shall become a spoil to those whom they spoiled and made servants. And the reason of the dire dealings of Jehovah with the enemies of His chosen nation is expressed in tenderness and wonderful love, “For He that toucheth you toucheth the apple, or pupil of His eye” (V. 8). This is the most sensitive part of the eye, the member which we sacredly guard, for it feels the slightest injury and its loss cannot be restored. The same attitude is expressed in the beginning relative to them, as declared by Moses. “He found him in a desert land. x x He cared for him, He kept him as the apple of His eye” (“*He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.*”—*Deut. 32:10 KJV*).

Then follows the greatest of all the promises—“Lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord” (V. 10), for it is the positive guarantee of the fulfillment of the others. If Jehovah is in the midst, we can say to everyone of the various things which annoy, big and little, “Go way troubles.” This was the ground and object of the expectations of the ancient, godly remnant, and is

**2:9** 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.

**2:10** Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD.

<sup>1</sup> Psalms 110:1 “(A Psalm of David.) The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 11:15 “And the LORD shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make *men* go over dryshod.”

Isaiah 19:16 “In that day shall Egypt be like unto women: and it shall be afraid and fear because of the shaking of the hand of the LORD of hosts, which he shaketh over it.”

still the hope of the future. The Lord Himself is the speaker, the blessed Angel of Jehovah, the same Lord whom we know, who even in the Old Testament was associated with the people of the Lord.

It is no marvel that in the glorious anticipation of that thrilling moment and its happy consequences, “the daughter of Zion” is called upon “to sing and shout and rejoice” (V. 10), because, as Zephaniah declares, relative to the same happy consummation, x x “the King, even Jehovah is in the midst of thee; thou shalt not fear evil any more” (“*the king of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more.*”—Zephaniah 3:15 KJV).

The “Lo, I come” of this place, refers to the second advent of Christ, as is plainly manifest by the results which follow that coming, “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 hath sent me unto thee”—V. 11.

During the present dispensation God has been taking out a people from among the Gentiles for His Name. The fall of the Jews has been the lifting up, as it were of the Gentiles. Thru their national diminishing, spiritual riches has come to individuals. God is visiting the whole world today picking out some from among all nations to the praise of His grace. It is after this visit has been brought to a successful close that Messiah will return and build the tabernacle of David which is fallen down and then “the residue of the men (Jews) shall seek after the Lord and all the Gentiles upon whom His Name is called” (“*That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.*”—Acts 15:17 KJV)—Acts 15:13-18.

It is upon the restoration of the ancient people of Jehovah that blessing will come to the world. Everything of earthly consequence is out of harmony with God’s plan while Israel are out of their land and blessing. Hence, the sooner the nations reinstate them as a nation in Palestine, the sooner the world will come into harmony with the Creator. For the restored Jews are the medium of blessing to the world. Their future is linked with that of their Messiah. Even the partial blessing which has come to the world during the present age is because of Israel’s unbelief (whether directly or passively), but this is nothing compared to what will come when they all believe. Israel saved and in their land is the hope of the world. For it is then that the following shall be fulfilled;

“And the Lord shall inherit Judah His portion in the Holy Land and shall choose Jerusalem again”—V. 12. The last word, “again” assures of a future restoration, for Zechariah lived in the time of the restoration from the Babylonish captivity. Notice also Palestine is called “the holy land,” for it is Jehovah’s land and as such He sees it hallowed ground. And tho’ at present it is

**2:11** 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.

**2:12** And the LORD shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again.

defiled and polluted more than any other land, we might say, in view of its relationship, yet it shall be cleansed of its defilement and set apart to the service of the Lord. The Lord Himself shall be there, the positive assurance of its holiness. The people too will be holy to correspond with their holy Lord and holy land. They shall be a holy people; even upon their possessions shall be ascribed holiness, from the least pot in their houses to the bells on the horses. “Holiness becometh thine House, O Lord, for ever,” will be the slogan of the Jew—Ps. 93:5.

**2:13** Be silent, O all flesh, before the LORD: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation.

The glorious third vision ends with the most solemn announcement of the great fact—the consummation and peak of all prophecy—the visible appearing of the Almighty God in the Person of the Messiah: “Be silent all flesh before Jehovah; for He is waked up out of his holy habitation”—V. 13.

It is a phrase of weighty import, meaningful and impressive. In the Hebrew the words “be silent,” are akin to “hush,” but also contain the force of “awe,” while the thought of absolute impotence in the presence of Deity is found in the phrase “all flesh.” It is a warning, as it were, against all assumption and presumption of the old creation in the presence of the Almighty God. He will have “waked up,” so to say, from his long continued sleep, as tho’ in response to the many cries of His waiting, oppressed, longing people who have been calling Him for hundreds of years to arise and show Himself in their defense.

The Church age is almost over. It has been a period of silence on God’s part. There has been no more revelation since the last words of Jesus to John, nineteen hundred years ago, “Surely I come quickly”—Rev. 22:20. But while God has been “silent,” men have been speaking. They have uttered their voice and blasphemed His holy Name. They have ridiculed His people, persecuting them with mockery, when not otherwise, and yet the Lord has not taken up their cause in any public manner. There has been no audible voice nor sound, no visible move on His part, but shortly there will be a change. “Our God shall come and shall not keep silent” (*“Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence”*—Psa. 50:3 KJV). The tables shall be turned. The flesh is warned to not only keep silent; but to stand in awe before the majesty of the Lord as He comes forth to judge the world. His enemies shall be scattered and flee to hide themselves from the face of the Lord, but the righteous shall be glad. They shall rejoice before His face, “yea, they shall rejoice exceedingly” (*“yea, let them exceedingly rejoice”*—Psa. 68:3 KJV) They shall not be silent, but shout aloud and sing when the Lord arises to abide in their midst forever. Hallelujah! let it be so.

## Joshua Before the Angel of the Lord

### The Fourth Vision

#### Chapter Three

#### Chapter 3

**3:1** 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 he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the Lord and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him”—Chap. 3:1.

The fourth and fifth visions are, in a sense, connected, even as the first three were related. These former contained promises, not only of the overthrow of Gentile world-powers, those “who lifted up their horns to scatter Judah, Israel and Jerusalem” (“*These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.*”—*Chap. 1:19 KJV*), and the enlargement and material prosperity of the promised land and the holy city; but also of the spiritual restoration of Israel to their place in the land as well as in the favor of God. With the latter was included the promise of the personal presence of Jehovah in the person of the Messiah, who should dwell in their midst and thus all the world would be blessed thru them. We say that this was the essence of the first three visions.

But the question, “How can these things be?” (John 3:9) no doubt suggested itself to Zechariah’s mind, even as it did to Nicodemus when the Lord gave him some new things to consider—<sup>1</sup>John 3:4. Remember that Israel had, so to say, forfeited their place, and made themselves unfit as the servant of Jehovah, and unworthy to officiate as, His priest. How can such an unfaithful witness be a blessing to the nations? must have been the cogitations of the prophet’s mind. The fact that he was “showed” the high priest standing before the Angel of Jehovah, would imply the above interpretation and give the answer to his thoughts. Hence we would say, The fourth and fifth visions show us the manner or way to the blessings for Israel which the first visions reveal to us.

The subject of the verb “showed,” was the Lord Himself. He was the Introducer of the visions to the prophet. Joshua was the high priest who had returned with the remnant and associated with Zerubbabel, the governor, was head over the colony of exiles from the Babylonish captivity. These latter had been in the land about sixteen years at that time.

It is important to observe at this point that Joshua stands before the Angel of Jehovah, as type of the nation, Israel. The emphasis which is upon his title, “High priest” proves this statement, as well as the fact that the plea, made by the great Advocate in answer to Satan’s accusations, is not in defense of Joshua personally, but for the city, “Jerusalem” which so often in Scripture stands for the people, and not always for the city. Also there is added proof of this conclusion in a comparison of verse three, “I have caused thine iniquity to pass,”

<sup>1</sup> John 3:4 “Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?”

with verse nine, “God will remove the iniquity of that land in one day” (*“saith the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.”—V. 9 KJV*). Hence, we say, It is the nation, Israel that is on trial in the person of Joshua, and not the man. He is simply the mediator and representative.

We are faced in the vision with one of those mysteries of revelation which we wait the loosing from our frail tenement of clay to understand. The position of Satan in the economy of things and his relation to the earth and worldly affairs and to man in general, is one of the things we “know not now,” but waits the perfect day when all things shall be made plain. And especially it is in his role as the accuser of mankind that he is an enigma. He has brought sin into the world and he deceives men continually, leading them on to destruction in their rebellion against God and rejection of his mercy: and then when he has accomplished his end, He turns and accuses them before God. It appears that he does not hate mankind: but he hates God and desires to ruin his plans and frustrate his purposes of mercy for the world.

In the case of Joshua we do not read of the actual accusations; but their nature may be inferred by these words, “Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and stood before the Angel”—V. 3. The word for “filthy” is only found here. It is the most expressive word in the Hebrew to describe filth of the most loathsome character and these garments so defiled represent the sinful condition of the people in the sight of God. And remember that this description concerns the most moral people in the world. Satan might well seek to impugn the holiness of God’s character by identifying Him with such defiled folk.

Well God admits that the people are all that is pictured. He does not deny the accusations of Satan, but He refuses to allow him to condemn. He that sits as Judge to condemn or acquit is the Lord. And note that it is the Angel of the Lord Himself who pleads the cause of His people. They can say, “He is near that justifieth me: who will contend with me? Let us stand together; who is mine adversary? Let him come near to me. Behold the Lord God will help me; who is he that shall condemn? lo they all shall wax old as a garment. The moth shall eat them up”—Isa. 50:8, 9. These words of challenge were taken up still more triumphantly by the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans; “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us”—Rom. 8:33, 34. Satan’s hatred and venomous attitude toward the church is just as great as it is against Israel. He hates all God’s people because of his animus against God and His Christ. He knows that one day they shall conquer him and put him away forever.

But to return to the vision. The plea of the Advocate on Israel’s behalf is that of the Lord’s choice of them. He says “The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even

**3:2** 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?*

the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem”—V. 2. The word “rebuke” conveys the thought of withering reproof when applied to God. The same word is used of Jesus when He rebuked the unclean spirit and he departed out of his victim. And this is the best answer that can be given to all Satan’s accusations as well as man’s, directed against the Church or Israel. What can they do to those whom the Lord chooses? When He takes up our cause we are safe. Men and devils must get out of the way. Israel are the chosen of the Lord regardless of all their wickedness and waywardness. They are no worse nor better than other men. It is simply that God chose them to be a special people, a witness to the world of Himself and His faithfulness and power. They have suffered more than all other men because of His choice of them and they shall be more blessed for the same reason. God Himself has avouched them a holy nation and His peculiar people and is going to actually make them so. The world may cavil and criticize; but God’s Word declares that Jerusalem shall be a praise in the earth and He is able to make it, so. His faithfulness demands the fulfillment of His own Word.

Israel were not faithful, that is true. If their position and blessing depended upon them, there surely would be no hope, but thank the Lord, He is responsible for their ultimate triumph over every obstacle. They have already been punished for their sins. In a sense, we may say Israel have been in the fire for nineteen hundred years as they have wandered in the midst of all the other peoples of the world; but they have never been consumed. They are a miracle before the eyes of the world. Like the burning bush, the symbol of the indestructibility of the Jew, the Lord let them burn, but they remained. And so they were appointed to this in the purpose of God.

When God made His covenant with Abraham, He made a smoking furnace and a burning lamp to pass before His chosen head of the family. It was a foreshadowing of the iron furnace of Egypt in which the nation was afterward found. And from a human point of view there was no hope. But with that furnace of four hundred year’s affliction, there was suspended the burning lamp of promise, that God would not utterly forsake, but would interpose for them and judge that nation and bring them out with great gain—<sup>1</sup>Gen. 15:13, 14. Did He do it? Let history say.

Babylon later was a furnace in which Israel was cast. But a remnant was plucked out “as a brand from the fire” (“*a brand plucked out of the fire*”—V. 2), God did not leave His people. They had the bright lamp of promise in the words of the prophets of those days—Daniel, Jeremiah and Ezekiel—to encourage them that their furnace fire could not consume them.

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<sup>1</sup> Genesis 15:13, 14 “And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land *that is* not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.”

Later, after Calvary, there was another casting of them into the furnace of affliction which is about to end just now. They have not been consumed; but have multiplied and replenished every nation where they have dwelt. They are about to be taken out. God is ready to say, It is enough; and if they were ready to accept His offer of mercy there would be no more sorrow for them. The furnace fire would be quenched forever and only the flaming torch of promise would remain to be fulfilled. But alas, they do not yet see that God is for them and that is the reason they have not been consumed. They will not believe His Word and yield themselves up to Him. So again they will for a few more years be cast into the smoking furnace and it will be the hottest yet. The nations whom they trust will kindle the fire and it will burn them, but a remnant shall be plucked out of the burning. And this is the special “brand” to which Zechariah’s vision points. The Lord plucks these folks out. They survive the great tribulation and are made ready for the blessing of the Lord, as we will note.

**3:3** Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel.

The “filthy garments” in which Joshua was clad, figure the sinful condition of the nation. They speak of the self-righteousness of the most moral man upon the earth; for the Jew was such. This symbol of filthy garments, to express the moral pollution of the people, is well known in prophecy. We read in Isaiah 64:6, “For we are all as an unclean thing and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags” (*“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags;” KJV*). It is the picture of their moral condition before God, tho’ before men they may be all that can be desired. And there is a further fact set forth in connection with the above and just as forcibly, by the Old Testament writings, which is that the Lord shall wash away the filth of His people. Then it can be said by them in contrast to their polluted condition; “I will greatly rejoice in Jehovah, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation. He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, even as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels” (*“I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.” KJV*)—Isa. 61:10.

**3:4** 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.

The words used here and variously translated “change of raiment” and “rich apparel,” refer to the high priest’s outfit. And these being put upon Joshua as the representative of Israel would not only indicate their pardon, justification and restoration to the land as the people of Jehovah, but more. It represents their reinstatement and reconsecration to their place as the priestly nation. And this is further emphasized in the following verse.

Zechariah has no doubt been an interested spectator of the symbolic picture set before him. We can imagine his interest in the scene, which no doubt

**3:5** 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.

becomes greater as the transformation of the high priest takes place, and he begins to realize the import of the transaction, as the filthy garments are taken away and the beautiful raiment is put upon him. We believe that he enters wholeheartedly into the sense of the proceeding, and that he is carried away, even in the vision, with the power of the truth: for we hear him burst out as tho' in prayer, "Let them set a fair (or clean) mitre upon his head"—V. 5. He sees Joshua appareled most wonderfully, yet something missing—the mitre—hence it appears that it is put upon him because of the prophet's intercession which is also instructive. We believe the lesson contained here is that after the nation of Israel is cleansed and set apart as the priestly family, it will be later that they will be crowned officially: for this word "mitre" does not convey the thought of an ordinary covering, but refers to the headdress worn by kings, and also for the tiara worn by the high priest of the law.

And this mitre or tiara was the completion of the high-priest's robing, that part of his attire on which he carried his office so to speak; for upon his forehead, attached to it, was a plate of pure gold upon which were engraven these words, "Holiness to the Lord" (Exodus 28:36). It was to be "always upon Aaron's forehead that he may bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel shall hallow, x x that they may be accepted before the Lord" (*"And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD."* KJV)—Ex. 28:36-38. Israel will be necessitated to put on their mitre by the needs of the world.

Aaron's priesthood had a two-fold character. He was appointed to meet Israel's need of a Mediator between them and God, and in this sense he figured the priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ who is set apart to such service thru His death and resurrection, He, who ever liveth to make intercession, but He is also a reminder of God's purpose for Israel as a nation, that they are His people in a peculiar sense; to be holy and to draw near to Him in priestly service and intercession for other nations. And again we say the wonderful transformation which Zechariah beholds in the person of Joshua, symbolically sets forth Israel's future place and service upon the earth. It describes the great change which will come over Israel as a nation; in looks and demeanor when they shall be called "the priests of the Lord and the ministers of our God" (*"But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: men shall call you the Ministers of our God"* KJV)—Isa. 61:6.

Just what happens in the case of every individual when he is saved will happen to the nation. They will realize their uncleanness before the Lord even as we do before we are born again, and they will cry out to the Lord for His salvation. And then there will be the stripping time. Like the blessed Apostle



Paul, their marvelous kinsman and figure, they will cast away from them all that would signify any gain to themselves, and say, “Yea verily I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord” (*“Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord”—Phil. 3:8 KJV*)—Phil 3:7-9.

There is no other way of salvation taught in the Book of all books. We read in the case of Adam and Eve when they had sinned and became conscious of their condition before God, that they sewed fig-leaves together and made themselves clothing; but they were still naked before Him. Nothing that man can do is able to atone for sin; but men continue to this day endeavoring to weave for themselves a covering which is of no avail to hide their nakedness from the holy eye of God. If their self-righteous garments cover them on the one side they are exposed on the other and vice versa. They are too narrow, or they are too short—<sup>1</sup>Isa. 28:20.

Men are absolutely hopeless as to making amends for sin. We cannot bring a clean thing out of an unclean. Our very best deeds, in the natural, are tainted with sin, even as our best thoughts and desires. We are little aware of our helplessness until the Lord puts His x-ray upon our hearts and lets us look at ourselves. Then we admit there is no hope but in God and His mercy. We were shut out of His presence forever, but for the fact that He found a way out of the dilemma. This is shown in the case of our first parents. God preached the Gospel of grace to them in the garden of Eden at the very beginning of their sin. He promised a Redeemer—“the Seed of the woman”—who should bruise the serpent’s head. That is, destroy the devil and his works—<sup>2</sup>Gen. 3:15. He then, before he drove them out of the garden, “made coats of skins and clothed them” (*“Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.”—Gen. 3:21 KJV*). The slaying of animals is implied, and the blood way of atonement taught there by the Lord Himself. And it still obtains. There is no other way of salvation—no other righteousness which men may bring to God than the best robe, which He puts on them when they put off their filthy garments by accepting Christ and the atonement of the cross.

“And the Angel of Jehovah protested unto Joshua, saying, 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 those that stand by”—V. 6, 7.

The word “protested” signifies “solemnly to testify,” or call God to witness. Thus we learn of the sacredness of Joshua’s office. The first part of the

**3:6** And the angel of the LORD protested unto Joshua, saying,

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 28:20 “For the bed is shorter than that *a man* can stretch himself *on it*: and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself *in it*.”

<sup>2</sup> Genesis 3:15 “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”

charge refers to his personal attitude toward the Lord. Fidelity in mankind's relations with Him, God demands. He must have faithful servants in His house. Disloyalty will not be tolerated. The second part of the charge relates to the work to which he has been called. The official duties of the high priest are also in question. He must be faithful in his service as well as faithful in personal character. There is a reward for such loyalty, as we learn from the promises made to Joshua. First, "he shall judge my house," was conditional upon the above faithfulness. The judgeship, no doubt, referred to the high priest representing God in all matters of controversy, especially in questions concerning the sanctuary. Second, "and thou shalt keep my courts," speaks of him as a watchman over the things of God. He was to be rewarded by being put into such an official place, but notice the next clause. It is the climax of the reward. "I will give thee places to walk among those that stand by."

**3:7** 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.

This statement has been variously translated, but it does not appear difficult to understand even in the above reading. "Those that stand by" (V. 7) refer to the angels or messengers who are associated with "the Angel" in these visions in Zechariah. We know that the latter anticipate the overcomers of the church age who will be with Christ in that great time of the restoration of Israel. They will have a part with Him in the work of the priesthood. They are viewed by Isaiah in his vision of that time as running with the live coal, for the prophet's cleansing. He calls them "the Seraphim." They are seen in the near place of access to God that some of the redeemed of Israel shall occupy in restoration as well as judgment. This interpretation agrees with the Jewish Targum as we have read. It paraphrases the statement thus; "I will give thee feet walking among these Seraphim." This teaches us that the overcoming priests of the earthly people will have a very close place to the throne of Christ, their High Priest and King. The Seraphim are a high rank of the heavenly saints; hence, to have places to walk among them would emphasize the great honor accorded these earthly priests because of their deserving.

Pardon and justification to the church are the free gifts of God; even so will they be to Israel. They have their source in His sovereign grace, apart from any merit on man's part, but the honor and privilege of acceptable service and future reward are conditional upon his faithfulness. Therefore to keep the charge of the Lord even in the very least place that has been entrusted to us, in the present day or later, is no little thing. "We must all be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ that each one may receive the things done in the body according to what he hath done whether it be good or bad" (*"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."* KJV)—II Cor. 5:10. This applies to all saints, tho' as quoted it has special reference to the Church. But to continue our lesson.

**3:8** 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.

“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”—V. 8.

These words are very encouraging to the Jewish people today if they had ears to hear, as they will have one of these days. Joshua is called to “hear,” not only with the outer ear, but with the ears of the heart, meaning, LISTEN and CONSIDER. It is in his official capacity as the head and representative of the people of Israel that he is thus addressed. The title, “high priest,” makes this clear, as also the following words, “Thou and thy fellows which sit before thee, for they are men wondered at,” or “men which are a sign, or wonder”—V. 8 R. V.

Joshua and his companions, the priests, who were associated with him in the service of the Lord at the time of Zechariah’s visions, were types of future priests and servants. They were a “sign,” something striking, or portentous. The same thing is said of Isaiah and his sons with their unusual, prophetic names, Shear-Jashub—“a remnant shall return,” and Maher-shalal-hash-baz—“haste spoil, speed prey.” These, with Isaiah’s own name, meaning, “Salvation of Jehovah,” were said to be for types or signs of things which were yet to come—<sup>1</sup>Isa. 7:3 and 8:3 and 18. Joshua and the whole Aaronic priesthood were types of the true Priest, Christ and His sons, “who are not made after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life” (“*Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.*” KJV)—Heb. 7:16. And the latter clause of the verse in Zechariah gives us further proof of this as the correct interpretation.

“For Behold I will bring forth My Servant the Branch”—V. 8. This phrase with the remainder of the chapter form one of the most powerful Messianic passages in the Old Testament. It is a brief, but most comprehensive announcement concerning the coming Redeemer that we find in the whole of Scripture. “My Servant” is the most mentioned name of the Messiah, the Anointed of God. It is found a score of places in Isaiah, the Evangel of the coming of Christ. But here in Zechariah it is used in combination with another familiar Messianic title of the promised Deliverer—“My Servant the Branch.”

We have this title, Messiah the Branch, brought before us four times in the Old Testament prophecy. In each instance it is a different aspect of His

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 7:3 “Then said the LORD unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and Shearjashub thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller’s field;”

Isaiah 8:3 “And I went unto the prophetess; and she conceived, and bare a son. Then said the LORD to me, Call his name Mahershalalhashbaz.”

Isaiah 8:18 “Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me *are* for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion.”

official character that is viewed. The four Gospel Records present Christ in these four views. Let us note them. First. Isaiah shows us Him as the “Branch of Jehovah”—Isa. 4:2. It is in this character, God with us, that Christ shall appear to Israel, converted and restored. They will cry, “Lo, this is our God,” as the divine Son of God flashes forth His glory upon them. John, the beloved Apostle gives us this portrait of Him. Second. He is shown as the “Branch of David,” that is the Messiah, the Seed of David according to the flesh revealed in His earthly glory as King of kings and Lord of lords. He shall sit upon the throne of David and reign over the House of Israel forever—<sup>1</sup>Isa. 11:1, Jer. 23:5 & 33:15. Matthew gives us a marvelous comprehensive view of Christ in this character. Third. “Jehovah’s Servant the Branch” reveals to us the Messiah in His humbling as a Man and His obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, according to <sup>2</sup>Isa. 52:13-15; 53:1-12; <sup>3</sup>Phil. 2:5-8. It is Mark who is used of the Spirit to set forth the Messiah in the above aspect. Fourth. Messiah, “the Man whose Name is the Branch” (Zech. 6:12, 13) in His character as the Son of Man, the Last Adam, the Second Man in contrast to the first man—<sup>4</sup>I Cor. 15:45-47. He is depicted as reigning over the earth, having regained the dominion which was given to the first Adam and lost by him. Luke shows us this life-size portrait of the Messiah, seen here as the New Man, Head of a new creation, Priest of the Most High God, King of Peace and King of Righteousness, the true Melchisedec to whom the returning Jews will give the tenth of the spoils of victory—<sup>5</sup>Gen. 14:20.

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 11:1 “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:”

Jeremiah 23:5 “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.”

Jeremiah 33:15 “In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.”

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 52:13-15 “And burned the house of the LORD, and the king’s house; and all the houses of Jerusalem, and all the houses of the great *men*, burned he with fire: And all the army of the Chaldeans, that *were* with the captain of the guard, brake down all the walls of Jerusalem round about. Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive *certain* of the poor of the people, and the residue of the people that remained in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to the king of Babylon, and the rest of the multitude.”

<sup>3</sup> Philippians 2:5-8 “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

<sup>4</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:45-47 “And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam *was made* a quickening spirit. Howbeit that *was* not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man *is* of the earth, earthy: the second man *is* the Lord from heaven.”

<sup>5</sup> Genesis 14:20 “And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.”

**3:9** 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.

**3:10** In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree.

But the climax of this great prophecy of Messiah is found in verse 9—“For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua—upon one stone are seven eyes. Behold I will engrave the graving thereof, and I will remove the iniquity of the land in one day”—V. 9.

We need not speculate about this Scripture, nor imagine some vain fanciful explanation regarding it. These symbolic references in Zechariah, as well as in Ezekiel and Revelation all refer to well-known predictions revealed elsewhere. Hence, we must interpret them by comparing Scripture with Scripture, spiritual things with spiritual, and thus arrive at the understanding—<sup>1</sup>I Cor. 2:13. The stone which is here seen laid before Joshua, reminds us of Isaiah 28:16. “Behold I lay in Zion a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation. He that believeth shall not make haste” (*“Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.”—Isa. 28:16 KJV*), or be confounded. Also we remember another, “The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner” (*“The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.” KJV*)—Ps. 118:22. Zechariah informs us that upon this same stone “are seven eyes” (*“shall be seven eyes”—V. 9 KJV*), which latter is easy of interpretation. It signifies the intelligence or omniscience of Christ, the Living Stone, of which this is all wonderfully suggestive. We read in Isaiah of the seven-fold plenitude of the Spirit—“the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord” (Isa. 11:2), and of discernment; “for He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes neither reprove after the hearing of His ears” (*“and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:”—Isa. 11:3 KJV*), but by the Spirit that shall rest upon Him—Isa. 11:2, 3. John the New Testament Zechariah, shows us that this is fulfilled in the Lamb which had been slain “having seven horns (all power) and seven eyes (all omniscience), which are the seven spirits, or seven-fold Spirit of God” (*“having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.” KJV*)—Rev. 5:6.

The engraving upon the stone which the Prophet beholds, expresses the fact that God will make manifest to the House of Israel, as well as to all people, the preciousness or perfect equipment of the Messiah for His office and mediatorial work. It will be indelibly marked in His career. God will no longer hide the fact of the perfection and worth of the Messiah, His Son. The results of His work also will be visible as the latter clause of the verse indicates, “I will remove the iniquity of this land in one day” (*“I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.”—V. 9 KJV*). Observe again that it is primarily to Israel that the

<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians 2:13 “Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”

vision refers. What is here seen happening to Joshua is a typical picture of that which the whole nation will experience; for in his official capacity he represented them. This is the “one day” to which the prophet alludes. It is the day when Israel will accept their Messiah and on the ground of His death upon the cursed tree they will have the joyful experience of being forgiven. “In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem; every family apart” (*“In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem...every family apart;”*—Chap. 12:11, 12). “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” (Chap. 13:1)—Zech. 12:10-14.

That fountain for sin and uncleanness has been opened by the death of Israel’s Messiah nineteen centuries ago; but in “that day” when they look upon Him whom they have pierced, it will be as tho’ it had just happened. That great sight will no doubt fall, upon the Day of Atonement and the Spirit of God will apply to their hearts and consciences the results of the redeeming work of Christ on Calvary’s hill. We will have more relating to “that day” when we come to the last chapters in our book.

Jude probably had this vision of Joshua’s cleansing in mind when he spoke of Michael not “disputing with Satan over the body of Moses” (*“when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses,”*—Jude 1:9 *KJV*), but saying, “The Lord rebuke thee” (Jude 1:9). No doubt this is the reason he refers to the “pulling out of the fire” (*“pulling them out of the fire”*—Jude 1:23 *KJV*), which is an echo of “the brand plucked from the burning” (*“a brand plucked out of the fire”*—V. 2 *KJV*), and the “garment spotted by the flesh” (Jude 1:23), an undoubted allusion to the “filthy garments” in which Joshua was at first seen standing before the Lord—Vs. 2, 3. Moses in his death and “sovereign resurrection” would aptly represent the whole nation, Israel; therefore all that refers to him foreshadows the sovereign restoration and blessing of the Jewish nation. They will be as tho’ raised from the dead.

## The Golden Candlestick

### The Fifth Vision

#### Chapter Four

#### Chapter 4

**4:1** And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep,

**4:2** 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:

**4:3** And two olive trees by it, one upon the right *side* of the bowl, and the other upon the left *side* thereof.

“And the angel that talked with me came again and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of 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 the two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl and the other upon the left side thereof”—Chap. 4:1, 2.

As stated previously, the fourth and fifth visions form a new section in this series of symbolic prophecy; but they stand in close connection with what has been already unfolded in the three preceding visions. These latter conveyed the good and comfortable assurance to the Prophet, and thus to the congregation, that the Lord had not cast off His ancient people which He had chosen in Abraham. A remnant had returned to the homeland, and tho’ they still were under the oppressive yoke of the Gentile world-power, they were there because of the good pleasure of the Persian dynasty which had just come into power over Babylon. They were not yet delivered from the domination of the nations; but the Lord was in their midst as the Angel of the Covenant, identified with them and even pleading their cause—Chap. 1:8-12. And this is especially significant when we view it as relating to the latter times: for tho’ there was a small measure of fulfillment in Zechariah’s day, yet that did not exhaust this prophecy. Remember this was prophecy, which always has reference to future events. And we are very near to the fulfillment of these predictions right now. God is showing Himself most marvelously in behalf of His covenant people. Abraham’s seed is not forgotten by the Lord. We are at this moment almost at the end of Gentile times which the first visions of Zechariah symbolize. Jehovah therein proclaimed that whosoever touched them touched the apple of His eye (chap. 2:8) and that those world powers “who lift up their horn to scatter Judah, Israel and Jerusalem” (“*which lifted up their horn over the land of Judah to scatter it.*”—Chap. 1:21 KJV) would be broken and cast out—Chap. 1:1-18. Furthermore, He proclaimed that the beloved city should be built again and on a far grander scale, according to the “blueprint” of the divine Architect, who Himself should be a wall of fire around that city and protect and defend it forever. He should also be the glory in the midst of it.

But as we noted in the fourth vision, the thought might have suggested itself to Zechariah, How are such things possible? Israel has been cast out of her land and has rendered herself unfit to be the people of God. How can they be again the blessed of Jehovah and His channel of blessing to the world? Then follows, as if in answer to this question, the vision of the third chapter, wherein

the Prophet is shown that the fulfillment of the promises to Israel depend not upon their merits, but on the sovereign grace of God. He has chosen Jerusalem as His city and Israel as His people, and His gifts and calling are not subject to any change.

The fourth vision then is a slight change from the three preceding, yet it is a further unfolding of what has gone before. Here we are shown how the Holy One can dwell in the midst of an unholy and defiled people whom He has chosen. The Prophet is shown a mighty transformation. The high priest, Joshua, standing before the Angel of the Lord as the representative of Israel, is realistically cleansed from his defilement. His filthy garments are taken off of him and he is clothed in clean raiment. So shall the Lord remove the moral defilement of the children of Israel, and cause her iniquity to pass away in that day when a nation shall be born anew—<sup>1</sup>Isa. 66:8. They shall be spiritually arrayed in the rich apparel, the priestly garments of salvation. The high-priestly mitre, to which was fastened the plate of gold, shall be upon their heads. Israel shall thus be fitted to go forth as missionaries of the Lord and scatter the Truth among the nations. Then shall follow in beautiful divine order the result which is symbolized by the fifth vision—Israel the Light of the world.

#### Symbolism of Vision Five

There has elapsed a brief interval since the former scene as is plainly evident. The Prophet is awakened by the interpreting angel. He had fallen no doubt into an ecstatic state, resembling slumber, as we note was often the experience of the prophets—<sup>2</sup>Dan. 10:9, <sup>3</sup>Rev. 1:17. He was lost to his surroundings in contemplation of what he had seen and heard in the previous vision, when he is roused by the question, “What seest thou?” He looks and beholds a candlestick all of gold with a bowl, or vessel for the oil at the top. This latter was a supply for the candlestick with its seven pipes or distributors to the seven lamps, which furnished the light. And there were two olive trees, the one on the right side, the other on the left of the bowl. These trees were full of olives, “which empty the golden oil out of themselves into the bowl” (*“which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves”—V. 12 KJV*) which supplied the candlestick—V. 12.

The Prophet seems especially interested in this beautiful sight. He asks,

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 66:8 “Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? *or* shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.”

<sup>2</sup> Daniel 10:9 “Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground.”

<sup>3</sup> Revelation 1:17 “And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, **Fear not; I am the first and the last.**”



**4:4** So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What *are* these, my lord?

**4:5** Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord.

What are these, my Lord? The Interpreter does not give the meaning, neither is it explained by the Angel of Jehovah. It is left for the Prophet, and for all to interpret; for the message is easy to understand.

The candlestick, the central object in the vision, is representative of the seven-branched candlestick in the Temple. The latter stood in the Holy Place, the figure of the heavenly tabernacle, and was the emblem of what the whole redeemed family shall finally become as joined to the risen, glorified Messiah and Lord. They shall shine, not only in the very presence of God, but to the ends of the earth.

The candlestick is not the Church as some would interpret, but a marvelous figure of what Israel shall be as restored to the Lord. It represents their high and holy calling as identified with their Messiah as the light to all other nations. This was always God's purpose for Israel, for when He "gave to the nations of Israel their inheritance, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel" (*"When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel."* KJV)—Deut. 32:8. Israel failed to measure up to God's standard for them, because they were under the covenant of law which is now set aside. When they return to Jehovah and inherit their land and enjoy the fulfillment of these promises, it will be as under the covenant of promise. And they will sing, even as we do now, "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling." God has covenanted with Abraham, and ratified the promise to Isaac and Jacob, to give their progeny the land of Canaan.

We read, "This is Jerusalem. I have set her in the midst of the nations, and countries are round about her" (*"This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her."* KJV)—Ezek. 5:5. The sceptre of rule shall come back to the ancient people of Jehovah after the long years of their dispersion are ended. Their spiritual blindness will be lifted. The scales shall fall from their eyes even as they fell from the Apostle Paul's, and they shall hear a voice saying, "I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth"—Acts 13:47. And they shall hear further, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold darkness shall cover the earth and gross darkness the people; but Jehovah shall arise upon thee and His glory shall be seen upon thee. All nations shall come to thy light and kings to the brightness of thy rising" (*"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."*—Isa. 60:1-3 KJV)—Isa. 60:1, 2. Israel, the restored

and blessed of the Lord, shall be as the candlestick of Jehovah in the earth, and they shall shine in glorious undimmed splendor as the light of the world for the thousand years reign of Christ.

In the Mosaic Tabernacle, the continuance of the light depended upon the offerings of the people. They were commanded to bring pure olive oil, beaten, for the light to burn continually—<sup>1</sup>Ex. 27:20. It was also dependent upon Aaron and his sons, whose ministry consisted of filling and cleaning the lamps, ordering and lighting them every morning and evening—<sup>2</sup>Ex. 30:7, 8. But in the vision under consideration, no attendant priests are seen, nor offerings of oil from the people. The lamps are filled continuously from the bowl above the candlestick, and the ample supply of the oil (symbolic of the abundant outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon Israel) is set forth by the carriers—the seven pipes—which poured the oil into each lamp.

The Two Olive Trees are a very important part of the vision. “Sons of oil,” is the literal translation of the Hebrew—V. 14. At the time of the vision, these two olive trees were representative of the two leaders or heads, Joshua, the high priest and Zerubbabel, the governor. “These are the two that stand before the Lord of the whole earth” (*“These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.”—Revelation 11:4 KJV*), teaches us the same thing. In the previous vision with which this is connected, Joshua is seen “standing” before the Angel of Jehovah, and in the present chapter Zerubbabel is mentioned by name. It is thus fitting that these two, who were the links with God and Israel at that time, be mentioned together. Their ministries were different, tho’ they were closely associated by the prophets Haggai and Zechariah. The one, Zerubbabel, was the national leader, while the other, Joshua, was the religious head.

But this conclusion does not exhaust the symbolism of these “sons of oil,” because all Zechariah’s visions of the night have reference to the “week,” of <sup>3</sup>Daniel 9:27, the seven years of unprecedented events which are still in the future for Israel. These men, therefore, must be viewed as standing for the kingly and priestly offices to which they belonged. These two orders were consecrated to their ministry by the “anointing oil” and were designed to foreshadow the two

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<sup>1</sup> Exodus 27:20 “And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always.”

<sup>2</sup> Exodus 30:7, 8 “And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations.”

<sup>3</sup> Daniel 9:27 “And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”

offices which shall ultimately be united in Christ. He shall be the great High Priest as well as the King upon His throne—<sup>1</sup>Zech. 6:13. Joshua as well as the whole of the Aaronic priesthood, and the kingly line represented by David, Solomon and all the other kings who wielded the sceptre and sat upon the throne of Judah, were types and shadows pointing on to Him, the Captain and great File-Leader of the faith. It shall be in His light, by the supply of the golden oil of the Spirit, that Israel's candlestick shall ever be kept burning with a sevenfold splendour that shall shine to the ends of the earth.

But there is also another application of the symbol of the sons of oil. We see two olive trees in Revelation, chapter 11. There they are representative of the faithful leaders of that future day who shall return to Palestine and Jehovah's favor. These two witnesses, as they are called, give their testimony during the great tribulation in Jerusalem and represent the future theocracy of Israel. Malachi, the last of the prophets of the Old Testament, tells us of one, called Elijah, who shall come to the nation before the great and terrible day of the Lord. We read, "He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to the fathers"—Mal. 4:5, 6.

The Prophet is wonderfully exercised as to these things. The interpreting Angel informs him that the power of the accomplishment of Israel's future is altogether dependent upon the Holy Spirit. "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"—V. 6. This word, used here for "might," is also used for "army," or "multitude." It refers to the strength of confederacy, or union, while the word for "power" refers to the individual. Together they may be taken to describe human strength in its every phase—physical, mental and moral—the power of the combined strength of the many. All of these, or any one of them cannot stand, neither advance the consummation of God's purposes. The Spirit of God will be the energizing power by which Israel's destiny, as symbolized by the candlestick, shall be fulfilled. He must be the only resource, the only hope of the Prince, the Priest and the people in the building of the Temple. The latter consummation will be the visible proof to the whole world that God is for Israel and that Israel are for the Lord. It will publicly testify that the favor of Jehovah is resting upon them, and other nations must leave hands off.

The Spirit was present with them in the past time of Zerubbabel, the pattern of the later accomplishment, as the Word of the Lord to Haggai, four months prior to this vision, assures. "Be strong; for I am with you, saith Jehovah of hosts, according to the Word which I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so My Spirit remaineth among you. Fear not" (*"be strong, O Joshua,*

<sup>1</sup> Zechariah 6:13 "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."

**4:6** 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.

*son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts: According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not.” KJV)*—Hag. 2:4, 5. Therefore we have the understanding of these words to Zerubbabel. He was to rely solely upon the Spirit of God, and thus the “great mountain” should depart. “Jesus said, If ye have faith and doubt not, ye shall say to this mountain, Be thou removed and it shall be done” (“*Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.*” KJV)—Matt. 21:21. God will accomplish all His wonderful purposes for Israel thru the might of the Holy Spirit which is promised to them (Joel 2), which was only partially fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, because the people did not believe. The Jew feels his high destiny as all the awakened life among them proves, but there is still the dependence upon money, influence, combinations and political powers; hence, God must let all these fail. They must realize by bitter experience the futility of all these agencies in the accomplishment of God’s purpose for them. They are born with the hope of supremacy and rule in their hearts, but they will find later that God alone will be able for their ultimate triumph. He declares that it is not by power, nor might, but by His Spirit, His will shall be fulfilled.

The nations upon whom the Jews shall depend are symbolized here by the “mountain,” which is in their way. They will be the real hindrance to their national life. God will let the rod on which they depend, the reed upon which they lean, turn to a serpent and bite them. The Gentile world powers must be broken down; they must be out of the way before Israel can advance. The confederacy of nations, the revived Roman Empire with all the confederacies of earth and Satan, cannot withstand the rush of the Spirit of Jehovah. When it is time for Him to show His speed, all the little tin cans of earth must get out of the way of His chariot, or they will be roughly handled. Every high thing must come down. The mountain will become a plain at the command of Zerubbabel when the Prince of Israel comes forth at the Head of the army of the Lord. He shall bring forth the Head Stone of the Temple with shootings, crying, “Grace, grace unto it”—V. 7. Christ is the Corner Stone which the nation rejected; but they must yet receive Him or they will never have a Temple or a home in Palestine. It is written, “The Stone which the builders refused is become the head of the corner. This is the Lord’s doings and it is marvelous in our eyes” (“*The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.*” KJV) David tells us—Ps. 118:22, 23.

It is Christ’s hands that have laid the foundation of the Temple even as Zerubbabel laid the foundation of the building in his day, and finished it. But

**4:7** 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.

**4:8** Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

**4:9** 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.

Christ is the Master Builder as well as the Corner Stone. The rejected, despised Jesus of Nazareth, is the Author and Finisher of all the plans and purposes of God. He is the Hub of the wheel of Israel's, as well as of all men's destinies, whether they are Jews or Gentiles. And as there were mighty shootings when the Temple of Zerubbabel was finished, so will there be mighty shootings when the latter House shall be finished. The priests and the Levites sang one to another in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord; for "He is good and His mercy endureth forever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout" (*"because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid."* KJV)—Ezra. 3:11.

The Temple which was built in Zechariah's day may have appeared a small thing in the eyes of "many of the priests and Levites and chief of the fathers, which were ancient men" (*"many of the priests and Levites and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men,"*—Ezra 3:12 KJV); for when they saw its modest dimensions and looked at their limited resources they wept with a loud voice x x x "so that the people could not discern the voice of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people" (*"So that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people:"*—Ezra 3:13 KJV)—Ezra. 3:10-13. In comparison with the glory of Solomon's Temple, which had been destroyed, this one was as nothing in their eyes—<sup>1</sup>Hag. 2:3. But it was especially in comparison with the future glorious Millennial Temple, that had been described by the former prophets, the centre from which the light of the Lord should stream, that this Temple seemed a little thing. The chief men could not reconcile the day of small things with the glorious prophecies. They did not know that the restoration from the captivity of Babylon was but a small thing, a little hint of the deliverance from a far greater captivity, that which is even now at hand for Israel. The working of the Lord in the Jew's behalf and their going back to the Fatherland may appear a small thing in the eyes of the nations. In fact it may all appear a very small thing in their own eyes, because the natural man is occupied with spectacular doings—big things catch his eye—but with God it is different. It is not how much but how well. He is more interested in quality than in quantity. The Jewish movement may be slow, but it is sure. God is more interested in them than any other nation in the world, and in a short time, when His Church is taken up, He will be more interested in their movements than any other movement of any people on the earth.

**4:10** 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.

It will only be a short time until those who are ashamed because of the little things shall rejoice when they see the plummet in the hands of the anti-

<sup>1</sup> Haggai 2:3 "Who *is* left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? *is it* not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?"

**4:11** 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?

**4:12** 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?

**4:13** And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these *be*? And I said, No, my lord.

**4:14** Then said he, These *are* the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.

typical Zerubbabel who is thus indicated as the future Builder of the Temple. “The seven eyes of the Lord,” the fullness of the Spirit, will rest upon Him. This emphasizes the Father’s approbation and delight. Those seven eyes run to and fro, thru-out the whole earth and nothing is hidden from their omniscience. The Lord will show Himself strong in behalf of every one whose heart is perfect toward Him—<sup>1</sup>II Chron. 16:9.

Nineteen centuries ago in His vicarious death upon the cross—His death of atonement and consequent glorious resurrection, Christ the Master Builder, laid the foundation of the Temple. Since then living stones, both Gentile and Jewish believers from all parts of the world, have been gathered by the Spirit, and the building fitly framed together is growing up a spiritual dwelling place for the Lord—<sup>2</sup>Eph. 2:19-22. It is almost completed, but its beauty cannot be manifested until at the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, when the Head shall be joined to the body and the mystical Christ revealed. He will then begin the Building on earth; for the heavenly House must be finished before the earthly one can begin. Both heaven and earth will join in one great and grand hallelujah chorus which will never end.

These first five visions have all been prophecies of hope and good cheer. They abound, as we have noted, in the most glorious promises and show us the consummation of God’s purposes toward Israel in symbolic signs. They tell us of Grace, of which there is not a more beautiful theme in Scripture. God delights to show His grace. He desires us to realize that He is glorified therein as in no other manner of His dealing with mankind. Israel shall learn His great heart of love when He shall arise and have mercy upon Zion—when He shall again “choose Israel” and breathe His Spirit upon them and they shall live in His sight—Ezek. 37.

But before these glorious hopes can be realized, before the beautiful symbolism of the candlestick shall be a reality and Israel’s light shine in greater splendour than ever before, both the land and the people must be cleansed and changed. Everything that defiles, or works abomination, or makes a lie must be cast out. And this is what we must consider in the following three visions.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Chronicles 16:9 “For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of *them* whose heart *is* perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.”

<sup>2</sup> Ephesians 2:19-22 “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”

## The Fiery Flying Roll

### The Sixth Vision

#### Chapter Five

#### Chapter 5

God desires to show mercy. He wants to bless, but if men refuse to accept His grace, they must perforce accept His judgment. Upon those who persist in their rebellion and wickedness, regardless of all His offers of mercy, God will pour out His wrath to the uttermost. Sin must be purged. The work of Christ on the cross must be accepted or men will suffer for their own sins. If sinners will not let God cleanse them from their sins, He will cleanse the earth from sin by taking the sinners out of it. Thus in these later visions we are shown the reverse side of the truth of the first chapters. Before the glorious results set forth therein can be fulfilled, a period of moral darkness, corruption and almost universal apostasy will be manifested in the world. We see this coming on apace even now in Christendom.

**5:1** Then I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a flying roll.

“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”—Chap. 5:1, 2.

**5:2** 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.

The Prophet turns from the contemplation of the pleasing vision which confronted him and finds a change. Probably the interpreting Angel calls his attention to the new order of things, and lifting up his eyes he sees a roll, twenty cubits long and ten cubits broad, which his instructor tells him is “the curse that goeth forth over the whole land”—V. 3.

**5:3** 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.

This is not the first mention of such a roll or scroll as the emblem of judgment from the Lord. In the prophecy of Ezekiel we have a similar vision. “And when I looked behold a hand was sent unto me and lo, a roll of a book was therein. And he spread it out before me and it was written within and without and there was written therein lamentation and mourning and woe”—Ezek. 2:9, 10. The roll which Zechariah beheld was also spread out, or open, else its dimensions could not have been seen. It was also written within and without as may be inferred from the words, “on this and on the other side according to it,” and seems to refer to the curse which the law contains for all those that disobey its precepts. It is written, “Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them”—Deut. 27:26.

There may be a question as to this interpretation, as there are only two transgressions of the law specified, for which the curse is to fall upon the offenders—perjury and theft—but these two probably include the two tables of the law. The statement, “everyone that sweareth” (V. 3) is explained later as swearing falsely by the Name of the Lord (V. 4) which refers to the third

command, which is found in the first table of the law; while “every one that stealeth” breaks the eight command, written on the second table of the law, which sums up man’s duty to his neighbor. However, it is no longer now, “Thou shalt not,” but on the flying roll are written the dreadful curses against all those who have disobeyed God’s law, which doom, according to the vision, is ready to be executed. There shall be delay no longer in the breaking forth of God’s wrath upon the wicked world.

Observe this striking fact, the roll is seen by Zechariah as “flying,” set in motion by the Lord of hosts, hence, going swiftly and unerringly on its devastating judgment course. An angry God is about to take vengeance upon a disobedient people. Imagine with what terror it must have inspired the Prophet—the roll probably illuminated, for it was night—carrying its dreadful load of curses thru the heavens. Where ever it moved its message was seen. It reminds us of the handwriting on the wall in Belshazzar’s banquet hall. The time is coming quickly when God will keep silence no longer, is the message.

The special dimensions of the roll are not without significance. They correspond with the size of the Holy Place in the Tabernacle, “twenty cubits long and ten cubits broad,” which we are assured is not accidental. Men shall be judged according to the measure of the sanctuary, not by their own measure, or false ideas of God’s requirements. Today one hears such statements, “Oh, I do as well as the next one, or No, I do not keep the law perfectly; but I do the best I can, etc.,” but this is not the balance of the Holy Place. No indeed: the measure of the sanctuary is in perfect correspondence with the majesty and holiness of the law of God which has been broken. And the awful doom of judgment for every individual is expressed thus, “And I will bring it forth, x x and it shall enter”—V. 4. There is no uncertainty as to the coming of the vengeance of God and the continuance of the judgment as long as necessary, is also emphasized in this statement.

The roll enters the house of the transgressor and remains there not only to punish the wicked person, but also to consume the timber and the stone of the house. Here we are confronted with the climax in the train of calamities that follow in the wake of the curse. The words of the last clause of the sentence are almost identical with those used of the house stricken with leprosy—<sup>1</sup>Lev. 14:45. The entire dwelling had to be destroyed, “both the stones thereof and the timber thereof” (“*shall consume it with the timber thereof and the stones thereof.*” *KJV*)—V. 4. The inference is plainly that the whole house of Israel after the flesh, shall be tried with fiery judgment. There is only one way to escape the curses of the broken law and that is by hiding in the wounds of the

**5:4** 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.

<sup>1</sup> Leviticus 14:45 “And he shall break down the house, the stones of it, and the timber thereof, and all the mortar of the house; and he shall carry *them* forth out of the city into an unclean place.”



Savior who bore those curses in His own body on the cross. God has opened a fountain for sin and uncleanness in the pierced side of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the vilest sinner, may become whiter than snow by washing therein. Then they may shout with the Apostle Paul, “Christ hath redeemed me from the curse of the law, having been made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is He that hangeth on a tree” (“*Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:*” *KJV*)—Gal. 3:13.

### The Significant Ephah

#### The Seventh Vision

“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 thru all the earth”—Chap. 5:5, 6.

This is one of the most difficult of the visions, but it is most interesting. The interpreting Angel had withdrawn after the instruction rendered in the preceding vision, but he is right on the scene again. He went forth and suggests to Zechariah that he lift up his eyes and see another striking sign. He does as the angel bids, but he does not recognize the object. The angel informs him that it is “the ephah that goeth forth” and adds these puzzling words, “This is their resemblance (their eye) in all the land”—V. 6 R.V.

As the Prophet continues to look, the cover of the ephah, consisting of a talent of lead, was lifted off and he beheld a woman, sitting in the midst of the ephah. The Angel, pointing to her, said, “This is wickedness”—V. 8. The Angel then “casts the weight of lead into the midst of the ephah, upon the mouth thereof” (V. 8), as tho’ the woman was endeavoring to get out of the ephah and must be stopped. Then the Prophet sees two women with wings like a stork coming forth from some invisible place and “the wind was in their wings”—V. 9. The latter phrase no doubt refers to the power of Satan. They lifted up the ephah between the heavens and the earth. Zechariah enquires as to its destination and he is informed that they are bearing it away to build it a house in the land of Shinar, and it shall be established and set there upon its own base.

Now for the interpretation. The “ephah” was the largest measure of commerce in use among the Jews. The eyes of the land are upon it, or rather it is more correct to say, that which it symbolizes is before the eyes of all men. Commercialism in the book of Revelation, chapter 18, is set before us very prominently as a sign of the full measure of wickedness at the end. “Merchants” are mentioned as having become rich thru the abundance of the delicacies of this system to which John is pointing. Later, “merchants” are seen weeping, because of the lack of markets for their merchandise. Then there is a long list of the

**5:5** 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.

**5:6** 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.

**5:7** And, behold, there was lifted up a talent of lead: and this *is* a woman that sitteth in the midst of the ephah.

**5:8** 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.

**5:9** 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.

**5:10** Then said I to the angel that talked with me, Whither do these bear the ephah?

**5:11** 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.

articles of commerce in which slaves and even souls of men are included—<sup>1</sup>Rev. 18:13. This proves that the commercialism therein emphasized is of more than ordinary import. It is of a religious character. Furthermore women, in Scripture, generally refer to religious things, sometimes in a good sense and sometimes otherwise. Israel is likened to a woman, likewise the Church. As loyal, and consecrated to the Lord she is called “a chaste virgin,” as false, she is named a harlot. The latter emphasizes the fact that she commercialized her place and power for gain. Commerce in a business sense is not necessarily evil. It is when men take hold of religious or spiritual things to reap something for themselves, when they make merchandise of the Gospel, that commerce becomes sinful. And the more these principles are evidenced, the greater they increase, the greater the wickedness, as is the case symbolized by the ephah. It is the figure of evil of the greatest magnitude—the church selling her wares and enriching herself.

The Hebrew word translated “wickedness” by the Septuagint, is the same as that used of the anti-Christ, the “Wicked” whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth—<sup>2</sup>II Thes. 2:8. Therefore, we say that the woman in the ephah personifies wickedness. She is its fullest expression, its climax. And the fact that she is surrounded by commerce, or that which expresses it, and sits in the very midst of it, is not without signification. We have here a striking portrait of the great whore of Revelation 17; for both of these women emphasize the most flagrant iniquity. The great “whore” has a golden cup in her hand full of the abominations and filthiness of her fornication, and she is situated upon many waters. She is arrayed in purple and scarlet and ornamented with gold, precious stones and pearls. Her name is “Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth”—Rev. 17:5. She is seen drunk with the blood of the saints, proving her connection with religion.

When we first see the woman in the ephah, the symbol of the great whore, she is apparently about to escape out of her place in the midst of the commerce by which she is surrounded, but she is not allowed to do so. The Angel throws the woman back in the ephah, and casts the circular mass of lead upon the mouth thereof, teaching us that the very instrument of her sin becomes the instrument of her punishment. The talent, symbol of her unholy trade, becomes the heavy weight by which she is held down until she is landed safely “in her own place” where after a season she will be judged and destroyed, together with those who have been her paramours in wickedness—the anti-Christ and false prophet.

But to return to the vision. The woman seeking to get out of her close

<sup>1</sup> Revelation 18:13 “And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.”

<sup>2</sup> 2 Thessalonians 2:8 “And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:”

quarters would hint of the time when the Catholic Church will get into the net of God's judgment. The very thing in which she traded is the means used of the Lord for her punishment. She is carried swiftly away and a house is built for her in the land of Shinar and established there upon her own base. The land of Shinar is Babylon. When we look into this carefully we are amazed at the understanding we get of this difficult vision. Babylon was the first city of which we have any record after the deluge. The city upon which God's judgment fell was that wicked city in the plain of Shinar—Gen. 11. The inhabitants of that land built a city and a tower whose top they intended should reach to heaven. They wanted to make themselves a name. The Lord came down to see the great sight. Man was deified in that city. He was his own god. Human strength and wisdom were in full development, but it was fallen man that was in evidence. Men reached the zenith of their self-development and judgment fell upon them quickly from the Lord and they were scattered. The Babylon of the future, viewed in the book of Revelation, is the very same attempt, only on a far greater scale. That religious city is even now in the building, but it has not reached the apex. It remains for the future to see to what lengths sinful man will go, and to what depths he will fall when the restraining hand of God is removed.

The Babylon of the future is not only the Catholic Church as many argue, but it is Protestantism, as well. It is a combination of all religious cults, claiming to be Christian, into one great confederacy. In fact Babylon has this very significance. It means "concentration and confusion." The Romish church as well as Protestantism will be joined together in one great hodgepodge of apostasy. They are nearing the shoals of the danger today and are only hindered by the power of the true ecclesia. But when the restraining one—the true Church, has departed, then quickly the leaven will spread and the full development of religious iniquity will be manifested. "Mystery, Babylon, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth" (Rev. 17:5) will be ruling over all the world. She is viewed by John as riding upon the world confederacy—the revived Roman Empire—holding the reins of the scarlet colored, galloping beast (Rev. 17), who is tramping everything under his feet when Daniel beholds him—<sup>1</sup>Dan. 7:19-25.

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel 7:19-25 "Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth *were of iron*, and his nails *of brass*; *which* devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; And of the ten horns that *were* in his head, and *of* the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even *of* that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look *was* more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom *are* ten kings *that* shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak *great* words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time."

Babylon in its beginning gives us the figure of a world empire, civil and religious (Gen. 11), arrayed against God; so in the end. It stands for the anti-Christian world, which, by lying sophistry is making inroads against the truth. All this is a preparation for Babylon. The professed church in every way is increasing—riches, learning, prestige, honor are hers. Influential men with money control its affairs. Errors of all kinds, with the accompaniment of loose morals, are afloat on the sea of religiousness. Great schemes, big things are the talk of the hour. Institutions of learning—in which infidelity under the form of higher criticism is taught—are erected and endowed by wealthy men, with millions of dollars, as tho' this world was to be the scene of their activities forever. And that is exactly what has been taught. The false church has constituted herself the teacher and has brought in wrong doctrines as to her destiny. She has leavened the whole mass of Truth (<sup>1</sup>Matt. 13:33) by putting into men's minds that she is God's appointed agency in the conversion of the world. Hence, they have sought world conquest with the apparent desire to Christianize it, but that is the bunk all round. She is a self-appointed agent, in this respect, but not a God-appointee. These so-called Christian nations are simply following on in the way of their own desire. They are not led in this manner against their will. It is their very nature to rule over the world. The devil has put it there. And in a measure they will attain their ambition and when it is a reality, they will turn upon the Romish Church and destroy that system. The anti-Christ, head of the world empire, will not share his honors with any one. The mighty city, religious Babylon, will fall even as Scripture foresees; "The ten horns which thou sawest, and the beast, these shall hate the whore and shall make her desolate and naked and eat her flesh and burn her with fire; for God hath put it into their hearts to fulfill His will" (*"And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will," KJV*)—Rev. 17:16, 17.

Some commentators of the Bible are of the opinion that the ancient city of Babylon must be rebuilt to fulfill the above Scripture, and others of like character in Isaiah and Jeremiah. According to their theory, a future judgment will fall upon Babylon which must arise, and to quote the words of one, "for a time will be the centre and embodiment of all the elements of our godless Western civilization and which will become the chief entrepot of commerce in the world." And there are developments in the world today which point in this direction, as we intimated. The Mesopotamian valley and all the region round about are the scene at the present time of great activity. It appears to be in a state of restoration. It is now called Irak. Britain has held the Mandate over this country until recently, when they gave up their authority to Feisal, the present

<sup>1</sup> Matthew 13:33 "Another parable spake he unto them; **The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.**"

ruler. It now enjoys a season of apparent independence and self-government, which will be established and ratified when Irak becomes a member of the League of Nations which is scheduled to happen in 1932.

Britain set King Feisal on the throne as a reward for his assistance in Arabia during the war. He has been loyal to the British Government in every obligation and the country has prospered under his rule. He is a popular ruler. He will no doubt continue in this capacity. It was largely due to his influence that Great Britain granted independence to Irak. Feisal is somewhat of a noted character. Several students of prophecy have visioned him as the coming anti-Christ and have so written him up. One man in particular, being most emphatic as to his identity. We confess we fail to see the correspondence to the anti-Christ of Biblical fame, either as the false prophet, or the counterfeit king; but we may see more later.

Shinar, we are assured, as mentioned in connection with the ephah in the vision given to Zechariah, refers altogether to apostatized Christendom, the hold of every foul, lying religious demon that is manifest today, and others which will appear later. It is shown as a great tree in <sup>1</sup>Matthew 13:32, with all the birds of the air, (wicked spirits) lodged in its branches. Shinar in Scripture is symbolic of the anti-Christian world, which claims to be Christian and yet wars against the Truth.

The professing Church is more and more going on into apostasy. Shortly she will be seen hand in glove with the revived Roman Empire, the counterfeit of Christ's Kingdom. Church and State will be united, as John, in Revelation shows.

<sup>1</sup> Matthew 13:32 “Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.”

## The Four Judgement Chariots

### The Eighth Vision

#### Chapter Six

#### Chapter 6

**6:1** 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.

**6:2** In the first chariot *were* red horses; and in the second chariot black horses;

**6:3** And in the third chariot white horses; and in the fourth chariot grisled and bay horses.

**6:4** Then I answered and said unto the angel that talked with me, What *are* these, my lord?

**6:5** 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.

“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”—Chap. 6:1-3.

This is the eighth and last vision that Zechariah beholds upon the screen on that memorable night. He is directed again, no doubt, by the Interpreting Angel to lift up his eyes. As he complies, he sees four chariots come forth from between two mountains of brass. The first was drawn by red horses, the second by black, the third by white and the fourth, variously colored, to which also is applied the adjective, “strong,” as bay may be translated. This vision connects with the two preceding ones, and signifies judgment, even as the former also suggested and as may be readily seen.

The two mountains in the Hebrew have the definite article expressed which indicates that they are well known and are closely associated, as we may infer by verse 5, with the presence of “the Lord of the whole earth” (“*the Lord of all the earth.*” *KJV*). These are no doubt Mt. Moriah and Mt. Olivet and refer figuratively to the first and second coming of Christ. They are designated as “mountains of brass” which emphatically proclaim judgment. Moriah declares the judgment which fell upon Christ at His first coming. Olivet just as surely declares the judgment which will fall upon all the wicked world at His second coming.

We are struck with the similarity of this last vision with the first one, contained in chapter one. There are seen the host of heavenly visitors upon red, speckled and white horses, walking to and fro upon the earth. We learned that the vision betokened judgment upon the nations who were at ease; for the Lord had returned with mercy to His earthly people and was jealous for Jerusalem and was ready to bless and prosper Israel. The Church is here viewed as an army, joined to Christ the Head, as Captain, and waiting the moment to take vengeance on all that are against God and His people. In this last vision, the waiting is over. There shall no longer be any delay. The host of heaven are now seen as God’s chariots of judgment. They are viewed as sweeping on in fiery indignation like a hurricane. It is as tho’ the night had almost gone and the morning was coming on apace. The riders in vision one, halted in the valley; but there is no halting now. The chariots are rushing on to execute the terrible work to which they are called. They are personified as “the four winds of heaven which go forth from

standing before the whole earth” (V. 5), swift and unerring as the wind to do the bidding of Jehovah.

In this connection, let us look at <sup>1</sup>Daniel 7:1-3. We there see the four winds of heaven “striving” upon the great sea. This mighty energizing of these winds caused “four beasts” to arise out of the depths. These later we know symbolize the “four” great Gentile world powers. John in His great visions, shows up these same “four” world powers coining up out of the sea, but as confederated into one mighty empire—Rev. 13. But those “four” winds of Zechariah do not refer to these. They are rather opposed to them. They are to break up these empires and put down all that for which they stand. They figure good powers, heavenly forces, which will be designedly and sovereignly in the will of God at this time and place. We are reminded of the Cherubim by the number “four.” We see them in Ezekiel’s prophecy, associated with the throne of heaven. They are rolling their judgment chariots along in the perfect will of God. “And they went every one straight forward: whither the Spirit was to go, they went and they turned not when they went”—Ezek. 1:12. When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Lord will have ready a standard against him.

In the book of Revelation, where Christ is viewed as taking by force His Kingdom to Himself, we have the same horses visioned, chapter 6, and the same army in chapter 19. In the former case, the horses are sent forth, but not in the same order named in Zechariah. Furthermore, as proof that we are correct in our interpretation here, the Living Creatures, or Cherubim, call them into action in connection with the Lamb as He opens the seals. The Judge and the judges are viewed together on the judicial throne. God is demanding the surrender of the world to His Christ by pouring out His fiery indignation upon the rebellious, usurping nations. The time of His wrath is come. The Stone is seen falling from heaven and smiting the image of Daniel 2 upon its feet. The whole system of Gentile rule will thus be put out of commission. The “chariots” are simply representative of the mighty army of the Lord, the swift moving agencies which will bring all the dynasties of earth to ruin in short order. Things will come to pass in quick time after they get started. This vision especially falls in the end of the seven years when heaven is seen opening and the great army of the Lord is visioned coming down with the Captain and Leader in command to judge the earth and to make war. He is clothed in a vesture dipped in blood and His name is called the Word of God. “Out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword that with it He should smite the nations and He shall rule them with a rod of iron and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God”—Rev. 19:15.

**6:6** 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.

**6:7** 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.

<sup>1</sup> Daniel 7:1-3 “In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, *and* told the sum of the matters. Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.”

## Supper for the Fowls

Immediately after the appearing of the King of kings with His great army, an angel is seen standing in the sun and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, “Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God, that ye may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of captains and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of them that sit upon them, both free and bond, both small and great” (*“Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.”—Rev. 19:17, 18 KJV*). How terrible is the outlook for this doomed world. No pen can describe the awful destruction that will follow when God rises up in His wrath to take vengeance upon the usurping rebellious nations, who are against His Son and His government. The Spirit of God admonishes the nations to “kiss the Son, lest He be angry and ye perish when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him” (*“Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.” KJV*)—Psalm 2:12.

“And He cried unto me and spake unto me, saying, Behold those which go toward the north country have quieted my spirit in the north country”—V. 8.

**6:8** 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.

The Interpreting Angel had already informed Zechariah that the chariots with their horses represented the agencies of God which were then coming forth to scatter death and destruction. They were sent forth at His command in cohorts to the North country and South country, both of which are decidedly prominent in Scripture. Daniel visions a long warfare relative to these two countries, which focuses attention upon the latter years, the seven years of prophetic import, as all Bible students agree—Dan. 11.

The “bay” horses, however, are not confined to one direction. They are sent forth thru-out the whole earth, and thus their special characteristic as “strong” ones are emphasized. We would infer from this description that some regiments of God’s army will be stronger than other cohorts or regiments, and thereby enabled to put down that which rises up more aggressively against Him. It will be the “strong” against the “strong,” as we would say. The expression “have quieted my spirit in the north country,” may be read, “caused my spirit to rest upon the north country,” implies that the special land is the object on which his spirit abides. And the word “spirit,” is also translated “anger” in other Scriptures, (<sup>1</sup>Judges 8:3 and Eccles. 10:4), in which sense it must be understood

<sup>1</sup> Judges 8:3 “God hath delivered into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb: and what was I able to do in comparison of you? Then their anger was abated toward him, when he had said that.”

Ecclesiastes 10:4 “If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, leave not thy place; for yielding pacifieth great offences.”



here. Thus we might paraphrase as follows, “that company of the host of the Lord, whose mission is toward the north country, carries thither the anger of the Lord and deposits it there.” John’s words relative to the unbeliever, “The wrath of God abideth on him” (John 3:36), expresses the same thought. The “north country” is especially singled out as the region where the wrath of God will be visited to the uttermost in that time of His vengeance. We have the reason of this given to us in the prophecy of Ezekiel where we are shown a great northern confederacy, assembling themselves against God and His people—Ezek. 38 and 39. It is not the same confederacy of nations as that of the revived Roman Empire, but rather a rival. The one is the Western league, the other the Northern.

Some one may say, How do you know? Scripture answers for us. Rosh, Meshech and Tubal, undoubtedly apply to Russia, (the first named refers to the country; the others to the cities), who is even now showing signs of a revolt against God and man, which later will break forth into open rebellion, Russia is greatly feared by other nations. It desires to plunge Europe into war, because she hopes to win the spoils of victory. She is steadily working toward world conquest.

The proof that Rosh is Russia is found in <sup>1</sup>Ezekiel 38:3. Rosh is addressed as Gog; therefore, we conclude that Gog is the leader of those nations, his country being Magog—“the overtopping place.” We learn from Genesis that “Magog, Tubal, Meshech and Gomer” were all sons of Japheth; while “Togarmah” was a grandson, being a son of Gomer. History informs us that Magog’s location was between Mesopotamia and the Caucasus. Also that these three, “Rosh, Meshech and Tubal,” anciently were united and called Sycythians. They were wanderers and roamed over the country north of the Black and Caspian Seas and were warlike tribes.

Furthermore, their own traditions represent them as having lived in Asia, being later identified with the Medes, from whence sprang the Russia that we know. And as the confederacy mentioned in Ezekiel gathers from a country north of Palestine, we believe we are justified in our statement that this nation is Russia and will be the head of the Northern confederacy. It furnishes the leader; for he is the “prince of Rosh,” R. V., not “chief prince” as in our authorized version. He is in control of Meshech and Tubal which may be easily identified as Moscow and Tobolsk. With him are represented other nations. Persia is one of these. It is even now partly occupied by Russia. Etheiopia and Phut are also mentioned, as well as Gomer and all its bands. The latter nation has been partly identified as Germany which was not a part of the former Roman Empire; therefore it will not be a part of its revival. This may partly explain why it is generally out of harmony with the other European countries.

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<sup>1</sup> Ezekiel 38:3 “And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I *am* against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal:”

God's judgments must be fully poured out upon all the nations of the world to make way for the Kingdom of Christ. The whole world will be in rebellion and the most rebellious and blasphemous will feel His wrath the most; for all men must bow at the Name of Jesus Christ. The Father has invested Him with all power, dominion and glory. All nations and languages shall serve Him. "His dominion is an everlasting dominion and His Kingdom shall never be destroyed" (*"And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."* KJV)—Dan. 7:27.

With this the night visions, or we might say, the Apocalypse of Zechariah ends. And this is most significant; for the truth prophesied in these last three visions, which stand related to one another, portraying Israel's night of sorrow, will be past. Their day of victory will have dawned. The Christ will appear, their Messiah, for Whom they have looked, and for whom they have longed for centuries, but did not recognize Him when He appeared the first time. They were looking at His Second Advent portrait in the Scriptures and failed to discover His likeness at His first coming, tho' it is plainly visible there. But we say, They will recognize Him in both characters when He appears to their defense and protection in that dark night which will end their suffering forever. And it is this latter fact which is symbolically portrayed in the second part of chapter 6, the crowning of the high priest. Some commentators consider this a part of the visions, a ninth, but we see it otherwise. It is the climax, the very apex of the monument of Truth which is contained in these moving pictures of that memorable night. It must follow as the topstone of that symbolic line of prophecy which the visions set forth.

#### The Crowning of Joshua

"And the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Take them of the captivity, of Heldai, of Tobijah and of Jedaiah, which are come from Babylon, and come thou the same day; x x x take silver and gold and make crowns and set them upon the head of Joshua, the son of Josedech, the high priest"—Chap. 6:9-13.

The proof that this is not one of the visions is contained in verse 9, where we read Zechariah's statement, "And the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying," showing that which follows is a new portion. The latter formula was used by the prophets to authenticate that which they spoke as being of the Holy Spirit and not of themselves. It was so intended in this case. The whole portion divides into a symbolical part (vs 9-11), and then the verbal prophecy—Vs. 13-15.

**6:9** And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

**6:10** 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;

**6:11** Then take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set *them* upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest;

The circumstance which was the occasion of this portion is interesting when seen in its typical bearing. Three prominent men from Babylon had arrived in Jerusalem, Heldai, Tobijah and Jedaiah. They had brought an offering to the Lord from the captivity. Some of those who had not returned to Palestine were yet in hearty sympathy with all that was taking place there. The building of the Temple was of special import to them. And the same thing is being enacted today. Many Jews are sending their money, and more will do so later, to restore and build Jerusalem. They are deeply interested in her walls and bulwarks, the Temple itself being of prime importance and they are willing to send abundantly when they see the mighty movings of Jehovah in their behalf, tho' they may not recognize Him walking on the waters at the present day.

Zechariah was commanded to go to the house of Josiah, the son of Zephaniah. The meanings of these names is most suggestive. "He will be sustained by Jehovah," because he is the son of him who is "treasured by Jehovah." They refer to the blessed Jewish remnant of the end time who will be helped by the Lord for the sake of the fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The Prophet was to take of the gold and silver and make crowns and set them upon the head of Joshua, the high priest. The word, "crowns," being plural has presented a difficulty to some which we can understand in its reference to Joshua. It probably was fashioned in some sort of a diadem encircled with several crowns. But in its symbolic character it is most instructive. The crowning of Joshua is simply a typical scene portraying the crowning of our Lord Jesus Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords. It is his priestly service that is the foundation of His Kingly throne. John had a view of Him in His downward march from glory with His great army (Rev. 19) and He was wearing a diadem of many crowns.

#### The Prophecy Concerning Joshua

After the crowning of Joshua by Zechariah, he was commanded to give him the following message. "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the Man whose name is The Branch. 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. 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"—V. 12-13.

Marvelous, far-reaching prophecy! So much in little! A book might be written on its unfolding and exposition. It is unique; a beacon of light to the understanding of this portion, showing plainly its typical character. Joshua was only the figure of the mighty Man of destiny, the Messiah of Israel that shall come and fulfill all that is written concerning His own people. He is one of them,

the prophesied Seed of Abraham, the Blessor of mankind, the Seed of David, the King of the Jews.

“Behold the Man,” is an expression which is now famous. It was used again by Pilate in presenting the innocent Man Jesus to the Jews who had betrayed Him into Pilate’s hands—<sup>1</sup>John 19:5. But in Zechariah, we are not directed to the Son of Man in His humiliation, “the Man of sorrows,” acquainted with grief, but the perfect man, the Man after God’s own heart, who in His own unsullied holiness, His own intrinsic excellence and unchallengeable righteousness, is able to stand before the throne of God. He is The Man to whom the Spirit of God would call our attention, who shall be crowned with glory and honor, as the reward of His suffering on the cross to redeem all humanity. He who has worn the crown of thorns, expressive of the curse, at His first advent, shall also wear the diadem of glory and have all things put in subjection under His feet when He appears the second time.

Joshua, to whom the words are addressed, is but a faint reflection, a small figure of the Real Person to whom these words refer. He himself could not by any possibility imagine that they were meant for him; because he was not of the house, or lineage of David, hence, could not be crowned as King. He was of the line of Aaron, a priest, and as long as the old dispensation lasted, the royalty and the priesthood were separate. No true prophet could ever declare anything contrary to this decree. If it had been Zerubbabel, who was a Prince of the house of David, who had been so crowned, there might be the shadow of ground for the supposition that he was meant and no other; but not so with Joshua’s crowning. And there is proof of the above statement in the fact that “the Man,” to whom the attention of Joshua is directed away from himself, is introduced by the well-known Messianic title—“The Branch.” We have noted the significance of this name of the Lord Jesus Christ in our exposition of Chapter 3; therefore we will pass on to the next sentence.

“And He shall grow up out of His place” (V. 12), or as a Hebrew translation reads, “He shall branch up from under Him,” come forth from out His own stock or root. The prophecy is emphatically true as to Christ. He came of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah and of the family of David. Also as to the country, His right cannot be disputed. He came out of Immanuel’s Land, born in Bethlehem Ephratha, even as it was spoken by Micah, the Seer—Chap. 5:2. Furthermore there is a hint of Him as the root of David as well as His offspring in this significant phrase, “He shall branch up from under Him.”

“And He shall build the Temple of the Lord, even He shall build the Temple and He shall bear the glory and shall sit and rule upon His throne”—V. 12, 13.

**6:12** 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:

<sup>1</sup> John 19:5 “Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!”

**6:13** 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.

Twice the fact is stated that He, the Branch, shall build the Temple. This was no doubt an encouragement to Joshua, as well as to Zerubbabel, that the Temple, which they were engaged in building, seemingly so insignificant when compared with the millennial Temple of the Scriptures, was only a shadow of that glorious one which Messiah should build in His own Person and power. Moreover “He shall bear the glory” (V. 13) or regal majesty of that place as none other has ever borne it. He shall be perfectly fitted in His own peerless Person to wear the honors gracefully. With dignity and majesty shall He wield the sceptre, as “one born to the purple,” as goes the saying. “He shall sit and rule upon His throne” (V. 13), as to the manner born. He will be the “King all glorious in His apparel, x x mighty to save,” absolute and autocratic Despot. And such sovereignty will be safe in His hands. He will be the ideal Ruler even as David visioned, “just and ruling in the fear of God, as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds, as the tender grass, springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain” (*“He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.” KJV*)—II Sam. 23:3-5. And the following citation connects.

“And He shall be a priest upon His throne and the counsel of peace shall be between them both”—V. 13.

The character of His rule is taught in the first clause of the above sentence. He is here described as the true Melchisedek—“King of Righteousness,” and also King of Salem—“King of Peace,” the great High Priest, who unlike Aaron, “hath an unchangeable priesthood”—Heb. 7:24. He now exercises this mediatorial office as the Intercessor and Advocate with the Father in behalf of His Body, the Church, as He sits at His right hand; but in a short time He shall come forth from thence and take possession of His own throne. Then will commence His long promised reign over earth as the King-Priest. His kingly rule will be that of a Priest upon His throne. That is, the chief glory of His rule will be in showing grace and not power. He will have compassion upon the ignorant and erring (<sup>1</sup>Heb. 5:2), and only the willful sinner in His Kingdom, the rebellious and incorrigible after one hundred years of probation, will feel the righteous wrath of the King—<sup>2</sup>Isa. 65:20. He will delight to show mercy. Judgment will always be “His strange work”—Isa. 28:21.

The second clause of the quotation, “and the counsel of peace shall be

<sup>1</sup> Hebrews 5:2 “Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.”

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 65:20 “There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner *being* an hundred years old shall be accursed.”

between them both” (V. 13), is simply a continuation and amplification of the first clause, i. e., the two offices of Christ as King and Priest, will not clash as one might suppose, tho’ they appear as diametrically opposed, the one to the other. The kingly phase of Christ’s rule speaks of righteousness and absolute justice; while the priestly aspect proclaims mercy to all men, and yet as relating to Christ, these principles are brought into harmony. God has devised a plan whereby it is now possible for Him to show mercy and yet at the same time not acquit the guilty—<sup>1</sup>Ex. 34:6, 7. He has given His Son a Ransom for the guilty. He died the Just for the unjust, therefore, the Holy God may now forgive the vilest sinner who repents, without marring the integrity of His throne. It becomes a throne of mercy—the Savior sits as the Judge. He has made peace by the blood of His cross. It was there that justice and mercy met together and righteousness and peace kissed each other. It is wonderful how many diametrically opposed principles were there reconciled, the result of which is that now the King and Priest, in the Person of Christ, may reign in harmony.

“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”—V. 14. There is a precious thought in this verse. The crowns which were set upon the head of Joshua, made of the gold and silver which those men brought from Babylon, were to be laid up in the temple as a memorial of them as well as the hospitable man, Josiah, son of Zephaniah, who entertained the distinguished visitors. But there is also more than this, in the fact that those crowns were deposited in the temple. They were to serve as a pledge and earnest of the fulfillment of the prophecy to which the symbolical action of the crowning of Joshua pointed. The further words here explain the typical significance—“And they that are far off shall come and build in the Temple of the Lord”—V. 15.

These words refer prophetically to those Jews, scattered in far off lands, during the dispersion, who would be gathered to the homeland and have their part in the furtherance of the work after the Messiah would be revealed to the Jews. It also points on to the conversion of the Gentiles and the wondrous and glorious time when all nations shall walk in the light of the Lord. These words may have had a slight fulfillment at the time when the remnant of the Jews returned from Babylon and built the Temple of the Lord; but the full realisation of them will not be until the Messiah of Israel sits upon the throne of David and reigns over Jerusalem. Then the Law shall go forth out of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem and converted Israel shall go forth as the missionaries of the Lord to the people of the world, declaring the wonderful works of the

<sup>1</sup> Exodus 34:6, 7 “And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear *the guilty*; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth *generation*.”

**6:14** 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.

Lord. Then all the Gentiles which are “afar off” shall turn to the Lord and seek after Him. They shall learn His ways, walk in His paths and bring their tribute of love to His land and worship and serve the Lord.

“And ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent He unto you.” Whether these words are those of the prophet, or the Angel of the Lord, is not so clear, nor is that the important item. The force of them is the same in either case. When these things begin to come to pass even then Israel shall know that Zechariah’s words are the Voice of the Lord. We cannot separate them. The words of Jehovah become the words of the Prophet and vice versa. The words of the Prophet become the words of the Lord, and shall be fulfilled as sure as the Lord lives and rules the universe, as even the final sentence reads; “And this shall come to pass if ye will diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God”—V. 15.

**6:15** 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.

This does not signify that prophecy is conditional upon their obedience. Oh, no, it is conditional upon the will and purpose of the unchangeable God; but the participation of the people in these sure promises is conditional upon their faith and obedience. It is so today. If we do not receive the Scriptures as the words of God, we do not get the benefit from them. Their fulfillment in our lives depends upon our faith in them. It is ever “according to your faith be it unto you” (Matt. 9:29); so in the case of Israel.

This above citation is quoted from Deut. 28:1. “And it shall come to pass if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God,” then all the blessings promised to them under the old covenant would be enjoyed by them. However, under the law, they had no power to obey, tho’ they were ready to promise; hence they came under the curse of the law and in consequence thereof, they suffered all these centuries. But when the Lord returns and they are under grace, they will find it easy to “hearken and do.” The stiff neck and hard heart will be gone. The law of God shall be in their inward parts and written in their hearts, even as we read, “A new heart also will I give you and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and ye shall keep my judgments and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land, x x and ye shall be my people and I will be your God”—Ezek. 36:26-28.

## The Second Division

Chapters 7 to 14

Predictions of the Day

Chapter Seven

“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, Sherezer and Regemmelech and their men to pray before the Lord, and speak unto the priests that were in the house of the Lord of hosts, saying, Should I weep in the fifth month, separating myself as I have done these many years?”—Chap. 7:1-3.

### Chapter 7

**7:1** 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;

Here begins the second division of our study book. The visions are over and now there is a change in the order of events. The Lord speaks to Zechariah, not in symbol or vision, but in plain language, easily understood. All that follows is but the amplification of “the good and comfortable words” (Chap. 1:13), which were symbolized in the visions. It is further assurance of the blessings that are surely coming to the Jewish people, after the terrible tribulation is past. The second division is really telling the same things as the first in a different manner.

Zechariah begins, even as he did the first part, by emphasizing the very day, month and year that the Word of the Lord came to him. We say, as we have said before, that this is not accidental, but most significant, intentional and purposeful. These dates have prophetic value, even as his visions and messages. We are learning of things that apply to the present system of world government and the beginning of a new order of things for the earth. Christ will be on His throne at the time figured by these dates—Zech. 1:7 and 7:1. Darius, mentioned in the above citations, is not the same one of whom we read in Daniel 6, 9 and 11. Inadvertently the distinction between the two was omitted in our reference to Darius on page 5. Darius the Mede reigned subject to Cyrus over Chaldea, while Darius the Persian, of Zechariah’s prophecy, was king of Persia. He began his rulership seventeen or eighteen years later than that of the Median king, in whose reign a remnant of both Judah and Israel returned to Judea under the leadership of Zerubbabel and Joshua.

The first zeal of the remnant of the restoration of that day was beautiful to behold for a short while. In the seventh month of the first year of their return, “they builded the altar of the God of Israel to offer burnt offerings thereon” (“*and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon,*” — *Ezra 3:2 KJV*), as was commanded by Moses; which sacrificial ritual had been suspended during the seventy years captivity in Babylon. “But the foundation of the Temple of the Lord was not laid” (“*But the foundation of the temple of the*



*LORD was not yet laid.*”—Ezra 3:6 KJV) until the second year of their coming back. Then they set themselves solemnly to the joyful task of rebuilding the Temple of the Lord—Ezra 3. The enemies stopped them after the death of Cyrus, their friend. They wrote to his successor, accusing the Jews of sundry evils and the work ceased until “the second year of Darius, king of Persia” (“*So it ceased unto the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.*”—Ezra 4:24 KJV)—Ezra 4. Here is the time when Zechariah’s prophecy begins. He had stirred the returned exiles to build and he continues to do so and no doubt as he received these revelations from Jehovah, in vision and message, he was beside himself with faith and hope. He did not know that he was predicting events relative to a far greater restoration than the one of which he was a part.

The remnant of the Jews which returned with Zerubbabel and Joshua had been in the land about eighteen years at the time of Zechariah’s prophecy. It was in the second year of Darius’ reign that the work of the building of the Temple was resumed. We believe, as intimated, that this year answers to the second year of the “week” of years of <sup>1</sup>Dan. 9:27, which according to our findings is 1934 in this end of time. Zechariah emphasized it definitely in the first division of his book and he begins the second division with another date—“the fourth year of Darius” (“*the fourth year of king Darius,*”—V. 1), two years later. This answers to 1936, which year will no doubt usher in all the remainder of Zechariah’s prophecies. The ninth month of the Jewish sacred year, Chisleu, is mentioned. It refers to December of our civil year and brings us, as relating to the seven years of destined import, to two or three months past the middle of that tremendous week. This is a point of time that is emphatically marked in Scripture. Daniel informs us that the coming “prince,” the head of the revived Roman Empire “in the midst of the week, shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease” (“*and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease,*” KJV)—Dan. 9:27. This is the cause of “the great tribulation,” which shortly begins to be felt by the Jew—<sup>2</sup>Matt. 24:21. It is also called the time of “Jacob’s trouble”—Jer. 30:7. Many other important events hover around this interesting point of time. Satan is cast down 250 days previously and is raging and roaming around, seeking whom he may devour—<sup>3</sup>I Pet. 5:8. The woman in the wilderness is protected from the middle of the week on—“a time, times and half a time,” three and a half years, half of the appointed “seven” of

<sup>1</sup> Daniel 9:27 “And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 24:21 “**For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.**”

<sup>3</sup> 1 Peter 5:8 “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:”

years. Also the “first beast” begins his despotic career 250 days before the middle of the week, for he continues his mad rule, 42 months, or 1260 days, half of the destined time—<sup>1</sup>Rev. 12:14 and 13:6. (See A. S. Copley’s book and chart on Revelation.)

### Question About the Fasts

Note in particular. The fourth year of Darius’ reign was a good year, as far as the outlook of the Jews at that time was concerned. All things appeared to be moving on smoothly. The evidence was promising for the remnant who had returned to the land. Every hindrance to the completion of the building of the Temple had been removed by the royal decree of Darius recorded in <sup>2</sup>Ezra 6:1. We also learn from that book this was two years before the completion of the Temple which latter was “in the sixth year of Darius” (“*in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king.*” *KJV*)—Ezra 6:15.

We say that things were running smoothly. The Jews were optimistic and enthusiastic and this apparent prosperity gave rise to the question as to whether the returned captives should continue to observe the days of national sorrow and fasting, which had been instituted in commemoration of the destruction of the Temple and the city, at the beginning of the seventy years captivity in Babylon. It was the inhabitants of Bethel, (see Revised Version) who took the initiative to bring this matter up before the priests. They sent two of their prominent citizens, “Sherezzer and Regemmelech, and their men” (V. 2), probably attendants “to intreat the favor of Jehovah and to speak unto the priests relative to the question of fasting, etc.”

In the authorized version the text reads, “they had sent unto the house of God”—V. 2. The revised version reads, “Now they of Bethel had sent” (“*When they had sent*”—V. 2 *KJV*), etc., which undoubtedly is correct, for tho’ Bethel, means “house of God” it is never used of the Temple, but always of the town of that name of Ephraim. It was one of the great centres of the false worship set up by Jereboam, the son of Nebat. The latter fact no doubt accounts for the sharp words with which Jehovah addressed these deputized men (V. 4); for this other Centre was not acknowledged by the Lord. But there is special significance in that these men were sent from Bethel to Jerusalem. It shows that the former bitterness and jealousy were forgotten. The lessons of the captivity were not lost

**7:2** When they had sent unto the house of God Sherezzer and Regemmelech, and their men, to pray before the LORD,

**7:3** *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?

**7:4** Then came the word of the LORD of hosts unto me, saying,

<sup>1</sup> Revelation 12:14 “And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.”

Revelation 13:6 “And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.”

<sup>2</sup> Ezra 6:1 “Then Darius the king made a decree, and search was made in the house of the rolls, where the treasures were laid up in Babylon.”

upon the returned exiles. They were admitting that Jeroboam and his secession from Judah were wrong. They were owning Jerusalem as the place of worship. The men, whose fathers were formerly identified with the Northern ten-tribed kingdom, no longer were cherishing hopes of a separate dynasty, nor looking for another place of worship. And this was no little concession on the part of those men of Israel. It teaches that the paramount yearning was for the unity of the nation, which no doubt will be in great manifestation when the Jews are again a recognized people in their own land.

**7:5** 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?

However, the answer of the Lord to those distinguished visitors was anything but encouraging. In fact we would say it was quite a rebuke. He said to Zechariah, “Speak unto all the people of the land and to the priests, saying, When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, even to me? And when ye did eat, x x did ye not eat for yourselves?” etc.—V. 5, 6.

**7:6** And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did not ye eat *for yourselves*, and drink *for yourselves*?

We have in these words of Jehovah a marvelous commentary on fasting. The Jews had religiously kept up their fasting times to commemorate the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and the murder of Gedaliah—<sup>1</sup>Jer. 52:12-14 and II Kgs. 25:25. They were thorough and earnest about their fasts. They took them seriously, and not only abstained from food and from drink as well, from one sunset to the other (which is the case yet with Jewish fasts); but they also mourned and lamented as tho’ for the dead. And here is the strange part. The observance of those fasts was a matter of perfect indifference to the Lord, because they were entirely self-centered. They fasted not unto the Lord, not because they were repentant before God, but because they were sorry for themselves. Furthermore, they were self-imposed and deemed meritorious before God. And that same concentration was apparent in their feasts as well as fasts. They ate and drank for themselves, hence, their feasts and facts were nothing to the Lord. There was no merit in either the one, or the other. And the same principle holds good today, whether in the case of Jew, or Gentile, saint, or sinner. We do not obtain God’s favor by any self-effort. Faith is the victory always. The many precepts and commandments of the Lord may all be summed up in these all-comprehensive words of the Apostle’s exhortation, “Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God”—1 Cor. 10:31.

<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah 52:12-14 “Now in the fifth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, which *was* the nineteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, *which* served the king of Babylon, into Jerusalem, And burned the house of the LORD, and the king’s house; and all the houses of Jerusalem, and all the houses of the great *men*, burned he with fire: And all the army of the Chaldeans, that *were* with the captain of the guard, brake down all the walls of Jerusalem round about.”

2 Kings 25:25 “But it came to pass in the seventh month, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the seed royal, came, and ten men with him, and smote Gedaliah, that he died, and the Jews and the Chaldees that were with him at Mizpah.”

**7:7** *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?*

**7:8** And the word of the LORD came unto Zechariah, saying,

**7:9** Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother:

**7:10** 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.

There are multitudes of Scriptures in the former prophets which bear witness to the truth of what Zechariah here affirms, namely, God’s repudiation of mere outward acts of religious observances, and especially of fasting as being in any way pleasing to Him. We read, “Wherefore have we fasted and Thou seest not? Wherefore have we afflicted our soul and Thou takest no knowledge?” (*“Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge?”—Isa. 58:3 KJV*). The answer from the Lord is much the same as He gave by Zechariah: “Behold, in the day of your fast, ye find your own pleasure. x x Ye shall not fast as ye do this day to make your voice to be heard on high. Is it such a fast that I have chosen? A day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head like a rush and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast and an acceptable day to Jehovah?” (*“Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high. Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD?”—Isaiah 58:4, 5 KJV*)—Isa. 58:3-5. R. V.

To obey God is better than sacrifice. It is the great principle enunciated by the Prophet Samuel in his scathing words to Saul who had deliberately disobeyed Him under the pretext of sacrifice—<sup>1</sup>I Sam. 15:22, 23. What attention does He pay to outward form of any kind, if the heart is not right with Him? Feast days, fast days, prayer days, or prayerless days are all rated the same by the Lord, as His words to Zechariah here imply. “Thus hath the Lord of hosts spoken, Execute true judgment and show 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 his heart”—V. 9, 10 R. V.

The same instructions are given us by Isaiah and other prophets. The Lord definitely announces the manner of fasts in which He delights—“Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the bands of the yoke and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?” (*“Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to*

<sup>1</sup> 1 Samuel 15:22, 23 “And Samuel said, Hath the LORD *as great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey *is* better than sacrifice, *and* to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion *is as* the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness *is as* iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from *being* king.”

*the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?”—Isaiah 58:6, 7 KJV)—Isa. 58:6, 8. R. V.*

**7:11** But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear.

Zechariah does not quote the former prophets; but gives the substance of their words, clothed in new language by the direct inspiration of God. Furthermore he tells the people that their fathers “refused to hearken to their prophets. They pulled away the shoulder and stopped their ears that they should not hear. x x x Therefore came a great wrath from the Lord of hosts”—V. 11, 12.

How perfectly this describes the attitude of people today to the Word of God. They do not want to hear; hence, turn their ears away, stop them up, for fear they will have to obey if they hear. The expression, “pulled away the shoulder,” is a Hebrew phrase which is only found one other place—<sup>1</sup>Neh. 9:29. It means literally, “they offered an unwilling or rebellious shoulder,” shaking off His yoke, even as an unmanageable beast of burden, instead of serving Jehovah with joyfulness. His yoke was not easy, nor His burden light, because they were under the law and not under grace. But we must go on to the New Testament to learn this. Peter calls the Law a yoke “which neither we, nor our fathers were able to bear” (“*which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?*”—Acts 15:10 KJV). He insists that it is tempting God to put believers under such bondage, and yet there are a multitude of self appointed teachers which do this very thing, contrary to the words of the great Kingdom Apostle—<sup>2</sup>Acts 15:10, 11. Read the whole chapter. It will prove most profitable in this connection.

**7:12** 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.

As we said and is borne out by the Scriptures, The Law only made sin more sinful. It increased the transgression, because of the lawless nature of the natural man; but Israel had made themselves a party to that covenant when they came out of Egypt. They said they would obey its every precept, as it is written, “All the people answered together and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do”—Ex. 19:8. They did not know their own evil heart; but having made themselves subject to the Law, they must bear the consequences of their disobedience. Therefore, as the Prophet is made to declare, “There came a great wrath from the Lord of hosts”—V. 12.

Then follows the description of the manner in which this wrath was

<sup>1</sup> Nehemiah 9:29 “And testifiedst against them, that thou mightest bring them again unto thy law: yet they dealt proudly, and hearkened not unto thy commandments, but sinned against thy judgments, (which if a man do, he shall live in them;) and withdrew the shoulder, and hardened their neck, and would not hear.”

<sup>2</sup> Acts 15:10, 11 “Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.”

**7:13** 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:

**7:14** 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.

shown out. Solemn are the words, “It came to pass that as He had cried and they would not hear, so they cried and I would not hear, saith the Lord of hosts” (V. 13). In these words the history of the Jews, for the past nineteen hundred years has been verified. They are also a warning to sinners whether Jew, or Gentile, who scorn the reproof and admonition of the Word when they hear it, or worse, mock at it as some do; for the time will come when they will call and God will close His ear to their cry, even as He did to the nation.

The last verse announces the chastisement of Israel for their treatment of His words. “I will scatter them” (V. 14), or I will toss them out, “as with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they have not known.” This prediction began to be fulfilled with the destruction of Solomon’s Temple and the seventy years captivity in Babylon, but it has continued all down the centuries since. Israel has been sifted among all nations, “tossed about like corn is sifted in a sieve” (“*I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve,*” *KJV*) (Amos 9:9), until the times of the Gentiles are ended.

How perfectly this prophecy has been fulfilled, history proclaims. And the latter clause relating to the land has been verified also. “Thus the land was desolate after them, that no man passed thru, or returned, for they laid the pleasant land desolate”—V. 14. This has been the case absolutely as regards the people to whom the land, Palestine, belongs. It has been without its owners. It is “the pleasant land,” as relating to Jehovah, the land of His delight, and it shall return to the people of His delight, who have been without their land, for nineteen hundred years. The Lord, His people and their land shall all be reunited one of these glorious days.

The next chapter gives us the positive answer to the question which had been asked by the men, Sherezer—“prince of the treasury,” and Regemimelech—“the official from the king.” These names show that those men represent the people who are thus instructed by His reply to the question relating to the fasts. He is going to change them into feasts. The answer in the eighth chapter is one of the greatest and most expressive prophecies in the Bible of Israel’s future. Some of the predictions are found in no other portion of Scripture; therefore we may rejoice that these two distinguished officials came up from Bethel to interrogate the priests in Jerusalem.

## Answer to the Question

### Chapter Eight

“Again the Word of the Lord of hosts came unto 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 I will be 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”—Vs. 1-3.

This chapter is a continuation of the message given the Prophet in answer to the question of the men from Bethel. It is the positive side of the reply. The seventh chapter is the negative side. It was preparatory to these marvelous prophecies which we are now about to consider. They are so profoundly great and wonderful, so far beyond the ken of mortal man to conceive, that they stagger his reason. How can such things be? we hear him enquire. “By faith we understand,” the Apostle answers; for the “worlds or ages were framed, not of things which do appear” (*“Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.”—Hebrews 11:3 KJV*), but simply by the Word of God. Hence when we believe this fact we do not hesitate to accept the most stupendous statements as to future events and changes which are due to soon appear in the earth. The Creator, God, who called worlds, planets and stars into being by the power of His own Word is able to do anything. There is nothing too hard for the Lord.

The following series of promises commences with the thrice repeated declaration that “the Lord of hosts,” is addressing His people. It is the Trinity, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who thus answers the question of these men with the following blessed words of encouragement and hope, and He is able to fulfill every one of these promises.

The Lord declared at the outset that He has been jealous for Jerusalem (chap. 1:14) and now He repeats the statement with only a slight variation. His anger is stirred to fiery heat against the nations. They showed His temporarily cast-off people no mercy; but rather added to their affliction when they were scattered in their midst. He held those nations responsible for their former cruel treatment of the Jews. And even more so today because they should know that the times of the Gentiles are almost over, and they should give up to the Jews their land and temple site. Jehovah will be obliged to wrest it from them; they will not let go of this Jewish property willingly. It is strange that the present day powers have not learned their lesson from the history of the past. None of the ancient powers, who oppressed and persecuted the Jew, have remained to tell the story. The words which the Lord spoke to Abraham is still being fulfilled

### Chapter 8

**8:1** Again the word of the LORD of hosts came *to me*, saying,

**8:2** Thus saith the LORD of hosts; I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury.

and will continue. “I will bless them that bless thee and curse him that curseth thee”—Gen. 12:3.

**8:3** 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.

Jehovah’s next statement is a repetition of His words which are set forth in the first vision. It is a positive declaration and shall have a positive fulfillment. “I am returned” (V. 3), is His glad announcement. He will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem regardless of all the combined power of Satan and men against such a consummation. “It is written” and so shall it be done. Some men would say this promise had a fulfillment in the partial restoration of the Jew from the Babylonish captivity. But that is a very light view to take of this magnificent prophecy. The fact of His return into fellowship and covenant relationship with His ancient people is the very heart and soul of all prophecy. If that falls to the ground then there is no hope for the nations or the world, because His promise to Abraham is thus become null and void.

Some one may say that His promise to Abraham had a fulfillment in Jesus Christ. All the nations shall be blessed in Him. Well that is so in a measure, as we learn from <sup>1</sup>Gal. 3:16, but there are also a multitude of other Scriptures which declare that the nation Israel shall be the first nation to come into the blessing promised thru Christ. Individuals may be blessed today thru Christ, but later whole nations shall be the recipients of God’s mercy and favor, but **NONE BEFORE THE JEW**—Rom. 11 and 15:8. He will return to his own land, as they are seen doing today, and Jehovah will return to them in the Person of the very same Jesus whom they rejected and crucified at His first advent. He will then in His glory and greatness dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. It shall become the centre of His government, the capital city of His domain in the earth. The light and truth shall go out to all the world from this vantage point in the middle of the globe. And Jerusalem shall be called the “City of Truth,” for two reasons. First, because it is the headquarters of the God of Truth. Second, because it is the location of the people of Truth. They shall no longer do iniquity nor speak lies (<sup>2</sup>Zeph. 3:13); but they shall be known thru-out the world as the righteous people. “And the mountain of Jehovah of hosts shall be called, The Holy Mountain” (“*and the mountain of the LORD of hosts the holy mountain.*”—V. 3 *KJV*), because of the presence of the Holy One.

After the above reiterated assurance of Jehovah’s favor and presence in Jerusalem there follows a beautiful picture of its restoration and prosperity. No longer shall the holy city lie desolate; no more shall young and old be cut off in her streets, nor shall the children be fainting for bread in the midst as was often

<sup>1</sup> Galatians 3:16 “Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.”

<sup>2</sup> Zephaniah 3:13 “The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make *them* afraid.”



**8:4** 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.

**8:5** And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof.

**8:6** Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the LORD of hosts.

the case formerly. Prolongation of life and numerous progeny shall be the order of the day as has been promised. Death will be stayed in that beautiful city of life. “There shall be no more an infant of days (cut off) nor an old man that hath not filled his days”—Isa. 65:20-22. Only the rebellious shall die during the thousand years reign of Christ. Life will be visibly reigning instead of death, as at the present time. Death will be the exception then, even as life is now. It will be a halcyon period for Jerusalem and Palestine. There shall be seen the two extremes, age and infancy, alike protected from death and the grave, even as Zechariah declares, “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” (Vs. 4, 5) in their exuberance and gladness.

The saved remnant of those days will exclaim in astonishment, even as David informs us, “This is the Lord’s doings and it is marvelous in our sight” (Psa. 118:23): for no human or natural means could have done it. Jehovah’s answer to them we have here in our chapter: “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?”—V. 6. It is as tho’ God Himself might almost be astonished at the mighty accomplishments of those days in behalf of His people. The word translated “marvelous” is the same one translated “hard” or difficult, in Gen. 18. Sarah laughed when the definite promise was given Abraham of the birth of Isaac. And the Lord said, “Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? Is anything too hard (wonderful) for the Lord?”—Genesis 18:13, 14. It was of course impossible with man, but nothing is impossible with God. He desires us to know that He delights to undertake the difficult problems. All His dealings with man are supernatural and wonderful. He waits until we reach the end of our resources, come to “wits end” corner, as the Psalmist declares (<sup>1</sup>Ps. 107:27), and then we find Him, the all-sufficient One there waiting to shoulder all the responsibility. It is wonderful, what the Lord can, and is willing to do for His people if they trust Him.

All God’s ways with the nation Israel were, and still are supernatural. Their very beginning was contrary to nature. He waited until Abraham was old and Sarah was barren and then gave them the promised child. He desired to lay a supernatural basis for His building of the family, and later the nation of Israel, that they and all the nations of the earth might know that God is sovereign in His choice and almighty in His power, and that nothing which He purposes shall fail, and nothing which He has spoken is too hard for Him to accomplish. Another thing that the Lord is teaching by doing the impossible is that the first creation, the natural man, is helpless and hopeless. Hence, there must be another creation brought upon the scene, another Man must come to the rescue, another

<sup>1</sup> Psalm 107:27 “They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits’ end.”

source of life must be provided for the human race. This has been accomplished thru Christ the Seed of the woman (<sup>1</sup>Gen. 3:15), and the Seed of Abraham—<sup>2</sup>Gal. 3:16. It will shortly be manifest in all the world that the Lord's arm is not shortened, but rather the opposite. He is the only One who can save, the only One who can bring order out of chaos. When Israel have destroyed themselves by their own foolishness, begotten of unbelief, then God comes to their rescue—<sup>3</sup>Hos. 13:9. It is always so, as Zechariah intimates in the next verse of our lesson.

“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 righteousness”—V. 7, 8.

**8:7** Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country;

**8:8** 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.

We cannot comprehend how anyone can deny the conversion of the Jews and their literal return to their land after reading such a great and comprehensive promise of Jehovah. It has never yet been fulfilled, as is evident, therefore it is still future. “From the land of the rising of the sun and from the land of the going down of the sun,” as is the Hebrew, there shall come the multitude of God's ancient people to possess the land of promise. A mere handful returned after the Babylonish captivity, but that does not exhaust this promise. Zechariah himself was a part of that remnant, but his prophecy relates to the future as it is plainly evident. Also at that time they were not brought back from the whole world, but only from one direction, from the east, also called the “north” because the invasion of Babylon and Persia was by way of the north. It was only after the Roman invasion, the second dispersion of the Jews, that they were scattered to the four winds of heaven, or thru-out the whole world.

Another fact which proves this restoration yet future, is that it is followed by the conversion of the whole of Israel. They shall be Jehovah's people. He will be their God in truth and righteousness. This latter has never yet been in evidence. Their covenant relationship and fellowship with the Lord will be complete and perfect when their restoration to the land is a reality. The present time is the Lo-ammi, “not My people,” period of Israel's history when they, as a nation, are separated from the Lord and given over into the hands of their enemies. But when those years of chastisement are ended God shall again acknowledge them as Ammi, “My people” even as another Prophet, speaking for the Lord, declares: “I will betroth thee unto Me forever; yea I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness, and in judgment and in loving kindness and in

<sup>1</sup> Genesis 3:15 “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”

<sup>2</sup> Galatians 3:16 “Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.”

<sup>3</sup> Hosea 13:9 “O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help.”

mercies. I will even betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness and thou shalt know the Lord”—Hos. 2:19, 20. They will be the beloved wife of Jehovah on earth, faithful to Him forever, even as the wife of the Lamb in heaven, held by the power of His own constraining love. They shall walk before God and with God with a perfect heart, for one thousand years, as the nation of righteousness, throughout the rest of their national history.

Then is given a word of encouragement to the remnant who shall be in evidence in the rebuilding of Jerusalem; prefaced by the “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”—V. 9.

**8:9** 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.

“Let your hands be strong” (V. 9), signifies “Be of good courage,” and reminds us of Haggai’s words, colleague and contemporary of Zechariah, “Be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith Jehovah and be strong, O Joshua, son of Jehozadeck, the high priest; and be strong all ye people of the land, and work” (“*Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts:*” KJV)—Hag. 2:4. In Zechariah the exhortation refers not only to the temple building, as in Haggai, but to the doing of the will of God in all things, both in the case of the individual as well as the entire nation. They were all called to hear and obey the voice of the prophets who were raised up in the past and will be raised up in the future to speak unto the people. The two witnesses are especially in view in the latter connection.

The words, “that the temple might be built,” is added as a more precise definition of the time to which the Prophet refers; for there had already been two beginnings of the building of the Temple. In the seventh month of the first year after the return of the first colony of the captives under the leadership of Zerubabel and Joshua, the altar was set upon its base and the sacrificial regime commenced again; and in the second year the foundation was laid amid the solemn yet happy scenes recorded in Ezra 3. But the difficulties encountered by the intrigues and lying accusations of the Samaritans and other enemies in the land, caused the work to cease. They excused themselves by saying, “The time is not come that Jehovah’s house should be built,” with the result that for thirteen years the work was suspended. In the second year of Darius, king of Persia, the word of the Lord came to Zechariah and Haggai and they roused the people by rebukes, appeals and exhortations to again arise and build. It was then that they took up the task with renewed faith and vigor, and with set purpose of heart began to build. It was from that day that the Lord gave His Word that He would bless them—<sup>1</sup>Haggai 2:19.

<sup>1</sup> Haggai 2:19 “Is the seed yet in the barn? yea, as yet the vine, and the fig tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive tree, hath not brought forth: from this day will I bless *you*.”

We believe that here is a hint of the delay of the future restoration when the remnant who will have returned shall begin to build the Temple, but will not be allowed to finish it because of their enemies until the Lord appears to their help and strength.

The time between—after the work ceased, and its beginning again—is considered and contrasted with the period after they obeyed the voice of the Lord. “For before those days there was no hire for man nor for beast, neither was there any peace for him that went out or came in, because of the affliction; for I set every man against his neighbor”—V. 10.

**8:10** 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.

This strange verse describes a strange condition and is the only verse in Scripture which predicts unemployment. The scene is laid in the time when the Jew is restored to his land whether we look at it as in the past or in the future. At the time the Prophet spoke these words, the foundation of the temple was laid and it had been partly built by the remnant of the Jews who had returned. But afterward they were hindered and it was to this time that Zechariah refers when there was no hire for man or beast. It was a judgment upon them for their laxity and for the nations also who refused to let them finish the work of the Temple’s rebuilding, God is not mocked. There is generally a cause for all these happenings in the world. The Jews had returned to Palestine by the edict of Cyrus, the Persian emperor, and permission given them to build the Temple. Later this latter was revoked and God was angry. Likewise there is a similarity today in the conduct of the nations regarding the Jews. They have allowed them to return, but they are hindered from building, hence, there is judgment from the Lord upon them. The time between—after the work ceased and its beginning again—is considered and contrasted with the period after they obeyed the voice of the Lord.

We cannot fail to see that it is a marvelous description of conditions of the present time. There was no “hire,” no employment for man or beast. The conditions of prosperity in this world all hinge upon the obedience and blessing of the Jew; for we read, “There was no peace in those days” for any man, anywhere. There was strife and contention manifested among even the remnant, and it is said that it was caused by the Lord setting every man’s hand against his neighbor because of the disobedience of His people. But after that the restored of Israel had entered upon the path of obedience and began to build, the Lord began to bless.

Likewise will it be in the latter time. There will come peace for the world when the Jews are at peace with the Lord. The unrest and instability in evidence today shall increase until the time when the Lord Jesus Christ shall be accepted by His ancient people. The nations may unite in the meantime and bring in a millennium as they are seeking to do at the present moment. Prosperity may appear to have come, but it will be but a counterfeit of the real thing. It is only

when the Jew is in his land with his Temple built and sacrifices resumed that the problem of the unemployed will be solved, and the peace of the world attained. When he is at peace with Jehovah, peace will be proclaimed to the world. Prosperity will be manifested in all lands. God will openly show Himself as national Protector and Friend of the Jew and all men will yield to the King of the Jews. They will prosper and multiply under His beneficent sway, as we further note;

**8:11** But now I *will not be* unto the residue of this people as in the former days, saith the LORD of hosts.

**8:12** 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*.

**8:13** 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.

“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, the ground shall give her increase and the heavens shall give their dew”—V. 11, 12. We are reminded of the similar promise in Hosea 2:21, 22: “It shall come to pass in that day, I will answer, saith Jehovah. I will answer the heavens and they shall answer the earth, and the earth shall answer the corn and the wine and the oil,” (“*And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the LORD, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth; And the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil;*”—Hosea 2:21, 22 KJV) etc. Not only shall the blessing of the Lord, resting upon their work, produce plentiful harvests in every line to which they put their hands; but their inheritance shall never more be taken from them. The land shall be their possession forever, as is written here, “I will cause the remnant of the people to possess all these things”—V. 12.

As the remnant of the people after the Babylonish captivity prospered, when they put their hand the second time to the rebuilding of the Temple; so will it be in the latter days. The former things were only a pledge and an earnest of greater things. It may all be summed up in the following verse, “And it shall come to pass, that as you 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”—V. 13.

Let us observe the association of the entire nation—Judah and Israel. Previous to the exile, they had been divided into two divisions, and after the partial restoration were included in one common destiny of blessing and sorrow. During the Loammi period, they, in their entirety are said to be a curse; likewise in their unity, shall they be a blessing—even as Jehovah says, “will I save you” (V. 13). It is the reiteration of the oft-expressed purpose of God to constitute the restored nation the source and instrument of blessing to all the nations of the earth, where they had been a curse.

We are impressed here with the fact, that tho’ only the remnant of Judah returned from Babylon (for they alone were said to have been scattered there; the ten tribes had been carried away several hundred years previous); yet Israel is mentioned also in their return. Now as that former restoration was but the earnest of another and far greater returning; so Israel will be included in the

latter. Do you see the point? The ten tribes, according to this statement, appear to be hidden among the Jews. I wonder if that is not the explanation of the great mystery of the whereabouts of Israel.

The faithfulness of God and the steadfastness of His purpose are the basis of the hope of the certain fulfillment of His promises: “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 those days to do well unto Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Fear ye not”—V. 14, 15. Just as surely as the evil came upon the people, so surely shall the good come to them. He will not repent, nor prove false to His Word. There is a correspondence here to Jeremiah 32:42-44. “Thus saith Jehovah, Like as I have brought all this evil upon this people; so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them. And fields shall be bought in this land, whereof ye say, It is desolate without man, or beast. Men shall buy fields for money and subscribe evidences and seal them and take witnesses; x x x for I will cause their captivity to return, saith the Lord” (*“For thus saith the LORD; Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them. And fields shall be bought in this land, whereof ye say, It is desolate without man or beast; it is given into the hand of the Chaldeans. Men shall buy fields for money, and subscribe evidences, and seal them, and take witnesses...for I will cause their captivity to return, saith the LORD.”—Jeremiah 32:42-44 KJV*). The Jews are already buying fields in Palestine and having the deeds recorded; and the Scripture shall have a greater fulfillment when the nation has repented and yielded to God. They will respond by faith and obedience, when the scales fall from their eyes. His grace will be realized and they will be God’s holy nation.

Then follows an exhortation somewhat similar to that of chapter 7:9, 10. “These are the things which ye shall do—Speak every man truth with his neighbor; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates, and let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbor, and love no false oath; for all these things do I hate, saith the Lord”—Vs. 16, 17. The practical side of salvation is to the front as we remarked in the notes on chapter seven. The judgment of truth and peace, which they are exhorted to set forth “in the gates,” refers to the place where the judges in Israel were wont to sit and mete out justice, or injustice, as the case might be. But no more shall unrighteous judgment be known; no more shall bribes be taken, when Israel are governed by their Righteous King, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The above enumerated evils are contrary to truth and peace, and are, for that very reason, things which God hates, in distinction from that which He loves. They sum up in few words the breach of both tables of the law. Duties to God and duties to man are herein set forth and Israel are thus told to keep the

**8:14** 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:

**8:15** So again have I thought in these days to do well unto Jerusalem and to the house of Judah: fear ye not.

**8:16** 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:

**8:17** 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.

law. But for this, they need a new birth, even as you and I, which all the nation will enjoy in that day of restoration and rejuvenation. They will then hate all that Jehovah hates and love what He loves.

### The Glad Tidings

In these closing verses of chapter eight, we have the direct answer to the question set forth in chapter seven. We saw there that the answer of the Lord was rather a rebuke as to the fasts, a question to them instead of an answer to their inquiry. But in our present lesson, is the positive reply a beautiful answer to their question.

“Thus saith the Lord of hosts; the fast of the fourth month and the fast of the fifth and the fast of the tenth shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness and cheerful feasts, therefore love truth and peace”—V. 19. Here is good news. These four set times, fast days, which were kept by the Jews in remembrance of four different calamities, which overtook them, shall be turned to feasts. The taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in the eleventh year of Zedekiah’s reign, B. C. 587 (<sup>1</sup>Jer. 52:6, 7) was celebrated in the ninth day of the fourth month; while the destruction of the city and Temple was remembered in the fifth month. Other happenings were also celebrated in that month. The fast of the seventh month was appointed for the murder of Gedaliah (2 Kgs. 25), while that of the tenth month was to remind them of the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem which finally culminated in its fall—2 Kgs 25:1-21, <sup>2</sup>Jer. 39:1 and <sup>3</sup>Ezek. 24:1, 2. All those dates are still observed as fasts by the Jewish nation in all parts of the earth; for it is still the night of sorrow for Jehovah’s chosen people. But their weeping is almost over. It is to be followed by a morning of joy when the Word of the Lord is fulfilled in their deliverance and blessing.

The Prophet says to the remnant, “These fasts shall be to the house of Judah, joy and blessing and cheerful feasts”—V. 19. It is wonderful news. As they have been the nation of sorrow and acquainted with grief; so shall they be the nation of joy, filled with the blessing of the Lord. The history of the Jew has a correspondence with that of Jesus. He was the obedient Servant, suffering for

**8:18** And the word of the LORD of hosts came unto me, saying,

**8:19** 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.

<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah 52:6, 7 “And in the fourth month, in the ninth *day* of the month, the famine was sore in the city, so that there was no bread for the people of the land. Then the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled, and went forth out of the city by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, which *was* by the king's garden; (now the Chaldeans *were* by the city round about:) and they went by the way of the plain.”

<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah 39:1 “In the ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth month, came Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon and all his army against Jerusalem, and they besieged it.”

<sup>3</sup> Ezekiel 24:1, 2 “Again in the ninth year, in the tenth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, write thee the name of the day, *even* of this same day: the king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem this same day.”

other's sins. They are the disobedient servants suffering for their own sins. There are many points of resemblance between the nation and Christ, the most startling and emphatic of which, is that they both come into their place in exaltation upon the earth at the same time. And it will then be possible for the Jews to obey Zechariah's exhortation "Love truth and peace." They will be associated in life and service with their Messiah and King the Way, the Truth and the Life, and the way of peace they will follow.

And then notice the results of Israel's return to the Lord and His return to His people. "It shall come to pass, that there shall come peoples and the inhabitants of many cities. And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another city, saying, Let us go speedily and pray before the Lord and seek the Lord of hosts. I will go also"—V. 20, 21.

**8:20** Thus saith the LORD of hosts; *It shall yet come to pass*, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities:

These statements are prefaced by the, "Thus saith the Lord." However unlikely and impossible they appear to the natural man of this nineteenth century, nevertheless, these prophecies shall all come to pass. "There shall come peoples," a collective word, "and inhabitants of many, or great, cities;" and the one inhabitant will witness to another and seek to speedily get him up to Jerusalem, even as we testify to sinners today and endeavor to get them interested in the Lord and His salvation.

**8:21** 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.

"Let us go," or be going, they will cry. The word "go" has the thought of perseverance, of a going on; for it may be a difficult, or long journey in some cases before they reach the haven of their hopes, the blessed goal of their ambitions. "I will go also," is the answer. It expresses the eagerness and mutual desire with which, not one, but many mighty nations, shall flock to the Gospel call in those days. The time of flabby indifference will be over. The laborers will be on fire to win souls for the Kingdom. They will not just be satisfied with their own salvation, and be careless of the salvation of others. They shall labor unceasingly, filled with divine love, to bring all to the knowledge of the Lord. And their success will be phenomenal, like the draught of fishes which Peter caught, when he cast his net on the right side <sup>1</sup>Luke 5:5, 6. There was a hint of these wonderful results, in the beginning of this dispensation. Witness Peter's Gospel-net and its gathering on the day of Pentecost, when the Jewish feast of Harvest had fully come (<sup>2</sup>Acts 2:41); also later at his second letting down of the net into the midst of the people <sup>3</sup>Acts 4:4. Great multitudes were caught in its

<sup>1</sup> Luke 5:5, 6 "And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake."

<sup>2</sup> Acts 2:41 "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls."

<sup>3</sup> Acts 4:4 "Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand."



meshes of salvation. Likewise in the latter days, numbers will be saved and begin to wend their way to the city of the great King to entreat the favor of Judah's Messiah. The scorned, mistreated, persecuted Jews will have their inning at last. Their Kinsman-Redeemer will be the Ruler, the Despot of the world, the only Potentate the Lord of lords and King of kings, to whom every knee will bow, and every tongue shall confess Him Lord to the glory of God the Father. The truth of the above is embodied in every prophet of the Holy Writings. We read both in Isaiah and Micah: "And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow into it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us of His ways and we will walk in His paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (*"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."* KJV)—Isa. 2:2, 3 R. V.

This marvelous condition of blessedness is to take place after the restoration and conversion of Israel, and not before. The Jew is to have his place on the program of the age before other nations can come into blessing. The conversion of the world will never come prior to the conversion of the Jew. When Jehovah will have mercy upon Jacob and choose Israel again and set him in his own land after the long centuries of darkness, he shall be as a firebrand to the rest of the nations. Then it shall be that all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord (<sup>1</sup>Num. 14:21); "for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea"—Isa. 11:9. Note the connection in these two citations, far apart in the Scriptures. The glory of the Lord is conditional upon the knowledge of the Lord. The one follows the other, either individually, or collectively.

The above is all confirmed and made emphatic in the last verse of our chapter. "In those days, it shall come to pass, that ten men out of all languages of the nations 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"—V. 23 R. V.

The number "ten," in Scripture, has the meaning of responsibility according to ability; hence, here it may refer to the great multitude of the nations who will then feel their responsibility to heed the Gospel of the Kingdom. Ten

**8:22** Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD.

**8:23** 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.

<sup>1</sup> Numbers 14:21 "But *as truly as* I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD."

out of all the languages of the nations may teach the fact that there will be that number of nations, speaking different languages, in the world at that juncture, who will have escaped the judgment which will fall upon the other powers because of their believing attitude toward the Jew—Matt. 25:31-45. These are said to take hold of the “skirt” or corner of the long flowing garments, which were the habiliments of men of the East. Among the Jews, as one of them has declared, to each of the four parts of the outer garment, “fringes, or tassels of blue were attached,” and this may be what is referred to in this place. It was said to be a sign that the wearer was a Jew. It is said that ten men, representative men, would so take hold with firm determination to accompany the Jew, who is himself represented as journeying to Jerusalem.

The Jew will not only believe in one God, which is his boast now, but will be so divinely associated and united with Him, that when a Gentile convert subscribes himself by the name of Jacob, it will be equivalent to saying, “I am the Lord’s;” and for him to call himself by the name of Israel will signify that he is acknowledging the Lord—<sup>1</sup>Isa. 44:1-5. Christ, “the Anointed,” of Israel is a Jew; but He is also the Son of God. Immanuel God with us took upon Him the seed of Israel; hence the Jew is bound up in a bundle of life with the Lord His God. The Holy One of Israel shall dwell in the midst of them and “holiness unto Jehovah” shall be written upon all that they possess as Zechariah informs us in chapter 14:20, 21. The Gentile nations will honor them as the “Priests of the Lord...the ministers of our God” (Isa. 61:6) and cleave unto them as the appointed heralds of salvation and instruments of blessing, saying, “We will go with you; for we have heard that the Lord is with you” (“*We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.*” *KJV*)—V. 23 R. V.

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<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 44:1-5 “Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen: Thus saith the LORD that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, *which* will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: And they shall spring up *as* among the grass, as willows by the water courses. One shall say, I *am* the LORD’S; and another shall call *himself* by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe *with* his hand unto the LORD, and surname *himself* by the name of Israel.”

## Overthrow of World Powers

### Chapter Nine

“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”—V. 1.

#### Chapter 9

**9:1** 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.

**9:2** And Hamath also shall border thereby; Tyrus, and Zidon, though it be very wise.

With this chapter we begin a new section of the prophecy of Zechariah. It appears so very different from the preceding portion, especially the first part of it, but it connects with all that follows. In a word these last chapters of our study book, 9 to 14, give us a bird’s-eye vision of the overthrow of Gentile world power over Israel, and the establishment of Jewish world power over the Gentiles.

Chapter 9-11 give us the facts relative to Gentile abasement and the overthrow of its kingdoms and power. While chapters 12-14, show us the judgment which precedes such consummation, thru which judgment the Jews must pass; to be sifted and purged before they are ready for their great exaltation and renown. The glory will follow the suffering. The crown will follow the cross. It is ever the way that God deals with mankind. Abasement must come before the lifting up, by the which we are shown the grace of God.

Chapters nine and ten form one continues prophecy. The foreground of the seer’s first words, is the course of Alexander the Great, who circled around the Holy Land, but did not molest or destroy it. He finally overthrew the Persian Empire. But this is only typical, and preliminary to the following solemn predicted events which are yet future.

The word “burden” in our authorized version is otherwise translated “oracle,” or “utterance.” The Prophet refers to the burden of the word of the Lord which was about to be fulfilled. It primarily describes the surprise and fear which will overcome the people when the Conqueror, the executor of God’s wrath shall appear. The consternation of the nations at the coming of Alexander in his time is shown as the pattern. When Hadrach and Damascus, representative of cities or countries of the latter days, are visited with the wrath of God, the nations will tremble. It will signify the beginning of the end. There shall be delay no longer. The day of God’s wrath will have come and all eyes shall be directed toward Him. They will realize at last that His judgments are coming in accordance with the solemn warnings of Scripture.

The eyes of the tribes of Israel are particularly meant in this reference, for at the time of Alexander they had especial reason to fear him, as the high priest from a sense of loyalty to the Persian monarch refused to acknowledge the Macedonian conqueror; but as has been intimated, that foreground merges into the future time when the eyes of all men shall be directed toward the Lion

of the tribe of Judah. He who was once humbled to the dust, led as a Lamb to the slaughter, whose hands and feet were pierced with nails and He was hung upon the cross, shall come forth conquering and to conquer, and no man nor devil can then say Him, Nay—<sup>1</sup>Rev. 1:7.

Hadrach is the first marked out place upon which the wrath of God is falling; and it shall not rest until it fall upon Damascus. According to ancient history these two cities were close together. They are no doubt representative of cities of the present day, noted places we might infer, on which God will take vengeance. Hamath the next mentioned city bordered the first two and shall be involved in the like fate and share in the poured out wrath of an offended King whose subjects are in revolt. Tyrus and Zidon, “tho’ she be very wise” are associated in the same ruin.

**9:3** And Tyrus did build herself a strong hold, and heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets.

Tyre is marked out in a special way for her material prosperity. “She built herself a stronghold and heaped up silver as the dust and fine gold as the mire of the streets”—V. 3 R. V. But all this did not help her in any wise to escape. There is said to be in Hebrew a play on the word Tyre. Read it thus, “Tyre built herself a tower,” tho’ the word used has a much wider significance than that of tower. Tyrus, meaning “a rocky stronghold,” was true to her name, but she was not satisfied at that. She built herself in addition a rocky fortress or tower. The latter no doubt refers to the new Tyre which was built upon an island. This was called “the stronghold of the sea” (<sup>2</sup>Isa. 23:4) because, tho small in extent, it was surrounded by a double wall a hundred and fifty feet high, which was so strong a fortification that Shalmanezzer besieged it for five years and Nebuchadnezzar for thirteen, but neither were able to conquer it. Hence, she was confident of her strength. It had proven invincible, time and again. “Her merchants were princes and her traffickers the honorable of the earth” (“*whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honourable of the earth?*”—*Isa. 23:8 KJV*)—Isa. 23:7, 8. All the ancient cities brought their best and choicest things, and laid them at the feet of her who appeared in the description as a queen enthroned on ivory, covered with “blue and purple from the isles of Elishah”—Ezek. 27:7. (See our book on Ezekiel for further description.)

But what are natural strength and wisdom and all material resources when nations are in revolt against God? As Alexander the Great finally destroyed Tyre after she had stood for centuries, the invulnerable city of the sea, so will the Lord Jesus Christ bring down her counterpart, in the time when these

<sup>1</sup> Revelation 1:7 “Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.”

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 23:4 “Be thou ashamed, O Zidon: for the sea hath spoken, *even* the strength of the sea, saying, I travail not, nor bring forth children, neither do I nourish up young men, *nor* bring up virgins.”

**9:4** Behold, the Lord will cast her out, and he will smite her power in the sea; and she shall be devoured with fire.

**9:5** 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.

**9:6** And a bastard shall dwell in Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.

**9:7** 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.

things shall be fulfilled. “Behold the Lord will cast her out and He will smite her power in the sea, and she shall be devoured with fire”—V. 4. Even tho she, with her associate Zidon, is very strong and apparently invincible, she will meet her Waterloo at last. Then the burden of the judgment travels on. Four Philistine cities are mentioned next.

“Ashkelon in the south, shall not escape. She is fearful when she sees the fate of the proud city of Tyre. Gaza also is sorrowful, and Ekron, for her expectation shall be ashamed; while a 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”—V. 5, 6.

These four cities were no doubt in the way of Alexander’s victorious march of conquest; but if not, we know that their latter-day anti-types will not escape the judgment of God. History tells us that the name of the King of Gaza, at the time of Alexander’s besiegement of that city, was Batis. He was a deputized Persian commander of the city, who had usurped great authority and independent position. This is interesting when seen in view of end-time events. He was slain and his death was tragic. He was bound to a chariot, with thongs thrust thru his feet, and dragged thru the city. He is representative of all those rebels of the day of Christ who dare lift up themselves against Him. They will be bound to His chariot and forced to bow to His authority. The usurpers of Christ’s dominion shall bite the dust, as is the saying.

The Philistines were wont to be proud of their race, their national place and probably face. But God took them down. He humbled their pride and He will do the same to the anti-typical Philistine of the latter day. The bastard would peek of illegitimacy not born of lawful wedlock, which when seen in a spiritual sense is wonderful. The Philistine represents religious folk, the formal church member who has never been born again. Hence the bastard would emphasize this fact. We read of such in Paul’s letter to the Hebrews. He says, “If ye endure chastening God dealeth with you as sons; x x but if ye be without chastisement x x then are ye bastards and not sons”—Heb. 12:7, 8. There were some of such character there some true believers and some bastards. The same condition obtains in Christendom at the present hour. Church membership is counted, instead of Christ membership, and vengeance will be taken on the Philistine. Ashdod—“the spoiler” shall be spoiled. Religious as well as political Rome is seen here in type. Furthermore the Prophet is made to say,

“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”—V. 7.

We are herein instructed that even the Philistine, the former avowed enemy of Israel, who survive the wreckage of the terrible judgment of the

notable day of the Lord, shall be cleansed from defilement, and afterward enter into the joy of the Jews. They too shall belong to God. Some of them will have honored places as chieftains and governors in Judah, and shall be esteemed as Jehusites or native sons of Jerusalem. Jebus was its name as given over into the hands of Gentiles. There is a hint here of the Jebusite, Araunah, who lived in the midst of the Jews and was reckoned as one of them. He was a distinguished man, a wealthy man. He sold his threshing floor to King David which afterward became the Temple-site for the dwelling of the great God of Israel. He also offered to present the oxen with which he had been ploughing, as a burnt offering and the plough to keep the fire burning—<sup>1</sup>2 Sam. 24:22 and 1 Chron. 21.

The above prophecy of the Philistine has never been fulfilled. None of the heathen nations were converted to Israel by the calamities which befell them in former days. “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 by thee any more; for now have I seen with mine eyes”—V. 8.

Herein is contained a marvelous statement. The Lord Himself promises to stand guard and defend His house from the oppressor “My house,” refers not primarily to the congregation of Israel; but to the Temple of the Lord. But the protection of the one is the protection of the other. It probably expresses the thought that God’s favor will be upon the Temple, even as the people, for He declares that no oppressor, “slave driver” is the meaning of the word will even have authority over them again. There is a hint in that word to their deliverance out of Egypt, from under the hands of their taskmasters.

“I have seen with mine eyes” (V. 8), the Lord declares. He has observed the oppression of the Gentiles over His people, like as in Egypt, and He has come down to deliver them. This Scripture in its final fulfillment cannot come until the Lord as the conquering King is on the scene. He came once to deliver them as the next verse of our chapter shows, but the people as a whole refused His tender advances and rejected His great atonement on the cross. The latter was a stumbling block to the nation. But the Stone which the builders refused is made the Head of the corner. He is the Corner-Stone of the great Building—God’s Kingdom upon the earth. The Jews can never have their place until He is accepted and given His place. The following is one of the great Messianic promises and it has been minutely fulfilled.

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion, Shout O daughter of Jerusalem.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Samuel 24:22 “And Araunah said unto David, Let my lord the king take and offer up what *seemeth* good unto him: behold, *here be* oxen for burnt sacrifice, and threshing instruments and *other* instruments of the oxen for wood.”

**9:8** 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.

**9:9** 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.

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”—V. 9.

From the victorious, march of the great Gentile world conqueror with his invincible army, which God uses as His rod to chastise the peoples and cities named in this portion, the Prophet passes on the real Conqueror, the true King, the One who has a divine right to reign. Alexander and other mighty men have been used of God to show forth His excellencies; but none have equaled, much less manifested the prowess that He will manifest.

It is amazing, tho' in accord with the character of Old Testament prophecy, that there are no indications given of the intervals between the different stages by which the Messiah's Kingdom should be established. Like a whole mountain range may appear as one mountain, when viewed from a distance, without discerning the various peaks with long valleys between, so prophecy of the Person and work of the Messiah of Israel. The inspired writers did not see the long interval between the sufferings of Christ and glory which should follow. Also it is interesting to note how often those inspired seers followed the course of the type of Messiah most marvelously, which latter finally merged into the Anti-type Himself, as in the case immediately before us. Alexander's march of victorious achievements culminates in the divine foreshadowing of the King of Israel. But He is here depicted as coming in upon an ass, the lowly beast of burden.

Israel are called upon to “Rejoice.” The promised One, for whom they have waited so long is at hand. Shout, the Prophet exclaims, calling upon the daughter of Zion to rise up and make the glad tidings known. There is a similar summons in an earlier chapter, “Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for lo I come and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith Jehovah” (“*Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD.*” *KJV*)—Zech. 2:10. This sounds as an echo of the last verse of “the Immanuel Book” as Isaiah chapters 7-12, has been called: “Cry aloud and shout: thou inhabitant of Zion; for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee”—Isa. 12:6.

But the coming of the King foretold in the passage in our study chapter is a different one from the other two quoted announcements. The one refers to His first advent, the others to His second. He must be first manifested in humble, lowly guise, as has been noted again and again, before it was possible for Him to be manifested in power and majesty. It is after His second advent that He is to reign over the earth as Immanuel, the God-Man, visibly dwelling in the midst of Israel. The Jews did not discern these two phases of Messiah's coming, hence, only the few recognized and received Him when “He came unto His own” people—John 1:11.

In the first word of verse nine, “Behold,” our attention is focused upon the Person of Christ in His first advent. He is introduced in four different characters by this word, “Behold,” as we have noted. These separate aspects give us a fourfold portrait of Christ, corresponding to the four Gospel Records. In our chapter here we are called upon to view Him in His official character as Zion’s King. The prophet announces to Israel, “Behold THY KING cometh unto thee”—V. 9. The Righteous Branch of David, the long-expected Ruler, who “shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth even a morning without clouds, as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain” (2 Sam. 23:4), shall come to Israel to bless her. As the Man Christ Jesus, He was Israel’s King, born of her, but as God, He was “come to her,” the Lord from heaven, the Word made flesh. As a Man, He was identified with Israel; but Israel needed salvation, even as any other people. The same thing may be said of His mother Mary. He was her Son, after the flesh: her Savior after the Spirit. She calls Him such. See <sup>1</sup>Luke 1:47.

The first item of the announced description here is that He is “just.” That signifies more than simply righteous in character and aim. It signifies One who has the fundamental element of the ideal King as visioned by David—<sup>2</sup>2 Sam. 23:3

Secondly, He comes, “having salvation.” He is present to deliver Israel from her bondage, both spiritual and national slavery. He has come for that purpose, as has been predicted of Him.

The third item in the context relating to the King, is that He is “lowly,” which primarily means “poor,” “afflicted.” It is in a word the description of the Righteous Servant of Jehovah as given by Isaiah 53, in that marvelous picture of the suffering Messiah. The translators, no doubt could not quite reconcile the fact of the King who was coming to deliver Israel, being “poor,” “afflicted,” etc, hence they rendered the word, “lowly,” which has the thought of meekness, humility, etc., but that is not its meaning. The great contrast is being emphasized—He is the King come to deliver, yet it is by suffering and death that He does it.

Therefore, in keeping with His above character, He presents Himself to the people. “Riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass” (V. 9), expresses the peaceful mission upon which He has come to Israel, as well as showing He was not in full possession of His rights, or authority at that time. The youth of the ass would further emphasize this latter phase. The time was not come for the manifestation of His power and glory, for God’s purposes were not

<sup>1</sup> Luke 1:47 “And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.”

<sup>2</sup> 2 Samuel 23:3 “The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men *must be* just, ruling in the fear of God.”



matured. The latter awaits His second coming when it is written (Rev. 19) that He shall appear upon a white horse, a fully matured kingly creature, even as the ass had in it the thought of his body of humiliation and limitation in the which He had hidden His glory.

The above verse 9, of our lesson, was literally fulfilled when Christ entered Jerusalem the first day of the week in which He was crucified, called “Passion Week.” Both Matthew and John quote the passage in connection with His triumphal entry—<sup>1</sup>Matt. 21:1-5. Which was the formal presentation of Israel’s Messiah to Jerusalem, as King of the Jews. The attitude of the multitude was at first cordial and enthusiastic. They strewed palm branches, emblems of victory, in His pathway and shouted the Messianic welcome, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!”—Matt. 21:9. But that rejoicing attitude toward their King soon changed. The chief priests and elders of the people influenced the weaker folks. When the question was asked, “Who is this?” (Matt. 21:10) they were daunted and answered in unbelief, “Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth of Galileo” (Matt. 21:11); and later they woefully rejected Him, and were influenced to cry, “Crucify Him, crucify Him” (Luke 23:21), when Pilate would have released Him.

But that all had to be, even as it was written. Christ must come and be rejected by His people, the Jews, and die upon the cross, according to prophecy—<sup>2</sup>Gen. 3:15, Isa. 53, Psalms 22, 69, etc. There was no national salvation for Israel at His first advent and no Kingdom for them then. From the Messiah’s humiliation, the depths of which are shown in the words “poor or afflicted” and “riding upon an ass,” in verse 9 of our chapter, we are directed to the glory and blessed results that should follow the second advent of the Savior-King, not only in relation to the nation, “beloved for the father’s sake” (Romans 11:28), but to the whole earth.

There has ensued a period of nearly two thousand years between the predictions of verses 9 and 10 of our chapter. The first was fulfilled when the Messiah entered Jerusalem, “riding upon an ass and a colt the foal of an ass” (“*riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.*”—V. 9 KJV). The nation

<sup>1</sup> Matthew 21:1-5 “And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, Saying unto them, **Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.** All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.”

<sup>2</sup> Genesis 3:15 “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”

**9:10** 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.

**9:11** As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein *is* no water.

beheld their King; but they did not accept Him. He shall return and “speak peace to the (Gentile) nations”—V. 10 R. V. The latter event is as sure to come as did the former; for regardless of the length of time which elapses, Jehovah never loses the thread of His purposes for the earth and its people. And tho’ they have had to wait long for the fulfillment of the predicted “peace on earth, good will to men” (“*and on earth peace, good will toward men.*”—*Luke 2:14 KJV*), as announced by the angels at the birth of Christ, yet it shall be realized. The King of the Jews, was born in Bethlehem, and that little town among the cities of Judah, shall yet boast of the fact that the Ruler of the nations was born there—<sup>1</sup>Micah 5:2.

“As for thee, also, by the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein there is no water”—V. 11.

Zechariah now turns to Zion and Israel and addresses himself to them. These “prisoners of hope” (V. 12), as they have been called, refer to the nation at the end time. In the vision of the dry bones (Ezek. 37) the complaint of the people is, that “our hope is lost” (Ezek. 37:11), but when He is manifested, who is indeed the Hope of Israel, the prisoners (the captives) will be released and cleansed. “Refrain thy voice from weeping and thine eyes from tears, x x x There is hope for thy latter end, saith the Lord, and thy children shall come again to their own border” (“*Thus saith the LORD; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears... And there is hope in thine end, saith the LORD, that thy children shall come again to their own border.*”—*Jeremiah 3:16, 17 KJV*)—Jer. 31:17.

The “blood of the covenant,” which is said to be the basis of the deliverance, refers primarily to the covenant made to Abraham. This latter was not like the covenant of Sinai, a contract between two parties, but of a promise of blessing to the seed of Abraham, to which God pledged Himself as to its fulfillment, without any promise from Abraham. In connection with that covenant, there was the shedding of the blood of the animals and birds, which Abraham was commanded to slay. But that bloodshedding, as well as that of all the sacrifices “on Jewish altars slain,” pointed on to that great sacrifice of Calvary. The death of Jesus was the answer of God to the covenant of promise: and it is this blood of the new covenant, in which all the promises of God, whether to Israel, or “the whosoever” of this age, or all ages, are made doubly sure and certain. “In Him is the Yea and in Him the Amen unto the glory of God by us” (“*For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.*”—*KJV*)—2 Cor. 1:20. Therefore, because of the eternal advocacy of that blood, He says, “I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit

<sup>1</sup> Micah 5:2 “But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, *though* thou be little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that is* to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting.”

wherein there is no water”—V. 11. The verb is in the present tense, tho’ referring to the future, as is often the case, in prophecy. God’s promises, tho’ the set time of their fulfillment may be far distant, are already as sure as if accomplished. The dungeon or “pit wherein is no water,” refers to the perishing condition of the remnant of the Jews at the set time of their deliverance. They will be at the point of perishing; no hope, but in God. The prophets all witness to their dire predicament. Isaiah says, “This is a people robbed and spoiled. They are all of them snared in holes and hid in prison houses. They are for a prey and none delivereth; for a spoil, and none saith, Restore” (*“But this is a people robbed and spoiled; they are all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison houses: they are for a prey, and none delivereth; for a spoil, and none saith, Restore.” KJV*)—Isa. 42:22. But regardless of their desperate plight, they will not be given over to destruction. There will be a way out for them, as we know. The expression, “the pit wherein is no water,” reminds us of the pit into which Joseph was cast. There was no water in it (<sup>1</sup>Gen. 37:24); but he did not perish. He was taken out, even as shall be the case with the faithful remnant of the latter time.

The Jews are here likened to one who is bound in a pit, or dungeon, which literally has been the case with the multitude of them during these nineteen centuries since Christ was rejected and put into the grave. He suffered prison darkness, but was delivered out of the tomb for their justification and blessing. He can now deliver them and He will do this very thing. They will owe their very life to the One that they put in the pit, even as Jacob’s sons owed their blessing to their brother, Joseph, whom they rejected and sold into the hands of the Gentiles. Nationally as well as spiritually, Israel will be delivered from all bondage at the coming of Christ and their acceptance of Him. There is a great change at hand for the poor, despised people of Jehovah. From the depths of humiliation and ruin, they shall be lifted up with Christ to share the spoils of His victory upon the earth. The beggar from the dung-hill shall be exalted as the prince of the earth—<sup>2</sup>1 Sam. 2:8.

The Messiah has already been anointed to deliver them, as He announced in the synagogue of Nazareth, where he had often visited as a child and man: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He hath sent Me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and the recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised”—Luke 4:18. In that day, they will shout aloud as they look upon their Messiah, saying, “He hath brought me up also out of an

<sup>1</sup> Genesis 37:24 “And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit *was* empty, *there was* no water in it.”

<sup>2</sup> 1 Samuel 2:8 “He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, *and* lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set *them* among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth *are* the LORD’S, and he hath set the world upon them.”

**9:12** Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare *that* I will render double unto thee;

horrible pit, out of the miry clay; and He has set my feet upon a Rock and established my goings. And He has put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God”—Ps. 40:1-3. The next verse of our lesson emphasizes what has preceded.

“Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope”—V. 12. The refuge, or fortress to which they are called to return, is primarily the land of Palestine, their own land, which is a rocky, fortified place as compared to the pit of their captivity; it refers also to the Lord. He is a safe hiding-place, a sure refuge for His people in every age and every clime. But it is especially to the Jews of the latter time, that these words are address. It is the voice of all prophecy as relates to God’s ancient people. He, Himself is spoken of as their sure defense, their stronghold in the day of trouble, whether they are in Palestine or other parts of the world, at the second advent of Christ.

The expression, “prisoners of hope,” or THE HOPE, as is the Hebrew, describes the Jewish people in their banishment and scattering. It marks the nation out from all other nations and distinguishes them from all other people. They have woefully sinned in the rejection of their Messiah and they have been punished. Jacob may be given over for a spoil and Israel to the robbers; but there is hope in their latter end. Or as Jeremiah also declares, in chapter 29:11, speaking as Jehovah’s mouthpiece, “I know the thoughts that I think towards you, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end” (*“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.—Jeremiah 29:11 KJV*). The Lord’s purposes shall be fulfilled to them. The remnant of Israel shall be blessed even as it is written many times in the Scriptures. The remnant of Israel shall take root, bud and bring forth fruit. The Psalmist breathed forth this spirit of confident expectation over and over again in response to their agonized cry from the depths of their national tribulation and anguish. There is encouragement and hope for them, by God’s own promises. “O Israel, hope in the Lord; for with Him there is mercy and with Him is plenteous redemption, and He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities” (*“Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.” KJV*)—Ps. 130:7, 8, Israel’s iniquities have been the cause of all his troubles; hence when he is forgiven and his transgressions removed then the Lord shall redeem him from his troubles.

The appellation, “prisoners of hope,” may in a sense, be applied to the Church also. We are not in bodily dispersion, neither in bondage to sin, or Satan. In Christ, we have even now “redemption thru the blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace” (*“redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace”—Eph. 1:7 KJV*). Already are we delivered from the power of darkness and are translated into the

Kingdom of the Son of His love and are made heirs and joint-heirs with Christ, to an inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away. But at the same time, we have not yet as to actual experience obtained the above. In reality, we are still environed with a body of weakness and humiliation, a body of limitation and corruptibility. We still carry around the body of death, linked up with the old creation. We are not yet in the land of promise, but are looking and longing for our house which is from heaven; therefore we too are “prisoners of hope.” “We who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption (or sonship) to wit, the redemption of the body. For by hope are we saved; but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopeth for that he seeth not? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it” (*“And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.”—Romans 8:23-25 KJV*)—Rom. 8:22-25. We are expecting the Lord from heaven, “who will change the body of our humiliation that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself” (*“Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” KJV*)—Phil. 3:21.

But to hasten on with our chapter as it relates to the children of Jacob. The second half of the verse which we have been considering, declares that at the time of the greatest adversity, as the following verses would indicate, “even today do I declare that I will render double unto thee”—V. 12. It is good news in regard to them, even as the double portion of the first-born. Israel is God’s son, His first-born in relation to the other nations, and He deals with them according to His law in this respect. When the Jews, the chosen people, are in their own land under the protection of their covenant-keeping God, they shall enjoy a double portion of His love and favor. But as in keeping with such privilege so is the responsibility, “of whom much is given, much is required” (*“For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required”—Luke 12:48 KJV*). When Israel sinned, she received a double chastisement. “She hath received of the Lord’s hand double for all her sins”—Isa. 40:2. This fact is the explanation of Israel’s wanderings and sufferings during these nineteen centuries since their dispersion. It is said by their writers that Israel’s sufferings surpass that of the whole of the rest of mankind.

But here is the glad tidings which Zechariah proclaims. Their sufferings are not to continue forever. They are “prisoners of hope,” which latter will soon be realized and for their shame they shall have double blessing, and for their confusion they shall rejoice in their portion, x x “Everlasting joy shall be to

**9:13** 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.

**9:14** 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.

**9:15** 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.

them” (“*everlasting joy shall be unto them.*” *KJV*)—Isa. 61:7. But before this glorious consummation, there must be the breaking down of Gentile World Power; for all the enemies of God’s Kingdom must be overthrown, and this is what these final verses of our chapter graphically portray:

“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”—V. 13. This clause concludes the preceding verse. The Lord will use His people, the Jews, as men of war to conquer and thoroughly subjugate His enemies. Judah shall be the bent bow, Ephraim the arrows and Zion the drawn sword in the hand of Christ, King of God’s Kingdom.

The “Greeks” referred to in this passage, to whom the “sons of Zion” were in opposition, were the Grecian world-power, which in Zechariah’s day was about to come; but as we have seen we must look to the greater fulfillment of these prophecies in the latter time. In the former days, there were wars between the Grecian empire and the Jews. Those were religious in character. An attempt was made to overturn the Jewish religion and substitute in its place Grecian customs. The Maccabean heroes took hold of the situation, resisting the enemy in the Name of the Lord with the full conviction that the cause in which they were engaged was His cause and that He was with them and would defend them as well as empower them in the conflict. And their faith was not in vain. He was the strength of His people, and the following citation shows that He shall prove Himself in this wise again.

“And the Lord shall be seen over them, and His arrow shall go forth as the lightning, and the Lord God shall blow with the trumpet and shall go with the whirlwinds of the south. And the Lord shall defend them and they shall devour and subdue with sling stones, and they shall drink and make a noise as thru wine and they shall be filled like bowls and as the corners of the altar”—Vs. 14, 15.

The language is glowing and figurative. It is so vivid in its beauty and strength, that many commentators think it highly exaggerated in reference to the Maccabean exploits. But the Lord delights in the faith of His people and in their victories, which, tho’ they appear small in the eyes of men, are great in His eyes. It is true that the Maccabeans had only a small, unorganized army of the poor and despised of the people. Judas and his brethren commanded those insignificant regiments; nevertheless they were the army of the Lord as well as the army of Israel. They went forth to battle in the Name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, even as it is written of David, the stripling in his day. The Grecian Empire, was even as Goliath, the Philistine, the enemy of the Lord, and He fought for the Maccabees as He did for David. Out of weakness they were made strong. “They waxed valiant in fight and turned to flight the

armies of the alien” (“*waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.*” *KJV*)—Heb. 11:34.

But as we have noted again and again, these prophecies of Zechariah cannot be restricted to any former time; therefore, we say with assurance that this whole passage points on the complete subjugation of Gentile dominion. Zion stands for the Kingdom of God while Greece stands for the kingdoms of the world which will be ruling in the time of Christ’s second advent. The city of God and the city of the world will be in opposition, the one to the other. Two world kingdoms cannot rule at the same time. One must go down in defeat, while the other rises. The overthrow of Antiochus Epiphanes and his successors at the hands of a comparative handful of despised Jews under the Maccabees, to which this has a slight reference, fore-shadows the final conflict of the world-powers and the judgments to be inflicted on the confederated armies that shall assuredly be gathered against Jerusalem for that great battle of Armageddon, which is yet to come. Those armies will be against God, as well as against His people; hence, the Lord will fight against them. He will empower the Jews. They shall be strong in the Lord and fight in the strength of Jehovah, so that “the feeble among them shall in that day be as David, and the house of David shall be as God, as the Angel of the Lord before them” (“*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.*” *KJV*)—Zech. 12:8.

That will be the time when Jehovah shall be seen over them and His arrow shall be manifested as the lightning. He, as Captain of the host of the Lord, shall blow the trumpet and go forth to fight against those nations as when He fought in the day of battle—<sup>1</sup>Zech. 14:3. He will defend them; and they shall devour, x x and they shall drink and make a noise even as a man filled with wine. The eating and drinking is in a figurative sense. It is the figure of a great conflict in which the Prophet is reminded by the Spirit of that prophecy of Balaam, uttered centuries before—“Behold the people (Israel) shall rise up as a great lion and lift up himself as a young lion. He shall not lie down until he eat of the prey and drink the blood of the slain”—Num. 23:24. The thought is that as the lion actually devours his enemies, so shall Christ the Lord subdue and overcome those that withstand Him in that dreadful day of judgment. They shall disappear as completely as the food of the lion. They shall subdue with sling stones, implies the weakness of the means used to get the victory. It will be as it was with David and Goliath.

The next verse refers to the ecstatic celebration of the victorious people. They will be wild with delight as tho’ drunk with wine. They will be filled like the bowls in which the priests were wont to catch the blood of the victims which

<sup>1</sup> Zechariah 14:3 “Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.”

were slain, and sprinkled with it, even as the corners or “horns” of the altar were sprinkled with the sacrificial blood. The real significance is that the judgment of God, which will be poured out upon the wicked people, satisfies them in some sense. Their sufferings have been atoned for by the poured-out wrath of God upon their enemies.

Then the beautiful ending that is reached in the last two verses of the chapter. The overthrow of Gentile world-power, which will be in usurpation of Christ’s Kingdom for almost seven years, will be followed by the exaltation of the Jews. They will come into their own place as the leading people of the earth. The words, “And the Lord shall save them,” does not signify salvation in the negative sense merely, but in the positive sense also, as the next clause interprets. He will be to them and do for them all that the natural Shepherd is and does for his flock. He will not only seek and deliver and gather His flock, but will feed, tend, lead and rule His people. He will be to them all that is implied in the Hebrew word “Shepherd.” It has the thought of a king as well as shepherd. The twenty-third Psalm, which has been so precious to all the people of God thru-out all the centuries since it was penned, will be a real experience to them. They shall not WANT any good thing. Their Shepherd shall lead them by the still waters and into green pastures. Their cup of joy will run over. They indeed and in truth will enter into the rest provided for them.

**9:16** 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 second part of verse 16 gives us another aspect of this salvation, which shall be the portion of Abraham’s seed. “They shall be for stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon His land” (V. 16), refers to the glorification of the Jews. They shall be honored with their Righteous Ruler—set as jewels in the glittering diadem of their King. After the nation has received their Messiah, after Zion’s righteousness has gone forth as brightness and her salvation as a lamp that burneth, so-that “nations shall see their righteousness and all kings their glory” (“*And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory*”—*Isa. 62:2 KJV*), then they shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of Jehovah and a royal diadem in the hand of God—<sup>1</sup>Isa. 62:3. And it is in “His land” that this shall be seen. The Lord stands in a special relationship to Palestine as well as to the people of Israel. He declares that the land belongs to Him. “The land is Mine” (Lev. 25:23), He says, and tho’ He appointed it with a gracious purpose in view, as the inheritance of the seed of Abraham, yet the ownership remains vested in Him. It is “Immanuel’s Land,” because the Messiah is the true heir to it. He is the Seed of Abraham to whom it was promised, as well as the Son of David and the Son of God. He shall enjoy the land with His people when they are restored and in covenant relationship with Him.

The section ends with an outburst of praise to the Lord. The Prophet

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 62:3 “Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.”



**9:17** For how great *is* his goodness, and how great *is* his beauty! corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids.

exclaims, “How great is His goodness and how great is His beauty!”—V. 17. Goodness is frequently attributed to God in the Old Testament. We read, in Psalm 31:19, “Oh, how great is Thy goodness which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee, which Thou hast wrought for them that put their trust in Thee, before the sons of men” (“*Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!*”—*Psa. 31:19 KJV*). Goodness is that phase of God’s character whereby He is moved to communicate good to His creatures, good of every kind and without limit, or measure, because He is the Creator, as well as the full expression of all good.

Beauty is not attributed to God, but it is used of the Messiah King in such Scriptures as “Thou art fairer (or more beautiful) than the sons of men” (“*Thou art fairer than the children of men*”—*Psa. 45:2 KJV*)—Ps. 45. Another, “Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty”—Isa. 33:17. It is to Israel that these words are addressed. It is in the face of their Kinsman-Redeemer that they will behold the glory and beauty of the invisible God. That wondrous goodness and beauty of Jehovah shall be reflected in that great nation, Israel, when they are converted to the right way and restored to their right place in the earth. Material prosperity, abundance of all earthly goods, shall be their portion, under the Shadow of the Almighty. “Corn,” exclaims the Prophet, “shall make the young men cheerful and new wine the maids”—V. 17. Palestine shall once again, and more so than ever before, be a land “flowing with milk and honey” (Exodus 3:17). Its many centuries of barrenness and desolation will be forgotten in the fertilizing showers of the latter rain which will be due to fall. It will be the time of rejuvenation of the land as well as of the people, which the next chapter predicts and assures.

## Exaltation of the Jewish Power

### Chapter Ten

“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 every one, grass in the field”—V. 1.

#### Chapter 10

**10:1** 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 every one grass in the field.

This chapter is a continuation of the preceding one. The two together form one prophecy. The breaking down of Gentile world-power must be followed immediately by the exaltation of Jewish world-power. Folks may mock and jeer at such a consummation and say, “If the Jews are the chosen people, then I am glad I am not chosen,” and other foolish expressions of unbelief; but God’s purposes concerning them shall be fulfilled. Of course they will be changed from what they are today. Their character will be entirely different. They as a nation will be born anew, even as individuals are today; and as spiritually changed they will need a material change. The latter will come about by the copious rains for which the Prophet urges the people to ask.

Chapter nine closed with the promise of the goodness of the Lord toward Israel in the matter of the prosperity of the land. Chapter ten informs us as to the cause of the material change. The rain will fall, material rain, which Israel were taught to regard as entirely in the hand of God, the giving of which was evidence of His favor and the withholding of it, His disfavor. “Are there any among the vanities of the heathen that can cause rain?” (*“Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain?”—Jer. 14:22 KJV*), the prophet Jeremiah exclaimed, or can the heavens (by their own power) give rain? “Art Thou not He, Jehovah, our God? Therefore we will wait upon Thee; for Thou hast made all these things” (*“art not thou he, O LORD our God? therefore we will wait upon thee: for thou hast made all these things.” KJV*)—Jer. 14:22.

Men of science today appear to have grown wiser. They no longer acknowledge God in these things, but attribute them all to natural causes: but such science is altogether foolishness. We know that there is a living, personal God, the Creator and Upholder of all things, who has in His wisdom appointed “laws” to govern His universe; yet He is above and behind even those laws to guide and control them. He is able to change those laws if He so desires and He often does so, and interferes in the affairs of men and nations to instruct, or correct them. Rain was promised to Israel as the direct reward to national obedience, as it is written:

“And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments, to love the Lord your God and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, that I will give the rain of your land in its season, the former rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn and thy wine and thine oil” (*“And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my*

*commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil.”—Deut. 11:13, 14 KJV)—Deut. 11.*

Returning to our chapter, we see that the people are urged by the Prophet to pray for “the latter rain.” It is this rain which is so important for maturing and strengthening the crops in Palestine. The “early rain” prepares the soil for sowing, but the latter rain is absolutely necessary to complete the harvest. While the primary reference is to the literal showers; yet there is also a blending of the spiritual rain, for the spiritual life, as is the case in Joel’s prophecy (Joel 2:21-32), the outward and visible blessings being types of the spiritual. It is written of Israel when they came out of Egypt, “Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain. Thou didst confirm Thine inheritance when it was weary” (*“Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary.” KJV*)—(Ps. 68:9), showing that the rain has a spiritual application as well as a material. Furthermore, when Israel shall again be brought forth from Egypt (world), they shall have a greater refreshing and confirmation of God’s favor upon them than they had in that earlier exodus. His favor to them will be as “a cloud of the latter rain” (Proverbs 16:15), referring to the shekinah cloud that hung over them, which was typical of the Holy Spirit, who shall be upon the people in refreshing, comforting presence. In response to the spirit of grace and supplication, God will “pour water upon him that is thirsty and floods upon the dry ground. I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed and My blessing upon thy offspring” (*“For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.” KJV*)—Isa. 44:3. The material and spiritual are both included in these citations. In fact to Israel, the temporal and spiritual blessings go hand in hand.

But there is a message for the Church also in this promise of the latter rain, viewed spiritually. When Israel refused their national blessings, “judged themselves unworthy of eternal life” (*“and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life,” KJV*) as Paul declared (Acts 13:46), thus rejecting the Holy Spirit who had come on the day of Pentecost, another purpose of God began to take form. The Church came into being. A people taken out from among the Gentiles was gathered and the Holy Spirit, as the early rain, was poured upon them. Later, because of disobedience and worldliness, God withheld the Rain, but in these past twenty five years it has been falling upon the Church. It is the time of the maturity of the harvest. Tho’ many of the religious leaders refuse to receive the Comforter, nevertheless He is manifesting Himself to those who hear the sound and ask for the Rain. It is the time of the spiritual Latter Rain. Notice the full instruction contained in this first verse of our chapter. “Ask ye of the

Lord, x x and the Lord shall give.” Jesus said identically the same words, “Ask and ye shall receive” (“*Ask, and it shall be given you*”—*Matt. 7:7 KJV*) for God does answer prayer. However, there is a due time for some things; hence the answer may be delayed. For instance, it would not avail Israel, or the Church to ask for the latter rain until the time for it had arrived. But when it is due, there is no difficulty in getting the rain, which is the case even now as regards the Church. It has been falling, and will continue to fall upon every individual that asks for it until the Body of Christ has been lifted up to her place in the heavenlies. Then the latter material and spiritual rain, will be poured out in copious measure upon the Jews and their land.

The Lord will give them showers of Rain—literally, rain in plenty. The early and the latter rain will be combined. Israel will receive more of the refreshing power of the Holy Spirit than ever has been manifested in the world. The miracles which they will accomplish will be greater than ever have been seen. We have had some little evidence of “the powers of the age to come” (“*the powers of the world to come*”—*Hebrews 6:5 KJV*) in this present dispensation, but only a taste to what is yet to come—*Heb. 6:5*. And with this refreshing, spiritual condition, there will be the glorious temporal prosperity which has been promised. All manner of fruitfulness will be in evidence. “He will give to every one grass in the field” (“*the LORD shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field.—V. 1 KJV*). None will be neglected, nor forgotten in that halcyon day of God’s visitation of His earthly people, the Jews; for one great hindrance to the effectual prayer of faith will then be lifted. The heart of all the people will be set upon God. Harmony will reign among them. There will no more be the divided heart in Israel, turning away from the true and living God to worship vanities as in the past, which is the force of verse 2 of our chapter.

“For the idols (teraphim) 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”—*V. 2*.

There are seven other Scripture references to “teraphim,” and the word translated “idol,” and these show that that they were not only idols, but a peculiar kind of idols, small enough to be hidden beneath the camel’s furniture, on which Rachel sat—<sup>1</sup>*Gen. 31:34*. Michal put them in David’s bed to deceive the searchers—<sup>2</sup>*1 Sam. 19:13*. They were used for divination and magic purposes (<sup>3</sup>*Ezek. 21:21*), and also to secure good fortune to a house. The meaning of the

**10:2** 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.

<sup>1</sup> Genesis 31:34 “Now Rachel had taken the images, and put them in the camel's furniture, and sat upon them. And Laban searched all the tent, but found *them* not.”

<sup>2</sup> 1 Samuel 19:13 “And Michal took an image, and laid *it* in the bed, and put a pillow of goats' *hair* for his bolster, and covered *it* with a cloth.”

<sup>3</sup> Ezekiel 21:21 “For the king of Babylon stood at the parting of the way, at the head of the two ways, to use divination: he made *his* arrows bright, he consulted with images, he looked in the liver.”

word is “nourishers.” It also signifies in the Syriac “to enquire.” They were a talisman whereby to obtain response instead of by the lawful priesthood thru the Urim and Thummim.

We find reference to the teraphim in Judges 17 and 18, where we get a glimpse of the condition manifest among some of the tribes in those days “when there was no king in Israel and every man did that which was right in his own eyes” (*“In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.”—Judges 21:25 KJV*). In the strange narrative, we find therein recorded a sad mixture of a certain knowledge of the Lord with that of idolatry. There was the illegitimate use of the divinely instituted ephod joined together with the pagan teraphim. These latter were used for oracular purposes, for the apostate Levite of Bethlehem asked counsel of them regarding the apostate Danites.

Hence, we learn that Israel turned to these teraphim when they were out of fellowship with the Lord, and in consequence there was no revelation from Him, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor Thummim. We have a parallelism in Christendom in its spiritual significance; for what the ephod and prophet were in Israel, the Scriptures are now. They are even more sure than dream, or vision. These oracles, as spoken by holy men of God, carry conviction to hearts which are honestly seeking for light. The truth which is contained therein is confirmed in human hearts and lives and in the fulfillment of its predictions in the world. But men today are stumbling at the supernatural in the Scriptures as if there could be a revelation of the Infinite Creator without such an element. They are turning away from the divine oracles to speculations of science on the one hand and seducing spirits and doctrines of demons on the other—<sup>1</sup>1 Tim. 4:1-3 and 2 Tim. 3. It is for this cause, that “the Lord shall send them strong delusion that they should believe the lie” (*“And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:” KJV*)—2 Thess. 2:11.

But to return to the chapter. The Prophet continues—“Therefore, because Israel followed those lying vanities, those false divinations, they went their way”—wandered like lost sheep, afflicted and oppressed of their enemies. This is the dire straits to which Israel were driven, and it is the manner of many of God’s children today, because of the false leaders among them. The Lord Jesus in His day saw the people as in this condition. He looked upon them with compassion; for they were distressed and scattered, neglected and harassed, because their appointed shepherds had proved false (<sup>2</sup>Matt. 9:4, 36, R. V.),

<sup>1</sup> 1 Timothy 4:1-3 “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.”

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 9:4, 36 “And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, **Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?** ... But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.”

hence, He came to their help as the Good Shepherd. But first He must deliver them from their false leaders, or pastors. We hear Him say,

“Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds and I punished the goats (he-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”—V. 3.

**10:3** 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.

Those shepherds refer to the princes who ruled over Israel in the past. They were not loyal to Jehovah, hence, were not true, or honest with the people. But we believe it has special reference to the religious leaders of the seven years of destined time, of which the whole book of Zechariah is instructing us. The chief of these will be the false prophet, “second beast” (Rev. 13), who, it is predicted, will be allied with the anti-Christ, the Gentile ruler of the European Empire, which will be in power in those days. That false prophet will have other leaders of the Jews associated with him. They will be apostate Jews, allied with apostate Gentiles, all of them in rebellion against God and His Christ and His Kingdom. Jehovah of hosts will punish them when He appears and visits His flock, the house of Judah. He will then assume His place as the Chief Shepherd (<sup>1</sup>1 Peter 5:4) and the Jews will no more be a prey to the “wild beasts,” who have hunted and devoured them all these centuries. They will be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. He will make, or “set them” as the goodly horse, or “horse of His majesty” in the battle. That is, the remnant of the Jews of that time of matchless doings will be the leading regiment to defeat the Gentile armies. They will fight in close proximity to the Captain of the armies of the Lord. They will be endued with super-human strength. Judah will be honored in the superlative degree as is shown in verse 4, and the reason is given:

“Out of him, came forth the corner (or corner-stone); out of him, the nail; out of him, the battle-bow; out of him, every oppressor together”—V. 4.

**10:4** Out of him came forth the corner, out of him the nail, out of him the battle bow, out of him every oppressor together.

We have in this short verse, as is often the case in Zechariah, an allusion to statements made by several former prophets in reference to the character of the Messiah. The thought of the cornerstone is taken from Isa. 28:16, where the prophet contrasts the sure refuge which the Lord provides for His people with the house of deception and lies which men make for themselves. The latter shall be swept away in the storm of God’s judgments which shall fall upon the anti-Christ and all of his associates in that soon coming day of disaster for the wicked. But there is a sure fortress for the saints, “Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste”—Isa. 28:16. The Lord applied this Scripture to

<sup>1</sup> 1 Peter 5:4 “And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”

Himself (<sup>1</sup>Matt. 21:42) as did also the Apostles—<sup>2</sup>Acts 4:11 and <sup>3</sup>1 Peter 2:4-8.

“From Him,” that is from Judah came this Stone of destined worth Jesus Christ was a Jew. He was of the royal seed of David both thru His mother, Mary and His foster-father, Joseph, as Matthew and Luke’s Gospel affirm. It is to the family of David, of the tribe of Judah, of the seed of Abraham, that the promise has been given of being the human stock of the Messiah, while Bethlehem Ephratha, a portion of Judah is named as His birthplace. His Deity is also emphasized in the same passage—“His goings forth are of old, even from eternity” (*“whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”* KJV)—Mic. 5:2.

The CORNER STONE is a most irrepresive symbol of Christ in more ways than one. First it declares His immovability and durability of character, His fixity of purpose. There was no wavering in His whole being. He was a tried Stone, tested to the uttermost and no alloy manifested, a precious Stone, tried in the fire, but His lustre and worth was not diminished. Rather otherwise. He was unique distinct and different from all other stones even as the natural corner-stones. He holds up the building which is a necessary characteristic of a foundation stone. “The foundation of God remains sure” (*“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure”*—2 Tim. 2:19 KJV), therefore the Prophet adds, “He that believeth shall not make haste” (Isa. 28:16). He will not fear and flee in alarm at the judgment in the evil day when God arises to shake terribly the earth; but he will abide in safety resting on the unshakeable Rock of Ages.

But there is further instruction here as to the corner-stone. It is “that stone which unites the two walls at the corner” as the dictionary states. And in this respect the corner-stone is also a fitting emblem of the Lord as we read; “For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in His flesh, the enmity, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make of Himself of twain, one

<sup>1</sup> Matthew 21:42 “Jesus saith unto them, *Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?*”

<sup>2</sup> Acts 4:11 “This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.”

<sup>3</sup> 1 Peter 2:4-8 “To whom coming, *as unto* a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, *and* precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe *he is* precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, *even to them* which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.”

new man, so making peace” (*“For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;”* KJV)—Eph. 2:14, 15. Paul reminds the Ephesian believers that they were formerly “Gentiles in the flesh, x x without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now, in Christ Jesus ye who sometime were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ, x x x Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints and of the household of God: and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord, in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God thru the Spirit” (*“Gentiles in the flesh...That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ...Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”*—Eph. 2:11, 12-13, 19-22 KJV)—Eph. 2:16-22.

We have quoted at length to show that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Corner-Stone whether looked at in reference to Israel or the Church. The safety and stability of a building depends upon the foundation. The plan may be as perfect as any architect can make it, the materials may be of the finest and the workmen of the best; but if the foundation with its corner-stone be anywhere faulty that building will not stand. On the other hand, the materials of a building may be of a poor quality, the plan not beautiful, even plain and ordinary; but if the foundation is sound, “the rain may descend, the floods may come, the winds may blow and beat upon that house, but it will not fall, for it is founded upon a rock” (*“And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.”* KJV)—Matt. 7:25. Hence, God’s Building will stand. “The gates of hell shall not prevail against His Church” (*“and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”*—Matt. 16:18 KJV), neither against His earthly people, the Jews. The Great God, the Divine Architect has purposed within Himself from a past eternity to build, out of human materials, a glorious Temple for His own eternal habitation. He, Himself has laid the foundation of this majestic structure, whether viewed in its heavenly or earthly aspect:



“Behold I LAY in Zion for a foundation, a Stone” (Isa. 28:16), and this tried and precious Corner-Stone is His own Son who has been perfected thru His death and resurrection, and none of the power of hell can prevail against Him.

In late years there have been some discoveries in the vicinity of the Temple site in Jerusalem. The following relates to the cornerstone. “The engineers worked round the stone in order to ascertain its dimensions, and report that it is 3 feet 8 inches high and 14 feet in length. The block is further described as squared and polished; and fixed in its abiding position 3,000 years ago, it still stands sure and steadfast, a fitting emblem of the Rock of Ages which can never be removed, but abideth forever.” But to proceed on.

The NAIL also refers to the Messiah. He is the “tent-pin,” which is the meaning of the word, or “stake which is driven into the ground, to which the tent is fastened.” It is also used of the strong peg inside the Oriental man’s tent which is built into the wall of the Eastern house on which valuable things are hung. All these meanings are most wonderfully suggestive of the Son of God and Son of David. There is an allusion here to Isaiah 22:22 where we read, “And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder, and he shall open and none shall shut; and he shall shut and none shall open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place and he shall be for a throne of glory to his father’s house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father’s house, the offspring and the issue, every small vessel of cups even to all the vessels of flagons” (*“And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father’s house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father’s house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons.”—Isa. 22:22-24 KJV*).

This prophecy was spoken primarily of Eliakim, son of Hilkiah, of the family of David, who was over Hezekiah’s house, in the same capacity as Joseph over the house of Pharaoh; but he plainly merges into the Messiah, in whom all the Davidic promises are assured. He is the glorious throne of His Father’s House. He will establish and uphold it forever. He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne. He says to John in the Patmos visions, “These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth and no man shutteth and shutteth and no man openeth”—Rev. 3:7.

The “nail,” or peg inside the house was for the purpose of hanging burdens upon. The burden of all the house of God shall be upon the shoulders of Christ. All the vessels, large and small shall hang upon Him. The children of Israel will acclaim Him as the One to whom all honor and glory belong. They will “hang upon Him,” literally depend upon Him for all things; for God Himself will look to Christ for one thousand years. The responsibility will all be put upon

Him. He will shoulder it all and ably execute the Father's will. All things and all people, as well as all the counsel of God will depend upon that Lordly Nail in a sure place.

The BATTLE BOW is another aspect of Christ's character which will be manifest at His Second Coming. Then He will be seen as the skillful Archer who shall send forth His sharp arrows in the heart of the king's enemies, "whereby the people shall be made to fall under Him" ("*Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee.*" KJV)—Ps. 45:5.

This description of Christ is not so pleasant to dwell upon as that of the Corner-Stone and the Nail; but it is just as important and real. Isaiah the prophet describes Him in one chapter as the suffering Lamb of God, "the sheep before his shearers dumb" ("*and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb*"—Isa. 53:7 KJV) (Isa. 53), without defense or alibi; but in another chapter, the same prophet shows Him in a far different aspect. He is portrayed as clothed with majesty, marching forth in the greatness of His strength to take vengeance on the nations: "Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth the winefat?" (Isa. 63:2). Then the answer, "I have trodden the winepress alone and of the peoples there was none with Me; for I will tread them in Mine anger and trample them in My fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon My garments and I will stain all My raiment"—Isa. 63:2-4. These two descriptions of the Messiah portray Him in His double office as Priest and King. As the One He offered Himself as our representative to God. He sacrificed Himself, and now we are represented by Him in glory. As King He shall be revealed from heaven with the messengers of His power, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ—<sup>1</sup>2 Thess. 1:7-10. John in his Patmos visions gives us a description of Him in this latter aspect coming down from heaven with His mighty army to make war against all His enemies. "And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS"—Rev. 19:1-16.

The OPPRESSOR is the last appellation addressed to the Messiah in this clause. The exact meaning is somewhat doubtful, for the construction is unusual and peculiar, but it seems to imply that the Messiah at His Second Advent shall gather up in Himself all authority and rule. He shall not only be the choice One of the people, but the EXACTOR, the most absolute, autocratic Ruler the world

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10 "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day."

has ever seen. He will be the Despot of all despots, Sovereign of the heavens and the earth. And yet it will be a Shepherd rule gentle and kind, firm and tender yet masterful. God's sovereignty shall be fully manifested in the reign of Christ upon the earth. It shall be a reign of righteousness, by One who is glorious in holiness, infinite in compassion, whose very nature is love. He will be a terror to the ungodly, but a joy and delight to the righteous, the very acme of blessing to His own people.

But the word, "oppressor," seems to suggest that the thought of its application to Israel's Messiah, or absolute Ruler, in His relation is not to them as their own Shepherd, but to their enemies, of whom He will exact obedience and submission with a rod of iron and make Israel to rule over them. Therefore in this connection we might quote with the Psalmist, "Be wise now, O ye kings; be instructed ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry and ye perish from the way when His wrath is kindled just a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him" (*"Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."* KJV)—Ps. 2:10-12.

The next verse of our chapter (v. 5), unfolds the thought of the rule of Christ and the change that will come over the people, and the change in their behalf. When He shall appear, the enemies of the Jews shall be chagrined; but they shall be elated. We read, "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"—V. 5.

**10:5** 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.

The above refers to the terrific battle of Armageddon. It will be fought to a finish. All nations shall feel the weight of Christ's anger. The King of the Jews will appear to fight for His people. He is a Jew, of the house of David, of the family of Judah. He will make His people as "the goodly horse" (V. 3) in the conflict. They will no longer be like a troubled and helpless flock of sheep running from the wolves; but on the contrary, they shall be transformed into mighty men of valor treading their enemies into the dust.

The latter shall be mixed with the mire of the streets, and be as worthless and foul as the dirt. The meaning is that they shall be so beaten down they will not be recognizable from the mud. It is a phrase of contempt as used to describe the adversaries of the Lord and of His people, while the people of God are likened to "stones of a crown," lifted high over the land. They will prevail over their enemies, "because Jehovah is with them," the secret and source of their strength. The enemies' cavalry, counted their greatest power, shall be confounded. In that day of marvelous victory Israel shall experience and therefore understand the words of the Psalmist David; "Some trust in chariots

**10:6** 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 some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God”—Psa. 20:7.

The remnant of Judah will be the first to come into the blessings of the strength of the Lord; but the whole house of Israel will also have part in the victorious conflict of the ages. He declares, “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 will have mercy upon them, and they shall be as tho’ I had not cast them off; for I am the Lord their God and I will hear them”—V. 6. The Lord will save them. This means a physical salvation from the armies of the nations which will be gathered around Jerusalem in that great day of God Almighty (<sup>1</sup>Rev. 19:17, 18), and which will be defeated and discomfited to the uttermost. Israel will then possess their land in peace. They will no longer be divided into two separate kingdoms, but will be united into one people, with a common destiny. They will dwell safely in their own land, no more the target at which all other nations shoot: God will be their Savior and Restorer. He will establish them in their own place in the middle of the earth as His especial treasure. He will blot out all their past sins and wipe away all tears from their eyes. Furthermore, He says;

“They shall be as tho’ I had not cast them off” (V. 6), which reminds us of the greater promise of the new covenant, “I will forgive their iniquity and their sins will I remember no more” (*“I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” KJV*)—Jer. 31:34. Ezekiel goes farther and tells us that added, to the forgiveness of their sins, they shall be restored to their land and to fellowship with the Lord, “I will settle you in your old estates and I will do better unto you than at your beginnings” (*“I will settle you after your old estates, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings” KJV*) (Ezek. 36:11), which agrees with the words of Jehovah thru Zechariah. He declares, It is as Jehovah, the unchangeable, covenant-keeping God of Israel that He so speaks, which is the reason that the sinful nation has not been destroyed. He will show Himself as their God at that eventful period. The lo-ruhamah era, as well as the lo-ammi time of Israel’s history, will be ended. He shall then hear and answer them even as other prophets declare. Isaiah boldly announces this fact, by the Word of Jehovah: “Then shalt thou call and the Lord shall answer. Thou shalt cry, and He shall say. Here am I” (*“Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am.” KJV*)—Isa. 58:9. The whole ten tribes are included in these promises, as the following citation indicates; “And they of Ephraim shall be as a mighty man and their heart shall rejoice as thru wine, yea their children shall see it and be glad. Their heart shall

<sup>1</sup> Revelation 19:17, 18 “And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all *men*, both free and bond, both small and great.”

**10:7** 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.

**10:8** I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them: and they shall increase as they have increased.

rejoice in the Lord”—V. 7 R. V.

The sons of Joseph, are often named Ephraim in the Scriptures; but the ten tribes are also so termed. Here it refers to the latter. They too have a part in the promises to Judah. These tribes at the time of Zechariah were still in exile, a mere fraction of them having joined the remnant of the Jews, who had returned after the Babylonish captivity. Likewise will it be in the latter days. The whole nation, not Judah only, have a part in their Kinsman-Redeemer, the Son of David and Son of God, whose advent to Zion the Prophet had so joyfully declared in chapter nine. He will come for Israel's salvation, as well as for that of Judah. They also shall be equipped as mighty men and their hearts shall dance with joy as thru wine. The Spirit shall be poured upon them. They shall be filled with the refreshing presence of the Comforter whom Jesus promised to them at His first Advent, had they ears to hear—John 14:16 to 26 and 15:26, 27. And their joy shall then abide forever. Their children shall witness it and be moved to desire the same experience. It will be a nation filled with the Holy Spirit for the thousand years reign of Christ. They will never lose the spiritual energy or fervor of love with which they began. It will be more glorious than tongue can tell. The Lord will be their boast and song when He has fulfilled these promises to them. Their heart will rejoice in Him. He declares:

“I will hiss for them and gather them, for I have redeemed them and they shall increase as they have increased”—V. 8.

The word used here for “hiss” is also translated “call,” “whistle” or “pipe,” in earlier prophecies. Isaiah uses it when he speaks of the Lord gathering the nations around Jerusalem to chastise His people. “It shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall hiss, (or whistle) for the fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt and the bee that is in the land of Assyria. And they shall come,” etc.—Isa. 7:18. Also the Prophet says, “He shall lift up an ensign to the nations x x and will hiss for them, etc.” (“*And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them*” *KJV*)—Isa. 5:26. The meaning is that the Lord will gather the hostile nations against Jerusalem.

But the word has also a more delightful meaning. It is used of the shepherd signaling for his flock which is especially the picture presented here. They have followed false shepherds in days gone by and they are still doing this and they will continue to do so until they have learned to their sorrow that these are blind guides. They have wandered away from the true Shepherd and have been afflicted; but He will gather them together shortly. He will visit His flock (v. 3). He will pipe for them and they will run after Him. He will do this for the reason stated—He has redeemed them. A full and complete redemption has been purchased for them by the blood of the cross. They shall be redeemed from all their iniquities and shall be known as “The holy people, the redeemed of the

Lord” (Isa. 62:12), from which time they shall love and serve Him, their Redeemer, who hath ransomed them from him who was stronger than they were.

And they shall increase as they have increased. It is a well-known fact that there is no people who have multiplied so rapidly as the Jew, since the beginning of the nineteenth century. It is a striking sign of the times. He has grown from the comparatively small number of five million at that time to at least sixteen million and this in spite of pogroms, overcrowding, starvation, merciless persecution, etc. But the old story of Israel in Egypt has been repeated—the more they were afflicted the faster they multiplied—<sup>1</sup>Ex. 1:7.

“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”—V. 9.

We do not believe that this signifies a future dispersion of the people as punishment. The word for “sow” is never used of scattering in a bad sense, but rather of the good seed that brings forth a harvest to feed humanity. It may refer to a sowing of them among the nations as evangelists and teachers where they will live. We read in another prophecy, “Behold the days come saith the Lord that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and with the seed of beast”—Jer. 31:27.

And they will remember the Lord and worship Him in the country where He chooses them to abide with their children. And they shall return in time to Jerusalem whether at the days of feasting, or to dwell there, is not so clear. But the emphasis is upon the fact that the Lord shall gather them as the following indicates;

“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”—V. 10.

Egypt and Assyria are singled out as the conflicting nations of the early days of Israel’s sojourn in Palestine. They represent the last day people of the world, or we may put it more forcibly by saying that they stand for the two opposing national confederacies of the noted seven years of Daniel 9:27. It is a prophecy which undoubtedly merges into the distant future and will be fulfilled to the uttermost “when Jehovah shall lift up His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people x x and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel and gather together the dispersed of Judah from Assyria and from Egypt x x and from the four corners of the earth” (“*that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people... and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four*

**10:9** 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.

**10:10** 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.

<sup>1</sup> Exodus 1:7 “And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them.”

*corners of the earth.” KJV)—Isa. 11:11, 12.*

And when the Lord performs this supernatural feat He will have a place prepared for them. Gilead—“the heap of witness,” and Lebanon—“the white,” tell us of the suitable dwelling for His people as they will be then. It probably represents all the promised land east and west of the Jordan. But even this portion will be found too small for them as we read in another prophecy. “The children of thy bereavement shall yet say in thine ears, The place is too strait for me. Give way or place to me that I may dwell. Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children and am desolate, a captive and removing to and fro? and who hath brought up these? Behold I was left alone, these, where had they been?” (*“The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell. Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? and who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been?”—Isa. 49:20, 21 KJV*). And this again reminds us of the jubilant exclamation of the same prophet, “Sing, O barren (or exult) thou that didst not bear. Break forth into singing, and cry, thou that didst not travail: far more are the children of the desolate, than the children of the married wife, saith Jehovah” (*“Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD.” KJV*)—Isa. 54:1.

The words are addressed to Jerusalem, the counterpart of Sarah in her barrenness at first, and her fruitfulness afterwards. She has been barren all these centuries, especially since Christ’s death, not because she has never borne children, but because she has been robbed of them on account of the captivity of the people. All this long period, she has been deprived of them, not because she has not given birth to children but because she has not borne them as the HOLY CITY. But she shall yet awake and sing when her desolate condition is over and her children gather around her as a multitude, far greater than before her barren slate. The increase of Zion’s population will be so great that she will marvel. No longer will she bewail her lonely bereaved condition, but she shall rejoice when she shall hear the people say “Give way that I may get a place.” It will seem as tho’ they will be pushing one another, to find a home, or vacant land to settle upon.

And this signifies far more than appears on the surface; for the land which God by covenant and oath has promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is about fifty times as great in extent as the portion which Israel actually possessed in their former sojourn. It is said that Voltaire because of his ignorance of the above fact uttered the following blasphemous words; The God of the Jews must

have been a little God because He gave His people a land, not larger than Wales and called it “a goodly land and large” (“*a good land and a large*” *KJV*)—Ex. 3:8. The real possession of the nation will be larger than that of France, but even this may be too small to hold all the people in the millennium, so great and rapid will be the increase of the saved and blessed remnant of that glad day.

“And He shall pass thru 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 sceptre of Egypt shall depart away”—V. 11.

**10:11** 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 sceptre of Egypt shall depart away.

There is again an allusion to the wonderful manner of God’s deliverance of the people out of Egypt when He lead them thru the Red Sea. It is the basis and illustration of what He will do for them in that future day of signs and wonders. The great Shepherd of Israel will gather and lead them to their own habitation removing by His Almighty power every obstacle in their pathway. “The pride of Assyria” represents the Northern Confederacy which will at that future day be menacing the Jews. God will bring them down. “The sceptre of Egypt” figures the Western Confederacy which will have dominion over the nation for a few years during the seven years of <sup>1</sup>Dan. 9:27. But their sceptre or rule shall be a thing of the past. Israel will have one King and their honor and glory shall be safe in His hands. All Gentile world-power will be laid low when the God of heaven shall set up His Kingdom upon the earth. Then the last verse of our chapter will be realized as it never has been.

“And I will strengthen them in the Lord: and they shall walk up and down in His Name, saith the Lord”—V. 12.

**10:12** And I will strengthen them in the LORD; and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the LORD.

The first clause denotes their inward character. Their whole life will be changed as well as their environment. The last clause tells us of their walk and conversation. They shall be rooted in God and all their actions in full accord and conformity to His revealed Name which shall then be gloriously manifested in their midst in the Person of Christ, the image of the invisible God. And it also signifies that they shall be His messengers and representatives, as is the place of the church today, dispensing blessings to the nations of the world. They shall be respected and honored in that coming day being known as the “priests of Jehovah” and hailed as the ministers of our God—<sup>2</sup>Isa. 61:6.

<sup>1</sup> Daniel 9:27 “And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 61:6 “But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: *men* shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.”



## Judgment of Leaders in Israel

### Chapter Eleven

“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”—Chap. 11:1, 2.

#### Chapter 11

**11:1** Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars.

Jewish interpreters behold in these prophecies the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. They inform us of many interesting incidents in this connection which they now deem were signal signs of the calamities which were about to fall. The following are a few of these, taken from the Talmud. “Our Rabbis have learned from tradition that forty years before the destruction of the Temple the lot would fall on the right side instead of the left. The lamp of the evening light would not burn, and the doors of the Temple used to open of their own accord and Rabbi Yockanan, Son of Zakkai, rebuked them. He said, O Temple, Temple, why art thou terrified? I know well that thy end is to be destroyed, for already Zechariah the son of Iddo, hath prophesied, “Open thy doors, O Lebanon, and let the fire consume thy cedars”—V. 1.

Furthermore as the time drew near for the above destruction after the rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ and His witnesses, the Apostles, strange signs in heaven and earth abounded in the land of Judah. They were warnings of the doom that was rapidly advancing. Josephus mentions a number of these. “A comet, which had the appearance of a huge sword, hung over the city for a whole year. While the people were assembled at the feast of unleavened bread at the sixth hour of the night a bright light shone about the Temple. On Pentecost when the priests entered by night into the temple, they said that they heard many voices proclaim, Let us depart hence. A certain Jew, Ananus, began suddenly to cry in the temple; A voice from the East and a voice from the West! a voice from the four winds! A voice against Jerusalem and against the Temple! A voice against the bridegrooms and the brides! A voice against all the people! He repeated this with a loud voice day and night in the narrow streets. He was severely beaten, but he uttered neither shriek for pain nor prayer for mercy. Raising his sad and broken voice he cried at every blow of the scourge, Woe, woe to Jerusalem! He paid no attention to anyone, nor spoke for four years except to cry the same words, Woe, woe to Jerusalem, the city and the temple. He neither reviled anyone who struck him, nor thanked anyone who blessed or fed him, but continued with his lamentable cry.”

All these startling signs and many more will be repeated, before the great and notable day of the Lord come, the Prophet Joel assures us (<sup>1</sup>Joel 2:30-32)

<sup>1</sup> Joel 2:30-32 “And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.”

and Peter quotes and reiterates his predictions—<sup>1</sup>Acts 2:19, 20. We continue with our lesson.

In this chapter we have a change. It tells of judgment upon the high ones, the leaders of the people of Israel. It stands in the same relation to the prophecies which comprise the second division of the book, as the fifth chapter, the Flying Roll and Ephah, does to the first division. The wondrous blessings of Israel which we have been contemplating shall be ushered in with judgment as the Scripture abundantly witnesses.

Lebanon—“the white,” is bidden to open its doors. That is, the steep mountain, standing for Jerusalem, is admonished of the fire which shall consume its cedars. Then the fir trees are called to howl, because the cedars are fallen. If the great ones are felled what chance is there for the lesser folk. They may expect a similar, if not a worse fate. Then the conflagration continues on. It sweeps down upon the land of Bashan, “rich soil,” and the oaks on the lower level will come within the advance of the desolating flames. This would speak of a great calamity: for these trees were practically inaccessible. But now we hear that the forest fire sweeps over the high and the low. And the meaning is manifest. The high and strong trees speak of the great ones of the nation. They will be forced to come down by the fiery judgment of God. His wrath will fall upon the shepherds, or rulers of Israel. They will cry aloud because their beauty is spoiled and their splendor dimmed. The land also is made desolate by the fiery wrath that is poured out upon it. The forests are burned. The close thickets which enclosed the Jordan river as it ran down thru the land of Judah shall be destroyed. The roar of the young lions is heard, for the pride of Jordan is devastated. There is weeping and wailing over the ruin that is manifested because of God’s judgments.

While the physical desolation of the land appears to be primarily set forth in the opening verses, yet the people are included also, as the latter part of the chapter implies. The truth is that Israel are here viewed as given over to judgment. They are “the flock of slaughter,” or “for slaughtering” (v. 4), if the Good Shepherd did not come and save them. The Prophet, representative of Him is commanded to feed them. He takes upon himself the office of shepherd and endeavors to rescue them from the wicked shepherds: but they refuse to let him save them. They are obstinate and he perforce is obliged to leave them to utter misery and ruin, the results of their unbelief. But he asks for his wages (ironically we are sure); for he has served them faithfully; and they in turn mockingly offer him “thirty pieces of silver.” This latter was the sum paid in

<sup>1</sup> Acts 2:19, 20 “And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:”

**11:2** 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.

**11:3** *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.

**11:4** Thus saith the LORD my God; Feed the flock of the slaughter;

compensation for a slave who had been killed—<sup>1</sup>Ex. 21:22. The Prophet by the command of God throws the money down in utter disdain “to the potter.” This was done in the Temple in the presence of the people. Then Zechariah breaks the staff, the last emblem of his relation to them—Vs. 10, 14.

And as was stated this was really carried out by the Prophet in his own person, but he was God’s representative as so acting. The children of Israel are seen here as captives in the hands of the Gentile powers. They appear to think that they are not guilty in their cruelty to the Jews, because the latter have sinned against the Lord, forgetting their own sins. Probably Zechariah is here reminded of Jeremiah’s words—“Thy people have been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, x x All that found them have devoured them and their adversaries say, We offend not because they have sinned against the Lord” (*“My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray...All that found them have devoured them: and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the LORD,” KJV*)—Jer. 50:6, 7.

Now while it is true Israel have been cast out of their land and handed over into the power of the Gentiles because of their rejection of Christ, yet God does not hold these nations guiltless of their cruelty toward His people, as we see further in the same chapter from Jeremiah’s prophecy. “Israel is a scattered sheep. The lions have driven him away; first the king of Assyria hath devoured him, and last, this Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon hath broken his bones. Therefore, thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel: behold I will punish the king of Babylon and his land as I have punished the king of Assyria” (*“Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones. Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria.” KJV*)—Jer. 50:17, 18.

These Gentile powers who have had dominion over the nation Israel are likened to ferocious wild beasts—Dan. 7 and Rev. 13. Their actions toward Israel, having devoured them in their fury, have given rise to their description; and as wild beasts God will deal with them. He has already shown His attitude of vengeance against Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome and He will do more in His wrath against the later nations who dare to usurp authority over His people when their dominion has ended. They are then in absolute rebellion against His Word and revealed will and He will defy them and scourge them to the uttermost.

<sup>1</sup> Exodus 21:22 “If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart *from her*, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges *determine*.”

**11:5** 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.

**11:6** 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 neighbour'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*.

But we must look to our lesson in detail. The remnant of Jews at the beginning of the new dispensation, will not only be abused and slain by Gentile oppressors, but “their own shepherds” (V. 5), their civil and religious leaders will be hand in glove with the World Empire, lording it over them. Thus they will prove their kinship with the heathen unbelievers as they will all be reckoned of this class before the Lord. There is a gradation in their wretchedness as portrayed in our chapter. First, the Gentile nations pity them not, but buy and sell and slay them as “sheep of slaughter”. Secondly, their own shepherds who might be expected to have compassion upon them “pity them not,” but are as cruel as the world rulers. Thirdly, the Lord Himself has lost patience with them, which is the worst of all. This latter is true in the history of men and nations. There comes a time when God is thru dealing in mercy. Because of unbelief He delivers them over to their own will and this is terrible punishment. His people “the inhabitants of the land” (V. 6) will be in a state of rebellion and in their unbelief will make friends, or yield to the usurping Gentile nations of the coming age. God’s anger will then be manifested by leaving them to their own punishment. The nations will be lords over them by the ultimatum of the Lord. Listen to His words: “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” (V. 6). These solemn words describe the confusion, strife, hatred and destruction which had a fulfillment after the people had rejected the Lord Jesus Christ and the further offers of mercy from the Lord by the Apostles. The Roman army came up and they were carried away out of their land after untold sufferings therein. A detailed account of this dreadful time of their history may be found in the Talmud and in Josephus.

But there is a greater punishment awaiting the people. The phrase “into the hand of the king,” refers especially to the king of Judah’s own choice. And it is of a foreign oppressor and not a native ruler that the Prophet speaks, because the Jews had no king of their own race at this time. Furthermore Zechariah never mentions nor describes in speaking of the future, any king of Judah except the Messiah.

The Jews chose their king and rejected Jesus when Pilate brought Him forth to them. They exclaimed, “We have no king but Caesar!” (John 19:15) and having made this deliberate statement they must abide the consequences. How terrible it has been and it is not yet over. The last Caesar is yet to be revealed, the worst that has yet been manifested. And again it will be their choice. The times of the Gentiles are almost over and Jesus is again being offered to them. Even now if they only believed the promises of God the Lord would take up their cause; but they are still rebellious and unbelieving and will accept the anti-Christ when he comes. The Lord Jesus told them that they would do so: “I am come in my Father’s Name, and ye receive Me not; if another shall come in his

own name, him ye will receive”—John 5:43.

In these past seventeen years the Lord has been showing the Jews that His favor is returning to them. He has opened the way that they may have their home land and become a national power again. He has made nations serve them and will yet demonstrate the fact that they are the nation of destiny. But they are not yet ready for His goodness. They are depending upon the world instead of the Lord. The Confederacy of Nations which will soon emerge as the hope of the world will be theirs also; they will boast in its power and exult in its prestige for a short time. Then the serpent will show itself. The poison will work and Israel’s “hope” will be found to have betrayed them. Again sorrows and pain will be upon them. Retribution will overtake the people. It is of that time in this chapter the Prophet writes.

“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. x x And I took my staff and cut it asunder that I might break my covenant which I had made with all the people”—V. 7-10.

Some might question whether this above transaction was an outward or an inward one. We incline to the former. It was a real action on his part, a sign of coming events, a prophecy, as it were. “The poor of the flock” who were observing the Prophet (v. 11) must refer to the God-fearing remnant among the obstinate nation. These poor afflicted ones were always found in the midst of Israel in the very darkest times of their history.

Zechariah took two staves upon entering his office here as shepherd. The eastern shepherd always carries a staff or rod with him when he goes forth to feed his sheep. It is generally bent, which fact has given rise to the shepherd’s crook in the hand of Christian bishops. With this staff the shepherd guides his flock to the green pastures and beside the still waters. It is also used to correct them when unruly and bring them back when wandering. On certain occasions the shepherd carried two staves, the one for defence, the other for leading and feeding the flock, as note the reference to psalm 23—“Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me” (Ps. 23:4).

Two staves are mentioned here. The one, “Beauty” refers to the loving kindness of the Lord; while the other, “Bands” represents the rule of the Lord. He kept the flock, leading them by kindly ways, as well as by forceful measures; and so equipped with these two staves he “fed the flock”—V. 7. The three shepherds which were cut off, has reference, not so much to individuals, but to the leading classes—priests, scribes and elders—in the day of Christ. But there is a further significance; for all that is written here has a decided application to

**11:7** 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.

the seven years of <sup>1</sup>Daniel 9:27, the week of wonders which is yet before us. The leaders among the people of those latter days will again cause the people to err, even as they did in the past, and they will be cut off suddenly.

The phrase “in one month,” no doubt refers to a short period of time, or it may signify that the Lord will cut them off in the moment of His appearing, whether the reference is to individuals or classes. At any rate we know that He will make a quick work of judgment when He shows Himself upon the earth. He will be desirous in getting it over: for judgment is ever His strange work. He does not delight in it, tho’ the necessity of it is plain. He ever delights in mercy. Note our text further:

“My soul lothed them and their soul lothed me”—V. 8. That is, He was “weary” or “impatient” as the word may be translated, with their unbelief, rebellion and disobedience. They usurped the place of leaders of the people and then led them astray, hence, the Lord was angry and complained of them. He was made tired by their ways, we would translate; and they did not love Him. In fact they loathed Him, or hated Him, as the word in the later clause signifies. It is a different word from the first used in this verse. It signifies “extreme disgust,” and instructs us as to the depths of iniquity in the human heart. The leaders of Israel in the time of Christ’s first appearing hated Him with intense hatred without a cause; and so will the later unbelieving priests, scribes and elders, or the special leaders, the individuals, the false king, prophet and priest. There will be three official outstanding men, of whom these former classes were the figures, who will be filled with satanic envy and murderous hate against the true Shepherd the Lord Jesus Christ, divinely chosen Prophet, Priest and King.

“Then said I, I will not feed you: that which dieth, let it die and that which 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 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 God”—V. 9-11.

This was actually carried out. The longsuffering of God was exhausted, when Israel rejected their true Shepherd because of the false leaders. The terrible calamities of war, famine, pestilence, internal strife and mutual destruction rapidly over took the people, likewise will it be again. They will have another chance to accept Christ. He is beginning to show His favor toward His ancient people even now had they eyes to see; but alas they are still blind as to the identity of their Messiah. They are not yet ready to acknowledge the Nazarene

**11:8** Three shepherds also I cut off in one month; and my soul lothed them, and their soul also abhorred me.

**11:9** 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.

<sup>1</sup> Daniel 9:27 “And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”

and until they will cry, “Blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord” (Matt. 23:39), they will not be delivered from the false leaders.

When the Jews refused their Messiah and King at His first coming, there was a rupture between them and God. They separated themselves, as it were, from His protecting Hand. They chose the false instead of the true and brought upon themselves the condemnation and judgment which they have suffered these nineteen centuries. And the worse part of it they will do the same thing again. They have not yet learned their lesson. Christ their Messiah is ready to appear again to defend, protect and plant them in their own land, but they will not yield to Him. Again they will heed the voice of the leaders among them, who will soon make a covenant with the worldly powers and thus put themselves outside the everlasting arms of Jehovah.

The Jewish polity was broken up shortly after the people had rejected their Savior and King and for the “many days” Israel have been without a king, without a prince, without a prophet, or a priest, even as has been predicted—<sup>1</sup>Hos. 3:4, 5. If they had accepted Him they would have found in Him, One in whom all these offices were united: and asunder Him they might have been His representatives on earth. But instead their relations with God were broken off, as is emphasized here in the breaking of the staff, Beauty (or Favor). It was the symbol of God’s protection over them. The covenant which He says He will break is the one made with the Gentiles for the word for people is really peoples, referring to the Gentiles. When He gave the Gentiles dominion it was on the basis of their protection of the Jews in their lands. He caused them to be at peace with and to befriend them and when they refused to heed His words, He broke their power. He refused to allow them to destroy His people. But when Israel refused Him as their Messiah, He refused to be their defense any longer and they became a prey to the Gentile world-powers, which are symbolized in Scripture as wild beasts ready to devour and make waste. And in the latter days this will be most marked after they have rejected Him the second time.

The manifest proof that the covenant was broken, which the Shepherd of Israel had made with the nations in their behalf, served as a demonstration to the poor of the flock. It was the signal sign to the believing remnant of that former day that the nation Israel were no longer the beloved people of the Lord. He was thru with them for the time, at least for the time being. Another translation of these words, “those that waited upon Me,” is beautiful. It reads, “those that watched, or observed Me,” that is, kept their eyes constantly upon Him that they might understand His will and His ways. It will be so of the believing remnant

<sup>1</sup> Hosea 3:4, 5 “For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and *without* teraphim: Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days.”

**11:10** 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.

**11:11** 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.

of the latter days also. The next verse tells us in symbol, further doings of the past and the future.

“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”—V. 12, 13.

**11:12** 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.

**11:13** 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.

Herein is a marvelous prediction. The rule of the shepherd was coming to an end, so he asks his wages. This is a symbolical transaction in which Zechariah himself was the chief actor, but he was representing Jehovah, the true Shepherd of Israel. He came forth in the fulness of time to show Himself in man’s form as the Messiah and his love was spurned. Hence, He requests His wages. The real reward He wanted—repentance, faith and obedience—they would not give Him, therefore He demands His wages. They insult His love, offering Him thirty pieces of silver, the compensation which was paid the owner of a slave gored to death by an ox—<sup>1</sup>Ex. 21:32. Then the Prophet was commanded to “cast it” (or fling it as an unclean thing) unto the potter, the goodly (or magnificent price) at which I was priced. The latter clause, is spoken in irony by the prophet who is emphasizing the lack of esteem and honor which was accorded him, typical of their treatment of the Lord Himself when He visited His people.

The casting to the potter of the thirty pieces of silver is variously interpreted; but the Jew’s rejection of Jesus made the temple unclean in God’s sight. And reading from Jeremiah where the above interpreters quote to prove their supposition, leads us to the same conclusion. God spoke to the Prophet, saying, “Go and get a potter’s earthen bottle (or vessel) and take of the ancients (elders) of the people and of the ancient of the priests, and go forth unto the valley of the son of Hinnom which is by the entry of the east gate, and proclaim there the words that I shall tell thee”—Jer. 19:1, 2. The phrase “throw to the potter” may have been a proverbial expression speaking of the valuelessness of the thing: but to us who have ears to hear it signifies much more.

In the command that the Prophet should throw the money, the price of his service to the potter, there is nothing said of his going to the Temple, but in the performance we read, “And I took the thirty pieces of silver and cast them in the house of Jehovah to the potter.” Is that not wonderfully suggestive of coming events which we know now as history. The Lord Jesus Christ the Messiah, Shepherd and King of Israel, came unto His own and they received

<sup>1</sup> Exodus 21:32 “If the ox shall push a manservant or a maidservant; he shall give unto their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.”



Him not, as John tells us (<sup>1</sup> John 1:11); but rather insulted Him, treated Him as a common slave, instead of an uncommon, extraordinary One; for He willingly offered Himself to serve them even unto death and thus deliver them. He was sold into the hands of His enemies by Judas, one of his supposed friends. He went to the chief priests and arranged with them to betray Him for thirty pieces of silver (<sup>2</sup>Matt. 26:14, 15); but when he saw that Jesus was really condemned and was on the way to execution, repented himself. He brought back the money to the chief priests and elders, saying, “I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood” (Matt. 27:4). But they said, “What is that to us? See thou to it” (“*What is that to us? see thou to that.*”—Matt. 27:4 KJV). Then he cast down the prices of silver into the sanctuary and departed and hanged Himself. The priests took the money and bought with it the potter’s field in which to bury strangers. Hence the field was called “The field of blood”—Matt. 27:3-9. Here is marvelous significance and depths of prophetic import when seen under the lens of the Holy Spirit.

The money is in the hands of those who hired the traitor to betray the Just One; but they now scruple to defile the treasury. The price of blood they cannot put among the offerings, therefore they take counsel and buy a place in which to bury strangers. The latter no doubt refers to Gentile proselytes to whom a certain regard was due yet priestly exclusiveness refused to allow them to lie in properly consecrated graves, as they said. That is the meaning from man’s side; but looked at from God’s side, it has a far different meaning. It was a witness of what Israel had really done by their betrayal of the Anointed of God. They had acquired for themselves a burial place in every land in which they were to be cast. They have been strangers in the earth since they denied the Holy Stranger who came into their midst. They cast Him out of the vineyard as an accursed thing and they actually signed their own sentence by so doing—Matt. 21:33-41. With the purchase price of their despicable treachery they have bought a cemetery, as it were, for themselves and their children. Their graves have been in strange lands and often in fields of blood, even in the Great Potter’s field as Jeremiah their weeping Prophet voiced the matter; “O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter, saith Jehovah? Behold as the clay in the potter’s hand, so are ye in my hand, O house of Israel” (“*O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter’s hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.*” KJV)—Jer. 18:6. They cast their money to the potter and ever since they have been as a vessel marred upon the wheel: by the edict of God they have suffered. Wanderers from Jehovah and their land they have died. As one of their own poets has written:

<sup>1</sup> John 1:11 “He came unto his own, and his own received him not.”

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 26:14, 15 “Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, And said *unto them*, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.”

“The wild dove has its nest;  
And the fox has its cave.  
Mankind have their country.  
Israel only a grave.”

But it is not always to be so. They shall be remolded in God’s great workshop, and become a vessel unto honor and glory. That is the reason of the long discipline of these nineteen-hundred years. It will not end until after the great tribulation foretold by the prophets and announced by Jesus upon Mt. Olivet before His death and resurrection—<sup>1</sup>Matt. 24:21.

It has been a matter of controversy that Matthew ascribed the above prophecy of Zechariah to Jeremiah and it never has been satisfactorily explained. The most plausible reason is that Zechariah’s prediction was simply a reiteration of two awesome prophecies of Jeremiah (chapters 18 and 19), and would, like them, be fulfilled in the rejection and destruction of the Jewish people because of their betrayal of their Messiah. Another explanation that has been accepted by many spiritual men is that the name Jeremiah crept into the passage in Matthew’s Gospel by mistake, because the quoted passage refers to the treachery of Judah against their Savior even as do the words of Zechariah. They are both concerned with the same fact, hence, the name of the writer has little to do with the prophecy. The Spirit is the Author of the words in both instances. The man was simply His mouth-piece or amanuensis, as the case might be. Man may be fallible, but God is not; hence, to us who know our Bibles there is no contradiction or discrepancy in its pages as to the Truth, even tho’ a slight error in names, because of a copyist’s error, may be sometimes found. But to return to our chapter.

“Then I cut asunder mine other staff, even Bands that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel”—V. 14.

The insult to the shepherd in offering him nothing more for his wages than the price of a dead slave is quickly followed by the breaking of the last tie which bound him to his flock. It was a hint of the severance of the relations which existed between Jehovah and Judah after the death of Christ. The whole nation was now rejected. The breaking of the first staff was a sign of what was coming later. The tribal brotherhood was to be done away. The fulfillment of the threat of verse 9 should then follow. “Let them eat every one the flesh of another” (“*let the rest eat every one the flesh of another.*”—V. 9 KJV). Terrible and solemn words which suggest the dissolution of every bond which bound the nation together, and made the siege of Jerusalem a pattern of horror which has never been exceeded and never will be except in the future devastation and

**11:14** Then I cut asunder mine other staff, *even* Bands, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

<sup>1</sup> Matthew 24:21 “**For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.**”

**11:15** And the LORD said unto me, Take unto thee yet the instruments of a foolish shepherd.

**11:16** 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.

**11:17** 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.

dreadful tribulation which is yet before the nation. The reason of this latter horror is found in the following verse:

“And the Lord said to me. Take unto thee yet the instruments of a foolish shepherd”—V. 15.

The Prophet now impersonates another shepherd, a cruel and wicked one. He no longer holds the staves, Beauty and Bands, but instruments of an entirely different character. What these are or in what respect they differed from those of the Good Shepherd we are not told. It has been said that the “instruments of the foolish shepherd” consisted of a strong stick mounted with iron which the sheep were hurt and wounded, whereas the Good Shepherd was wont to keep the sheep in order with a thin staff and gentle strokes. And while this is only conjecture, yet it is not far from the truth, for we have the answer to the symbolical act in another prophecy. The Lord Himself says, “I will raise up a shepherd in the land which shall not visit that which is cut off, neither shall he seek those that are scattered, nor heal that which is broken; neither shall he feed that which is sound, but he shall eat the flesh of the fat and shall tear their hoofs in pieces”—Ezek. 34.

This foolish shepherd is the opposite of the Good Shepherd. The latter came to seek and save and heal and gather his sheep, but the false shepherd scatters and eats the flesh of the sheep. As the Good Shepherd, which part Zechariah acted in the first act of the chapter, is in the truest sense none other than Israel’s Messiah, so the wicked shepherd is none other than the anti-Christ. Under his brief reign all Israel’s sorrows and suffering shall reach their climax in the final great tribulation. He will be indeed the personification of foolishness even as Christ is Wisdom personified. To quote from an old writer relative to the anti-Christ; “Since the extremes! folly consists in the extremest wickedness, he will be the most foolish who reaches the highest impiety, and this will he do by arrogating to himself divinity and claiming divine honors.”

The career of this evil man shall be short and his end sudden and fearful “Woe to the idol (or worthless) shepherd” (V. 17)—is the prophetic warning. When he exalts himself and seeks worship as God from his dupes, his doom is settled. He leaves his place as shepherd, forsakes the flock and thus proves himself “the hireling”—John 10:12. “The sword shall be upon his arm and his right eye shall be utterly darkened”—V. 17.

The arm in Scripture symbolizes strength, the eye intelligence and wisdom. These two characteristics will mark the hireling shepherd. He will be the expression of satanic wisdom and might. Anti-Christian world-power will be summed up in him. All the world religious and otherwise will boast in him, and wonder after him. He evil be the “man of the hour,” the superman for whom the world is waiting even now. He will rule the world for a short period. His

great strength and wisdom will be manifested, but it in these very parts that he shall be smitten. “The sword of the Lord and of Gideon” shall come down upon his arm. All his boasted strength shall be withered and found useless before the greater power of Jehovah; and his eye shall be darkened. The superior wisdom of Christ shall dim his light. It will be found valueless in the greater light from heaven. His end will come with the Messiah’s appearing. These two shepherds, the one false, the other true, cannot be in evidence at the same time. The anti-Christ disappears as the shekinah cloud of the Shepherd of Israel hoves into sight. It is written—he shall be destroyed with the brightness of Christ’s appearing—<sup>1</sup>2 Thess. 2:8.

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Thessalonians 2:8 “And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:”

## Israel's Final Conflict

### Chapter 12

“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”—V. 1-2.

### Chapter 12

**12:1** 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.

We now begin our study of the last section of the second division of Zechariah—Chaps. 12 to 14. It marks also the beginning of the second “burden” of the word of Jehovah. The first “burden” we have just finished—Chaps. 9-11. The overthrow and abasement of the world-powers, or man’s kingdom and the introduction and setting up of Messiah’s power, or the Kingdom of God, may be declared as the epitome of the last six chapters of the book. And the two “burdens” which compose this second half of the book, threat of war between the Gentile powers and Israel, tho’ in different ways. In the first (chaps. 9-11), the judgment thru which Gentile world-power over Israel is finally overthrown and Israel is supernaturally endowed with strength, forms the basic thought. In the second (chaps. 12-14), the judgment thru which Israel is sifted and cleansed in the final great battle with the nations and transformed into the holy nation of Jehovah, is the theme and substance of the whole.

This latter section which is our subject now takes us down to the very end of the seven years of <sup>1</sup>Daniel 9:27. It is apocalyptic in character, having to do with the very same events and the very same time that John in Revelation visioned. The return of the Lord Jesus Christ and the setting up of His Kingdom with Israel as the reigning nation on the earth is embraced in this section of the this prophecy.

“In that day,” which is mentioned no less than fourteen times in these three chapters, is indeed the day of Messiah, not in His humiliation, but His glorification. It refers to the LORD’S DAY, which in its full duration comprises three sections. The first extends from the setting up of Christ’s throne in the air, about the beginning of the “week” or seven years of <sup>1</sup>Dan. 9:27, (sometimes called the last week of Daniel) to “the Day of the Lord,” which later covers only a brief part of the seven years. Four times Joel calls this second division, “The Day of the Lord;” once he calls it, “The great and terrible day of the Lord”—

<sup>1</sup> Daniel 9:27 “And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”

<sup>1</sup>Joel 1:15, 2:1, 11, 31 and 3:14. Peter terms this period “That great and notable day of the Lord”—<sup>2</sup>Acts 2:20. Paul calls it, “The day of the Lord”—<sup>3</sup>2 Thess. 3:2, R. V. It is “a day of destruction from the Almighty, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness”—<sup>4</sup>Joel 2:2. It culminates in the battle of Armageddon which ends the second section of the day of the Lord. The third section embraces the remainder of the millennial reign of Christ. But it is of the doings of the second section, the latter part of the seven years of destined wonders yet to be fulfilled, that these last chapters in Zechariah prophesy.

The main theme of the first verses of chapter 12 is the wonderful supernatural deliverance of Israel from the destruction of the armies of the confederated anti-Christian world-powers in the final siege of Jerusalem. It is the solemn “time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jer. 30:7), the terrible tribulation which is yet to come upon Israel, of which all the prophets tell. And to emphasize the positive fulfillment of these prophecies which Zechariah is about to announce, the Spirit indicates the Almightyness of Him who is speaking. We are informed at the outset of His creative power. He who is declaring these coming events is He who has stretched forth the heavens as a curtain and laid the foundations of the earth for a stable habitation for man whom He formed to dwell upon it. He would thus give us a basis for our faith, an assurance that without any shadow of doubt, Israel, as well as all men, might expect the fulfillment of these prophecies. He will accomplish that which He has spoken whether it be good or evil. Then the Prophet proceeds:

“Behold,” is his first word. It is most emphatic. “I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling,” (“a goblet or basin of giddiness,” a better translation of the

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<sup>1</sup> Joel 1:15 “Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD *is* at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.”

Joel 2:1, 11, 31 “Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for *it is* nigh at hand;... And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp *is* very great: for *he is* strong that executeth his word: for the day of the LORD *is* great and very terrible; and who can abide it?...The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.”

Joel 3:14 “Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD *is* near in the valley of decision.”

<sup>2</sup> Acts 2:20 “The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:”

<sup>3</sup> 2 Thessalonians 3:2 “And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all *men* have not faith.”

<sup>4</sup> Joel 2:2 “A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, *even* to the years of many generations.”

**12:2** 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.

phrase which is unusual) “unto all the people round about”—V. 2. This condition of reeling or giddiness is frequently used in Scripture as a symbol of the judgment of God which brings mankind down to a condition of helplessness and misery like unto that of a staggering, intoxicated man who cannot stand much less walk. It is a most impressive statement. It reveals so much to us who have ears to hear. Other prophets have declared the same thing. Isaiah, speaking of the identical time and event says, “They have erred (reeled) thru wine, and thru strong drink are out of the way. The priest and the prophet have erred thru strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way thru strong drink. They err (reel) in vision and stumble in judgment” (“*But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.*” *KJV*)—Isa. 28:7. Also in Psalms we read, “In the hand of the Lord is a cup and the wine is red. It is full of mixture and He poureth out of the same; surely the dregs thereof, the wicked of the earth shall wring them out and drink them” (“*For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them.*” *KJV*)—Ps. 75:8. The figure of drunkenness is also used to describe, the judgment which Israel also experiences, (note <sup>1</sup>Isaiah 51:21-23.) but in our study prophecy, the reference is not to the judgment upon Israel, but judgment upon their enemies, the nations who will be gathered around Jerusalem for that last dreadful, siege. The thought in this instance is that of a vessel large enough for all peoples of the world to drink out of it. In the Hebrew it is “goblet” or “basin,” as was noted. They shall drink of Jehovah’s intoxicating cup of wrath either one at a time or one after the other. They shall be drunken upon this strong decoction from the heavens and stagger and fall, to rise no more.

Those armies of the nations will gather around the beloved city for the last great conflict of the ages. Satan is the aggressor in the matter; but God allows it. In fact He really desires this consummation. It is written, that He calls them into the valley of Jehoshaphat to be judged, as note, “Let the heathen be wakened and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow: for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision; for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision” (“*Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves*”

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 51:21-23 “Therefore hear now this, thou afflicted, and drunken, but not with wine: Thus saith thy Lord the LORD, and thy God *that* pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, *even* the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again: But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee; which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over: and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over.”

*together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O LORD. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.” KJV)—Joel 3:11-14. It is “the day of the vengeance of our God”—Isa. 61:2.*

**12:3** 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.

The Jew must be in his land at the time the Lord shall thresh His vintage. They will come into their time of tribulation, and the Lord will use the armies of the nations, whom they trusted, to bring down the whip upon them. Then He will turn and take revenge upon those nations. That is the real gist of the lesson we have in this chapter. “And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people. All that burden themselves with it, shall be cut to pieces, tho’ all the people of the earth be gathered together against it”—V. 3

There is a gradation in the thought, as to the judgment meted out to the nations, in the figure of the “burdensome stone” which wounds and cuts all who attempt to touch it, while the “reeling cup” only renders them powerless. The same meaning may be seen in the description of the hosts gathered for the attack. First, the reference is to the nations around the city (v. 2), while in verse 3, it is “all people” and all “the nations of the earth,” who are warned of coming disaster and destruction. It signifies no doubt that the latter are represented by the flower of their armies for that terrible battle upon the plains of Esdraelon, in the valley of Megiddo.

The gathering of these hosts of military men is often mentioned in Scripture and generally in language meant to impress the mind with the peculiar magnitude of the earthly power that is to be displayed in this last great effort of man and Satan to defeat the purpose of God regarding the nation of destiny—the Jew. In the book of Revelation, we read that it is the spirits of demons working miracles which are the drawing power of these armies of the earth powers. They gather for the battle of the great day of God Almighty—<sup>1</sup>Rev. 16:14. Israel will be in a terrible plight with the warring hosts all about them. There will be no chance whatever of escape. They will be shut up to God’s mercy, as has often been the case in their history. But this extremity is again God’s opportunity to deliver them. His power will be manifested again in their hour of need and it will be in such a manner as has never been seen. The fullest display of satanic wisdom and fleshly might will call forth more of the dynamic bolts of Jehovah. It will be some manifestation. He has been silent these many centuries; but in that day He will roar upon His enemies. He will not show grace;

<sup>1</sup> Revelation 16:14 “For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, *which* go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”



but judgment will fall. The long-deferred, slumbering wrath of an angry God will be poured out without measure. The wicked, rebellious world will drink of this cup until the very last dregs have been drained; then He will turn and restore the earth to a state of blessedness which it has never enjoyed since sin ruined its beauty. But more of this later.

“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 I will smite every horse of the people with blindness”—V. 4.

**12:4** 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.

This is the mighty manner of the Lord’s interposition in Israel’s behalf in that day of His manifestation. The same words used here, “astonishment,” “madness” and “blindness,” to describe the judgment to fall upon the armies of the confederated nations, are the same which elsewhere describe the chastisement upon Israel for their departure from the Lord, as “Jehovah shall smite thee with madness and with blindness and with astonishment” (*“The LORD shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart:” KJV*)—Deut. 28:28. But when Zion’s warfare is accomplished and the due time to favor her has come, the Lord declares, “I will take out of thine hand the cup of reeling, even the bowl of the cup of my fury. Thou shalt no more drink again. I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee” (*“Thus saith thy Lord the LORD, and thy God that pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again: But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee;”*—Isa. 51:22, 23 KJV). They shall drink to the uttermost of those plagues.

The effect upon the enemies of Israel may be imagined. The horse will reel (whether these latter are really cavalry of flesh, or air-fleets, does not matter). The meaning is clear. Bewilderment is upon all the armies. The riders in their madness are no longer able to manage, or guide their steeds, or pilot their planes, as the case may be. The enemies of Israel will find themselves in dire straits at the very moment when they imagine victory has come and the battle won. Instead of them chasing the despairing Jews in their flight, they themselves are described as being in a state of panic and rushing upon destruction. Jehovah says, “I will open mine eyes” (V. 4) upon the house of Judah, which stands here for the whole of Israel. Peter, after his denial of Jesus, is a wonderful type of the believing remnant of that day of the Lord. Jesus the Messiah-King will look upon them, His long unbelieving, rebellious people, with tender reproach, yet mixed with love and pity, and that look will melt their stubborn heart. They will truly repent and weep bitterly, which we learn later in this very chapter. We will return to the description of the judgment upon their enemies.

**12:5** 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.

**12:6** 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.

**12:7** 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.

Terror and confusion will seize upon the ranks of the assembled hosts as the result of the plagues with which they will be smitten. Their united front will be gone, with all their confidence and assurance. Judah's attitude will be changed also. From the moment that they find the eye of the Lord upon them the demoralized weakling remnant will arise and fight as gods. The next verse assures us of this consummation. "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"—V. 5.

The leaders of Israel recognize the supernatural change in the inhabitants of Jerusalem and they are encouraged thereby. They realize that Jehovah is for them, as His Word declares, and shall fulfill all the good pleasure of His will toward His people. The fact is manifest as we read in chapter 1:16, "that the Lord hath chosen Jerusalem and has returned to her with mercies" ("*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.*" *KJV*). The princes of Judah are jubilant and rejoice in her invincible, impregnable defense, Jehovah Himself. "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved" (Psa. 46:5), they sing. God shall help her after her long night of sorrow has passed away. And then the following citation will come to pass;

"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 around about on the right hand and on the left, and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem"—V. 6.

The princes or governors will be as a great destruction from the Almighty; as a fire will they burn up the armies of the people. They will fight, endued with power from on high. The judgment will be complete: the destruction final. Thru will begin the work of reconstruction, as we read;

"The Lord 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"—V. 7.

The grace of God is revealed in the above citation most wonderfully. The deliverance of those of Judah who are on the outside of the city is as in contrast to those within. They are saved first. That is, the weakest and most defenseless are the recipients of the greatest grace, as is always the case. God delights to manifest His mercy. His grace and glory are thus shown in the fact that the defended place will not be delivered until the defenseless part has been protected. But this is only a small part of the triumphant march of the overcoming King of kings—Rev. 19. The conflict will shortly be over when He

**12:8** 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.

shows Himself. The arm of the adversary is suddenly withered, as we read further.

“In that day, shall Jehovah defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and he that is feeble among them shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the Angel of Jehovah before them”—V. 8. The walls and bulwarks of the city will not constitute its defense in the day of the Lord. They will be as nothing before the advance of the multitude of the confederated armies, but Messiah will come to the help of the believing remnant at the very moment of their most desperate plight. We read in chapters 13:8, 9 and 14:1-6, which portions refer to the same invasion of the land, that a part of the city is actually taken, and half of the people shall be ready to go away into captivity. But at that very moment, when all hope is taken away, the Lord appears to their joy and the utter discomfiture and defeat of the enemy. “Wits-end corner” is reached and then the glory of Israel appears. Their Messiah hoves in sight with His armies from heaven and lo, Israel’s tribulation is over forever. And the remnant shall be girded with superhuman strength when they see that Jehovah is for them. We can, in a measure, recognize how their wail of despair will be turned to the shout of victory and they will rise up and fight as they have never fought. The feeblest individual shall be so strengthened that he shall fight as David, the greatest warrior of Israel’s line, their national hero; to the Jew the expression of greatest strength. And the house of David shall be in their united strength as God, even as the Angel who went before them and was their Captain and Leader as they went on conquering and to conquer, in the land of Canaan—<sup>1</sup>Josh. 5:13-15.

The Lord deals in the same way with us. When we are weakest He comes to our help. It is then that we are strong. His principles are always the same. The Psalmist exclaims, “Through God we shall do valiantly” (Psa. 60:12). Or it might be translated, “In God we are as a host.” However weak or insignificant we may appear to be to the natural man, if we are trusting God absolutely, we are greater than the mightiest army of the world. It is then that God can show His power, as He will do in the case of the remnant of Israel when the latter will be wholly cast upon Him. The next verse of our chapter tells us further of the doings of the great day of God Almighty.

“And it shall come to pass in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem”—V. 9.

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<sup>1</sup> Joshua 5:13-15 “And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, *Art* thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but *as* captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? And the captain of the LORD’S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest *is* holy. And Joshua did so.”

**12:9** And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

While Jehovah is endowing His people with supernatural power so that they are able to perform stupendous feats of prowess and are making the enemy dizzy with the onslaught, He, Himself is not idle. He will come forth in martial array to attack and destroy all those armies which have come to fight against the beloved city. The thought is that He has set Himself to this task and will not fail of His purpose. It is inexorable and final. Israel's enemies in that day are His, and He will have no mercy. He will come with this two-fold purpose in view, to protect those which love Him, and destroy those who hate Him. Nothing can stay His hand when once He has risen up to the work. Judgment on the wicked is inevitable. Like Habakkuk (chap. 2:2, 3), we exclaim, "Write the vision and make it plain upon tablets that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie; tho' it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come. It will not tarry" ("*And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.*"—Hab. 2:2, 3 KJV). And the period of the fulfillment of the Prophet's vision is much closer than when he wrote.

#### The Great National Mourning

In the following verses of our chapter, 9 to 14, we have another marvelous victory described, that of the melted heart of Judah and all the dwellers at Jerusalem. There is the national repentance of Israel predicted before all their blessings can be enjoyed even as in the individual. The truth must be received and acknowledged, as to our desperate condition, before we can be reconciled to God.

"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 is in bitterness for His first-born"—V. 10.

**12:10** 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.

This tabulates a great spiritual crisis in Israel's history. It is more solemn and more wonderful than even the outward deliverance of the people over their enemies. This is Jehovah's conquest over them. They will learn, as we are learning, that this is the greatest triumph. When He can cause rebels to surrender and own Him as Master in their lives, and make them to obey and follow Him, in His train, as the vanquished, that is some achievement. Jeshurun had been made to ride the high places of the earth: he had waxed fat and kicked; then he forsook God which made him and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation. But after this time of mourning, Israel will be faithful forever. They will be born anew. This is the covenant that the Lord will make with them. He will write His laws upon their heart and put them in their mind. He will be their God and they

shall be His people—<sup>1</sup>Heb. 8:10. They, as a nation will yield to Him as the apostle Paul, the individual. He is a striking shadow of them in his conversion and further experience as a servant of Jehovah. Let us look at the heart of this great prophetic promise in our lesson in Zechariah. It begins with Jehovah. He says,

“I will pour”—literally rain in torrents. The expression carries us back to Joel, where we read, “I will pour My Spirit upon all flesh” (*“I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh;”*—*Joel 2:28 KJV*); and Isaiah, “I will pour water upon him that is thirsty and floods upon the dry ground, also I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed” (*“For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:”*—*Isa. 44:3 KJV*)—*Joel 2:28, Isa. 44:3*. It refers to the abundance of the gift of the Spirit which shall be bestowed upon Israel. He begins to manifest Himself in the fact of the great repentance that will fall upon the people. Like their pattern Paul, the scales will fall from their eyes and they will weep as only a Jew can weep.

This great change will come upon the whole of “the house of David and inhabitants of Jerusalem” (*“the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem” KJV*)—*V. 10*. The capitol city simply refers to the people, as is so often the case in the prophetic word; for we are informed in verse 12 that the mourning extends “to the whole land” and “all the families of the people”—*V. 14*.

“The spirit of grace and supplication” (*V. 10*) refers to the Holy Spirit’s work in the heart. He conveys to the heart the knowledge of God’s grace, and that goodness overwhelms the soul and makes the heart soft and tender, breaking up all the hardness until we can do nothing but weep and cry to God for His favor. Oh, how precious is this experience. It is absolutely necessary for fruitbearing, that the Holy Spirit work over the soil of our hearts until they are in a state of fertility, yielded and still for the Master’s will. It is then that we are ready for the seed of the Word of God; for sown in hearts of this character it will bring forth a harvest of fruitage. Israel will bud and blossom as individuals, and as a nation they will fill the earth with the fruit of their wonderful life. The results of their yieldedness will be wonderful, far in excess of all their expectation, imagination, or any other nation. God will be glorified, men will be edified and they themselves satisfied. The next clause informs us of the result of the repentance.

“They shall look upon (or unto) Me whom they have pierced”—*V. 10*. After the Holy Spirit has plowed deep in the hearts of the remnant of the Jews

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<sup>1</sup> Hebrews 8:10 “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:”

when the tribulation is past, Jesus of Nazareth, the Lord Himself shall appear to them. He will no doubt be seen in the heaven, and they will behold Him in the glory and know Him, even as the apostle Paul did. They will gaze upon Him with no ordinary indifferent look, but with rapt intent will consider that Man in the glory. There will be surprise as well as expectation and delight in that contemplation. The word for “look” is the same as that used in the story of the brazen serpent, which may have been in the mind of Zechariah when he wrote this prophecy. “And Moses made a serpent of brass and set it on a pole; and it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld (or looked unto) the serpent of brass, he lived”—Num. 21:9. With the same eager, expectant hope the remnant of the nation shall look unto Him, the great and glorious Anti-type of the brazen serpent. He was lifted up upon the cross and “whosoever believeth on Him shall never perish, but have everlasting life” (“*whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*” KJV)—John 3:16.

And just as the words, “they shall look unto Me” (“*they shall look upon me*”—V. 10 KJV), sets forth the essential oneness of the pierced One with Jehovah, so does the sudden transition in the same verse from the first person to the third and the words “they shall mourn for Him” (V. 10), teach us that yet, as to His Person, He is distinct from God. This is a great mystery, and an apparent paradox, but the Tri-unity of God is a doctrine that is plainly taught in Scripture. We meet with many inspired citations which speak of the Messiah as Jehovah, the Mighty God, and yet in the same verse tell us of Him as being sent forth or coming in the name of God. Then further,

“And they shall mourn for Him”—V. 10. This too, is no ordinary grief, but rather unusual and extraordinary. The same expression is used for the mourning for the dead, with the sorrow expressed at the death of an only son, even as is written here, with the bitterness for his first born. The mourning for an only son was a proverbial expression descriptive of intense suffering. Jeremiah 6:26, declares the same thought, “O daughter of my people, gird thee with sackcloth and wallow thyself in ashes; make thee mourning as for an only son, most bitter lamentation.” Also Amos 8:10, “I will make it as the mourning for an only son” (“*I will make it as the mourning of an only son,*” KJV). The grief exhibited at the death of such was among the Jews the bitterest, most uncontrollable grief, hence it is used here in reference to their mourning in the time of their repentance when they behold their Messiah. And it is especially striking when used in this connection over the Messiah whom they have pierced. For He is called the First-born of every creature, not alone of Israel; and John exclaimed of Him, “We beheld His glory, the glory of the Only-Begotten of the Father full of grace and truth” (“*and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,*”) *full of grace and truth.*”—John 1:14 KJV). And He is such not only in relation to the Father, and as the Son of Man to all men, but

more particularly in relation to the nation, Israel. He is the Child of promise, the Seed of Abraham, the destined only One, whom the nationally barren woman, who was betrothed to Jehovah, has brought forth supernaturally by the power of God. He is the “First-born among many brethren” (Rom. 8:29), and these are first and foremost, Hebrews, His own according to the flesh, as well as those of all mankind. And it is this only One, that they have taken and with wicked hands have pierced and slain. But oh, the grief when the remnant of the people are brought face to face with the fact of what their forefathers have done. It will be to them as tho’ they actually were the guilty ones, because in their unbelief and hatred of Jesus of Nazareth they had, as it were, crucified Him afresh. And not only will the grief be great and individual, but it will be universal as the following implies.

“In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, x x 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 the house of Shimei apart and their wives apart. All the families that remain, every family apart and their wives apart”—V. 11-14.

The great penitential mourning of the Jews of the time of their restoration is likened in magnitude to the mourning of Hadadrimmon. The latter according to history was a city near Jezreel and refers to the national mourning over the young king Josiah who was slain by Pharaoh-Necho in the valley of Megiddon —<sup>1</sup>2 Kgs. 23:29, 30. His death was the greatest sorrow which had, until that time befallen Judah, for he was the last hope of their declining kingdom which was fast going on the rocks. Jeremiah took part in that national lamentation and wrote his dirge upon it (<sup>2</sup>2 Chron. 35:25) in all which record we can discern references to the greater King than Josiah. The lamentation for the cutting off of the beloved youthful ruler continued and became an ordinance in Israel which survived the seventy years captivity in Babylon. That reference is made to it by Zechariah, proves that it was a typical mourning and so universal that it was worthy to be compared to the future and yet greater lamentation for Christ, the still greater King of Israel who was slain in His youth.

Of the four families singled out for mention as taking a part in the

**12:11** In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.

**12:12** 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;

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings 23:29, 30 “In his days Pharaohnechoh king of Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates: and king Josiah went against him; and he slew him at Megiddo, when he had seen him. And his servants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead.”

<sup>2</sup> 2 Chronicles 35:25 “And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, and made them an ordinance in Israel: and, behold, they *are* written in the lamentations.”

**12:13** The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimeï apart, and their wives apart;

national mourning, two are well known, David and Levi; but the house of Nathan and Shemei are not so familiar. There must be a reason that these four are thus made conspicuous. And so there is. Nathan's family is singled out from the whole house of David, for the reason that he was the chosen son from which came the Messiah, the royal One; for Mary the mother of Jesus was of the line of David thru Nathan—<sup>1</sup>Luke 3:31. There is a reason for Shemei's mention also. He was the son of Gershom the grandson of Levi. Hence, we have thus two families of the royal and two of the priestly lines; and of these, we might say, one stands for the head of each (David and Levi); and the other two for the subordinate families of the lines which indicate that the mourning reached to all the people of Israel, every family from the highest to the lowest being represented in these two heads.

Also there may be a further lesson furnished by these two families, David and Levi, being set forth apart from the others in this manner. They represented the aristocratic privileged class, the royal and religious leaders of Israel, who in times past led the people astray by their evil example, but now they are patterns to the people for good. Their example will be followed by all the families that remain, as we read, they shall mourn "every family apart and their wives apart"—V. 14.

**12:14** All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.

This description emphasizes the depth and intensity of sorrow which will be manifested. It will be no make believe contrition, a self-effort; sort of a repentance, to satisfy a guilty conscience, but reality of mourning is evidenced by the language. For not only is the lamentation public and universal, but it is participated in by each family apart from others; and more, each individual compelled by the depth of sorrow will weep alone. Even husbands shall mourn apart from their wives and vice versa. Men and women will be overwhelmed with their individual share in the guilt of having slain their Messiah. Thus the mourning will be no mere ceremonial or formal cleansing but genuine sorrow of heart.

And when this godly sorrow has accomplished its work, the Lord Himself, for whose sake they are grief-stricken, shall draw near and comfort them. He will pour in "the oil of joy for mourning" (Isa. 61:3) and clothe them with "garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness" ("*the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;*"—*Isa. 61:3 KJV*). Like Joseph to his brethren (typical of Christ and Israel), He will say to them, "Ye thought evil against Me, but God meant it unto good to bring to pass, as it is this day to save much people alive; now therefore be not grieved nor angry with yourselves" ("*But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now therefore fear ye not:*" *KJV*)—Gen. 50:20.

<sup>1</sup> Luke 3:31 "Which was *the son* of Melea, which was *the son* of Menan, which was *the son* of Mattatha, which was *the son* of Nathan, which was *the son* of David,"



And so they will be comforted even as one whom his mother comforts and they will devote themselves to Him forever. Loyalty will be their middle name. No more wandering heart. He will betroth them to Himself and Israel will be Jehovah's true and faithful helpmeet in the earth, as Hosea 2:19, 20, tells us, "And I will betroth thee unto Me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness and in judgment, and in loving kindness and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness and thou shalt know the Lord."

## More Data of Israel's Salvation

### Chapter Thirteen

“In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness”—V. 1.

#### Chapter 13

**13:1** 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.

The first six verses of this chapter are a continuation of the great prophecy of chapter 12. The great day of national repentance could not be complete without reference to the fountain opened for sin and iniquity in the house of Israel.

The word for “fountain” is wonderfully instructive for us who have ears to hear. It is the word used for “dug out.” It perhaps originated with the thought of a well or cistern. Jeremiah uses it in reference to the Lord Himself, “The Fountain of living waters” (Jer. 2:13). But in our text the figure of fountain is introduced, not primarily as the source of life or refreshment, but as the means of cleansing from sin and moral filthiness. In this great reservoir the guilty may wash and be clean.

The same words for sin and uncleanness are found in <sup>1</sup>Num. 19:9 where we read of the ashes of the red heifer which shall be laid up in a clean place without the camp and the water which is poured off the ashes is used “for water of separation, a means of purification from sin.” It refers to the ceremonial cleansing required under the law dispensation, but most suggestive of typical truth. It requires no stretching of the imagination whatever, no far-fetching or twisting of the Scriptures on our part, to see in this fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for national and individual cleansing from sin, nothing else than the blood of Jesus, their Messiah whom they pierced. This fountain was no doubt in a sense opened when the Roman soldier took a spear and pierced the side of the holy Lamb of God and “there came out blood and water” (“*and forthwith came there out blood and water.*” *KJV*)—John 19:34. Atonement for sin the blood, but water also, the daily cleansing from all defilement is found in the death of Christ. Out of Him as the Riven Rock flow the streams of spiritual as well as physical healing. It is the blood that is the foundation of salvation, the blood that atones for sin and reconciles God to man; but it is the fact of His life to which we are indebted for our daily cleansing. He that is laved needs not to be laved again, but he needs the daily washing of his feet—<sup>2</sup>John 13:10, Greek.

<sup>1</sup> Numbers 19:9 “And a man *that is* clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and lay *them* up without the camp in a clean place, and it shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel for a water of separation: *it is* a purification for sin.”

<sup>2</sup> John 13:10 “Jesus saith to him, **He that is washed needeth not save to wash *his* feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.**”

Israel are yet to look unto Him whom they have pierced, and then the fountain will be seen and appreciated. They shall experience in that day the wonderful and everlasting efficacy of the blood of Jesus their Messiah and God's Son, which cleanseth from all sin. His blood will then be on them in quite another and a blessed sense. That prayer of their forefathers uttered long ago which has haunted them thru the centuries, and even as the blood of Abel brought down the curse of God on Cain, has brought the curse upon them, so later it will bring the blessing. They will then know by experience the blessed truth of Hebrews 9:13, "if the blood of bulls and of goats and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

Some one may object and say that Zechariah's prophecy states that "in that day" of national restoration the fountain for sin and uncleanness shall be opened, whereas Christ was crucified nineteen centuries ago. For answer, we declare that it will be in that future day that the meritorious effects of that opened fountain of Golgatha, will be open to them. As the nation, their eyes have been closed. They cannot see the cleansing stream until the due time arrives. Paul in his cursing of the false prophet, Elymas the sorcerer, gives us the type of the blindness which has befallen the nation. "Behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee and thou shalt be blind for a season" (*"And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season."*—Acts 13:11 KJV); while in his teaching he gives us the doctrine—"blindness in part has happened unto Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (*"that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:"* KJV)—Rom. 11:25, 26.

The cleansing fountain for sin was opened once for all when the Lamb of God was slain, but the sinner actually beholds that stream in the day his eyes are opened to the true meaning of the great redemption of Calvary, when the Spirit of God applies the blood of Jesus to his own individual need. So it will be in the case of Israel nationally. The fountain will be opened then to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. They will behold the Lamb of God which has taken away their sin nineteen centuries ago, but will then take it away from them. And blessed be God this fountain will never be closed; for such is the meaning in the Hebrew. It carries the thought of not only atonement provided, but cleansing also in the wounds of the Crucified. That opened fountain shall remain open forever, free and accessible to all and eternally

**13:2** 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.

**13:3** 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.

effectual for sin and defilement. We read further,

“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; 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 thru when he prophesieth”—V. 2, 3.

The two foremost sources of Israel’s moral defilement in the land were idolatry and false prophecy. These shall be utterly put away from them. Not only will false worship be put away; but the objects of idolatrous worship shall no more be remembered. There will be a wholesale house-cleaning when the restoration of Israel is a fact. The false prophets shall disappear and the “unclean spirit,” Satan, the author and inspirer of all such prophecy, then and now, shall be cast out of the earth, shut up in the pit—<sup>1</sup>Rev. 20:1-3.

Then the Prophet introduces a supposed case of a son who shall prophesy in that day of regeneration of the nation, and the attitude of his parents thereto. The allusion is no doubt to Deut. 13:6-10 where it is written, “If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom shall entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, x x thine eye shall not pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him, but thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death” (“*If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods... neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him: But thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death*”—*Duet. 13:6-9 KJV*).

This is an illustration of the zeal which will characterize the converted people of destiny. They will be consecrated to the Lord in the fullest sense. The devotedness of Levi in that far-off day which gained for him his official place among the other tribes (<sup>2</sup>Ex. 32:26-29) shall be the pattern for all Israel. They

<sup>1</sup> Revelation 20:1-3 “And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.”

<sup>2</sup> Exodus 32:26-29 “Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who *is* on the LORD'S side? *let him come* unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, *and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour.* And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men. For Moses had said, Consecrate yourselves to day to the LORD, even every man upon his son, and upon his brother; that he may bestow upon you a blessing this day.”

will be the willing servants of Jehovah, loyal and zealous to His cause to the uttermost. The false prophet will not be heeded nor spared, even if it is a son or a daughter. Paul again is their type in this attitude. He was of this same caliber, but it was in the flesh. He thought Jesus of Nazareth was a false prophet and he was haling men and women to prison and putting his hand to the signing of their death warrant, because he thought he was right. He was zealous for Jehovah of Old Testament fame, God of law and order; but when He appeared in flesh, full of grace and truth, he did not recognize Him. He needed a revelation from heaven to change him, even as the nation will receive, and they too will not be disobedient to the heavenly vision. The same grace will be available.

“And in that day it shall come to pass 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”—V. 4, 5.

**13:4** 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:

**13:5** But he shall say, I *am* no prophet, I *am* an husbandman; for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth.

Not only will false prophets be no longer tolerated, but if there are any such pretenders, they will be ashamed of their calling. They will give up such a dangerous business (which it will be then) and seek a more quiet way of earning their living. They will put off the deceptive garment and dress in the ordinary garb of other men. In other words it will no longer be popular or safe to be a false prophet. There will be no need of prophecy of any kind, because the Word of God has been completed and it will be all fulfilled when Jesus sits on His throne. He will allow no more prophesying in the name of the Lord. In fact as to prophets now the same thing may be said. There are no seers like unto those of Israel. The Scriptures have been filled up. We need no addendas nor supplements to what has been written. We have therein a complete revelation of all God’s purposes for “the Jew and Gentile and the Church of God,” the three classes of folks which are upon the earth, as the Spirit has classified them—<sup>1</sup>1 Cor. 10:32.

The hairy garment was the distinguishing garb of some of the great prophets and as used by them it was in the order of God, but even that which is good becomes evil when it is of Satan or the flesh, hence, out of God’s will. Elijah the mighty prophet of Israel was described by Ahaziah’s messengers as “a hairy man” with a girdle of leather about his loins—<sup>2</sup>2 Kgs. 1:8. A course of life in conformity to the rough garment followed. Frugality in life and raiment always marked the true prophets. But in the case of false prophets the rough garment was worn as a cloak of hypocrisy. It was used to deceive—outwardly

<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians 10:32 “Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:”

<sup>2</sup> 2 Kings 1:8 “And they answered him, *He was* an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins. And he said, *It is* Elijah the Tishbite”

clothed as true prophets of God, inwardly they were as ravening wolves seeking to disrupt and rend the flock. This is the same condition which obtains religiously at the present time. False prophets abound. They will be in the majority in the “sevens” of prophesied times which are yet before the Jews. These latter will be in contrast and opposition to the true prophets. Especially will their voice be heard in denial of the words of the two outstanding witnesses in Jerusalem—Rev. 11.

The false prophets will mislead the people of Israel. They will cause them to return to idolatry. The unclean spirit which was cast out will return again with seven other relatives and find the house swept and garnished, or adorned with self-righteousness and complacent self-satisfaction. They will enter in and dwell there, so that the last state of Israel will be worse than the first. This will happen to that evil generation of those seven years—<sup>1</sup>Matt. 12:43-45. In <sup>2</sup>Revelation 13:12-17, we have the key to the situation and the connection between idolatry and false prophets. For the special idolatry manifest in those days will be the worship of the image of the first beast, or king of the world empire which will be in power in that day. And it will be the second beast, the false prophet who will be the instigator of this idolatry. And not the Jews only will worship this image, for all “that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb that hath been slain from the foundation of the world” (*“And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”—Rev. 13:8 KJV*).

Both of these evil men are seen as wild beasts, under the lens of Jehovah. They are counterfeits of Christ—the first one as king, the second as prophet. They are anti-Christ, against Christ, opposed to Him in every way. But it is

<sup>1</sup> Matthew 12:43-45 “When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.”

<sup>2</sup> Revelation 13:12-17 “And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by *the means of* those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.”

especially the false prophet of whom there is a bare hint here in our study chapter. He is viewed as in contrast to Christ the true Prophet, tho' even He will not be manifested in this office at His second coming. That is past. He will say, "I am no prophet. I am an husbandman," or bondman, a slave as verse 5 implies. Then the significance of the following citation becomes apparent.

"And one shall say to him. What are those wounds in thine hands? Then He shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends"—V. 6.

**13:6** 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.

Commentators of this prophecy generally refer it to anti-Christ, but while it is true, the false king shall be wounded and die, as an imitation of Christ, yet here the prophet is in view rather than the king. We are not told anywhere that the counterfeit prophet is wounded, hence, we can only infer that these words are of the true Prophet even as the context seems to prove, for there can be no controversy as to the next verse.

"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 my hand upon the little ones"—V. 7.

**13:7** 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.

Herein is the manner of His wounding revealed. It was in the will and purpose of God that Christ was crucified. The Spirit shows us Him who was wounded in the house of His friends or lovers, smitten even unto death, by His own people the Jews. They did not recognize "the image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15) and charged Him with blasphemy because He declared He spoke in His Name, as one equal with God. And yet this dreadful crime is viewed in our passage here as being the act of God in order to make His death an offering for sin. We read in the great atonement chapter, Isaiah 53, that "it pleased Jehovah to bruise Him. He hath put Him to grief" ("*Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief*"—*Isa. 53:10 KJV*), etc. He was led as a Lamb to slaughter by the hand of man, but it was allowed, or rather willed by the Lord. Human malice and inhumanity could do no more or less than the counsel and might of Jehovah ordained to come to pass. It was decreed that the Son of Man should die for the redemption of mankind. We will look in detail at this great passage. The sword is personified and is called upon to awake!—to rouse itself, from sleep, as it were, in order to execute divine justice. And then the awesome mystery, upon whom does this judgment fall? upon Him who stands in the nearest and closest relationship to Jehovah. This is wholly beyond man's reason to conceive. It needs a revelation to understand the wonderful counsel of God in the salvation of man which is foretold in the Scriptures. The Lamb of God, in order to save a lost race, is wounded, or (literally pierced thru) for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities and pours out His soul unto death in order that sinners shall be saved from the penalty of sin and obtain eternal life.

Jehovah Himself is the Shepherd of Israel and in the Person of Messiah He fulfills all that is implied in that relationship. We see this more fully in Ezekiel 34, where it is written that He Himself shall “seek” and “save” the lost, “heal” and “strengthen” the weak and protect the defenseless, His scattered flock. He declares that He “will set up one shepherd over them and He shall feed them, even my servant David. He shall feed them and He shall be their Shepherd” (Ezek. 34:23), for He has called and appointed Him to this office. He is His Representative and it is in and thru Him that this relationship between God and His people is realized. It is further brought out in the next clause—“the man that is my fellow” (V. 7). The latter signifies “a relation, the nearest one” and in the only other place found, <sup>1</sup>Lev. 25:15, it is translated “brother.”

The Jews accused our Lord of blasphemy because He claimed that He was “equal with God,” or when speaking of Himself as the Good Shepherd, who layeth down His life for the sheep, said “I and My Father are one” (John 10:30). He probably alluded to this passage in Zechariah. This is a mystery; but it can be solved by faith in the things that are written, but which no amount of reasoning will bring to us. Christ was the equal of God. He was the eternal Son of God who came first to His own, but they received Him not, rather they rejected and crucified Him. The sword reached Him. The Shepherd was smitten even unto death, with the result—“the sheep were scattered” (*“they were scattered”*—Ezek. 34:5 KJV). The nation, Israel, to whom He came was dispersed to the four winds of heaven. These are designated the sheep of slaughter—Chap. 11:1-4. It was fulfilled after the death of Christ. The Romans—“the people of the prince that shall come” (Dan. 9:26)—destroyed the city and the sanctuary (A. D. 70) even as Daniel prophesied—Dan 9:27. And yet while this terrible judgment fell upon the people generally, a small remnant remained the objects of the Shepherd’s care, even as we read in the last clause.

“And I will turn my hand upon the little ones”—V. 7.

The unique phrase, “turn my hand” sometimes refers to inflicting punishment and then again it has in it the sense of Protection. In the case here it speaks of the grace that was manifested to the remnant at the time of the destruction by the Romans, but it also has reference to the same protecting care that will be vouchsafed to the believing remnant of the final “week” of trouble. This phrase “little ones” does not occur elsewhere. The true meaning is that they are humble, patient, or “those who make themselves small; the poor of the flock” (chap. 11:7) the poor and righteous few in distinction from the godless majority.

The whole of this beautiful prophecy finds its realization in Christ, as He Himself intimates. In the night in the which He was betrayed, after He had

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<sup>1</sup> Leviticus 25:15 “According to the number of years after the jubile thou shalt buy of thy neighbour, and according unto the number of years of the fruits he shall sell unto thee:”



partaken of the Passover Supper, with His disciples, He said to them, “All ye shall be offended the sheep in Me this night, for it is written, I will smite the shepherd and shall be scattered abroad. But after I am raised up, I will go before you into Galilee” (“*All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.*”—Matt. 26:31-32 KJV).

But this fulfillment did not exhaust the meaning of this prophecy; for the primary reference waits for the end time. It speaks of the final deliverance and salvation of the Jewish remnant as the next portion of our study chapter indicates. “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 part shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part thru 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”—V. 8, 9.

**13:8** 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.

**13:9** 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.

Now we know this beautiful prophetic word has never had a complete fulfillment in the history of Israel. After the siege of seven years and destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman army, about 40 years after the crucifixion of Christ, there was no such results manifested. The Jews were all either killed or carried away into captivity; with the exception of the Christians, to which we are assured this citation does not apply. It is entirely prophetic of the nation. We find a parallel Scripture in Ezekiel 5:12, where the nation is seen divided into three parts, “A third part of thee shall die with the pestilence; x x a third part shall fall by the sword, x x and I will scatter a third part into all the winds.”

The whole of the people are here depicted as divided into three parts, death receiving two and life one part. The literal fulfillment of this as to the exact number is not the question. It is of the general judgment of the whole nation and the small part that will survive the destructive fury which will be meted out. The world speaks of “the survival of the fittest,” but here the opposite will be the case according to man’s verdict. All the great, sufficient and powerful will be taken away. It will be the survival of the weak, the contrite, the poor and needy. God will come to their help in that day of darkness and dilemma. He is able and will prove that fact. The great Day of Jacob’s final trouble will also be the climax of his triumph. Satan’s fire will be kindled and his furnace heated “seven times hotter” (“*seven times more than it was wont to be heated.*”—Dan. 3:19 KJV) than ever against the Jews, yet at the end of that night of sorrow will come the greatest day of their long history. It will dawn into a morning of joy which will continue one thousand years.

Two-thirds may be cut off and die, but the entire nation shall never be utterly destroyed. There is always a “third” or a “tenth” left to tell the story and witness of Jehovah. They are the indestructible “holy seed” (Isa. 6:13) which

God protects and preserves as a nucleus of His great and blessed nation which is yet to fill the face of the earth with fruit. He says, “I will make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, but I will not make a full end of thee” (*“For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee.”—Jer. 30:11 KJV*). No fires, regardless of their intensity, (and there have been some devastating ones) have been sufficient to burn them up root and branch, and no waters of affliction however deep have been able to swallow them up entirely. At the end of all their chastisements, with which they have, and will yet be visited, they shall unite to praise God for His mercy. They shall see the end of the Lord’s ways, that “He is pitiful and of tender mercy” (*“that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.” KJV*)—James 5:11. Job is a type of the remnant of promise. He suffered as a witness of God’s manner of dealing with man, even as has the Jew. The latter is a sign to the whole world of the Lord and His unfailing Word and sure promise.

Hence, the “refining” and the “trying” and the “testing” of the remnant, as is told us in the above quoted verse of our lesson is all for a purpose. We read in Malachi of the same time and same “little flock” whom Jehovah will refine as silver is refined and will try as gold is tried and they will come forth “a vessel unto honor, meet and sanctified for the Master’s use, prepared unto every good work” (*“a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.” KJV*)—2 Tim. 2:21. And they shall trust in the Lord as none have ever trusted. They shall pray as none have ever prayed, and work as none have ever worked for their Messiah and King. “Devotedness” will be their middle name. No more shall they have a wandering heart, no more shall gold allure them, no more will anything have power to turn them away from the Man in the glory whose face will ever be turned toward them. Their fellowship will be a perfect thing. They will love and be loved by their Redeemer. Their name shall be called Hephzibah—“the Lord delighted in thee” and their land shall be named, Beulah—“married;” for as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall their God rejoice over them—<sup>1</sup>Isa. 62:4, 5. They shall call upon His Name, as the Prophet here declares, and He will hear them. He will say, “It is my people” and they shall say, “The Lord is my God.”

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 62:4, 5 “Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. For *as* a young man marrieth a virgin, *so* shall thy sons marry thee: and *as* the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, *so* shall thy God rejoice over thee.”

## Messiah's Visible Appearing

### Chapter Fourteen

“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 them shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city”—Vs. 1, 2.

#### Chapter 14

**14:1** Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.

**14:2** 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.

The first verses of our final chapter are simply a continuation of the final verses of the preceding chapter. They amplify and expand the subject of the judgment which is yet to fall upon Jerusalem and the Jews in the seven years of prophesied wonders. It is the same time again reverted to with which chapter twelve opens. The mourning time of Israel and their cleansing appear as a parenthesis herein; for now we hear the judgment peals. The latter is allowed of God to fall upon Jerusalem in the final great siege by means of the marshalled Gentile armies of the confederated nations. Their subsequent decisive destruction, coming upon them as a whirlwind, is so graphically related by Zechariah as tho' he were an eye-witness.

Some may be surprised that there is a repetition of so many of these events; but that is the way of the Scriptures. The prophets often announce some important coming event, then later, give us more details of it, which is the case here. Any attempt to make all these statements of Zechariah follow in Chronological order, would reduce the prophecies to a mass of confusion. The same manner is found in Revelation. There is first a statement of the happenings of the seven years of <sup>1</sup>Dan. 9:27, and then the events are detailed.

In the case of the fulfillment of these prophecies, there must be the restoration of the Jews to Palestine in unbelief, which state of affairs has been going on for the past ten years. They must be there before the second advent of Christ; for prophecy demands it. There will exist the same state of affairs as at the first advent of Christ, when their clock nationally stopped, not to be wound up again until “the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled” (*“the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled”*—*Luke 21:24 KJV*). This period is at hand. We can see the stately stoppings of the Sovereign of the seasons in His wonderful moving at the present moment. Jew and Gentile and the Church of God are all being sifted and located according to His pre-arranged plan and purpose, taking their position on Jehovah's great stage for the final wind-up of this age.

<sup>1</sup> Daniel 9:27 “And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”

Hence, we say, There must be a nucleus of the Jews in the land of promise when the Lord begins to fulfill His gracious promises to them. They will be only a small minority, compared to the whole nation, that will come into blessing; for prior to this will be the great tribulation during which so many will perish.

A Jewish state will no doubt soon be in order. It will arise under the protection of the European League of Nations, which may even now be seen coming into view. Conditions among these nations are forcing this issue. The Jewish commonwealth will be according to the Zionist programmed as the “openly recognized and legally assured home of the Jew.” The Balfour Declaration recognized the Jews as once more a nation and promised to facilitate their re-establishment in Palestine after Jerusalem had been captured by the British army under Allenby; but so far, this glorious hope has not materialized. They are yet waiting that day for which every orthodox Jewish heart yearns, and it will come as sure as the sunrise. Habakkuk urged them to wait for the fulfillment of the promise, tho’ the vision tarry, because it will come. Paul connects this above vision as that of the coming of Christ He declares that the restoration and blessing of Israel is dependent upon their attitude to their Messiah. “For yet a little while and He that shall come will come and will not tarry”—Heb. 10:37. But to return to our chapter.

After a short interval of peace and prosperity as a nation, there will come for the Jew the dreadful night of anguish, the darkest hour of Israel’s sad history. It is prophesied in this gathering of the nations and the attendant siege of Jerusalem. It will be the retributive judgment of Jehovah upon them, allowed because of the covenant into which they will enter with the counterfeit Christ, to whom they will swear allegiance, thus culminating their national apostasy and fulfilling the Word of Christ—“If another shall come in his name, him ye will receive” (*“if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive” KJV*)—John 5:43. Isaiah calls it “a covenant of death, and an agreement with hell” (*“And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand” KJV*)—Isa. 28:18. He declares that “the hail (judgment) shall sweep away the refuge of lies and the waters shall overflow the hiding place”—Isa. 28:17. And another prophet exclaims, “Alas! for the day is great, so that there is none like it even the time of Jacob’s trouble” (*“Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble” KJV*)—Jer. 30:7.

The dreadfulness of those stirring days we have commented upon in chapter 12. The armies of the confederated nations, the flower of their strength, march in triumph thru the land, easily treading down all opposition, and in overwhelming, irresistible force and fury attack Jerusalem which is speedily at their mercy. The city is taken and the spoil divided in the midst of her, in calm,

leisurely fashion without any fear of molestation. Then the cruel scenes, which accompany war, and the sacking of the besieged city will be in evidence to the uttermost. Half the population is dragged forth to go into captivity, and the small and wretched remnant left, is without hope. The enemy probably intends them for a later destruction: but here it can be truly said, “Man proposes; but God disposes,” and in this case interposes. The day which begins with calamities for Israel is not going to end in triumph for their foes; for this is “the day of the Lord,” a day set apart for Him to display His mighty power and show Himself the majestic Man of destiny, the Man who shall make His enemies bite the dust. It is the hour of Christ’s triumph, the hour for which He has been waiting nineteen hundred years, the day when He shall go forth for the salvation of His people, as it is written—

**14:3** Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.

“Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations as when He fought in the day of battle”—V. 3. Many instances are recorded in Scripture, when Jehovah fought for Israel, for instance note Joshua 10:14, where we read, words almost identical with these of this prophecy, “And there was no day like that before it, or after it; x x for Jehovah fought for Israel” (*“And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for Israel.”—Joshua 10:14 KJV*). That was the day when the organized armies of the nations of Canaan were defeated by Joshua and his unmilitary hosts, the latter being typical of the remnant of the Jews in the last great conflict. The Lord fought for Joshua and Israel at that time, which was the cause of the victory, and so will it be again. “If God be for us, who can be against us?” Paul enquires (Rom. 8:31), and then proceeds to answer his own question, by the following statements in that chapter of unfathomed depths of grace and truth.

#### Majestic Manifestation

“And His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives on the east”—V. 4.

**14:4** 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.

The mountain, so clearly defined and located by this prophecy, is associated with many events and striking hours in the nation’s history. It was from this mountain that the Lord went up to heaven in the sight of His disciples after He had been rejected and slain by the nation. He led His faithful remnant of people out, as far as to Bethany, on the southeast slope of the mount of Olives and He lifted up his hands and blessed them—<sup>1</sup>Luke 24:50, 51. Hence, from this same mountain they shall see Him return. The prophet Ezekiel beheld this consummation, even as he previously had seen the departure of the Glory of

<sup>1</sup> Luke 24:50, 51 “And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.”

**14:5** 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.

Jehovah—Ezek. 10. He says, “Afterward He brought me to the gate that looketh toward the east, and behold, the Glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east and His voice was like the sound of many waters and the earth shined with His glory” (“*Afterward he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the east: And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory.*” *KJV*)—Ezek. 43:1, 2. And this is a prophecy in symbolic language of the game event which the heavenly messengers announced to the men of Galilee —“This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go” (“*this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*” *KJV*)—Acts 1:11. And not only in like manner, that is visibly and bodily and with “a cloud;” but He shall come to the same place whence He finally departed.

It is to this mountain, He often reverted when His heart was pained and crushed. It was here, that He shed tears of (agony over Jerusalem, and in this same place He spoke the marvelous prophecy of the end-time things—Matt. 24), which shall all be fulfill at His second coming. In response to His appearance with His mystical body, the church, in glorious array, that sacred mountain shall cleave in two parts—from east to west; half of it moving to the north and half to the south, thus forming “a very great valley.” It is unto this valley, the remnant of the Jews remaining alive after the great massacre in Jerusalem, shall flee as they fled in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah. There is no other mention of this earthquake in Scripture, except possibly <sup>1</sup>Amos 1:1. It must have been an unusual and dreadful earthquake, judging from its typical aspect; for its memory survived for more than two centuries and is referred to here by Zachariah as being fresh in the minds of the people. The Hebrew text reads, “Ye shall flee into My mountains” (V. 5), the lofty heights of this newly formed chasm being called His mountains (plural), because they were made thus by His power. It will act as a wall unto them even as the parallel occurrence of the waters of the Red Sea, which dividing in the midst, were a wall on the right hand and on the left to the children of Israel—<sup>2</sup>Ex. 14:22.

The fear of the Lord will occasion the terror more than the fear of the earthquake. The Lord coming in His glory and majesty with all His matchless holy ones, who have previously been caught up to meet Him, will fill the heavens with light and splendor and inspire His foes with consternation and

<sup>1</sup> Amos 1:1 “The words of Amos, who was among the herdmen of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake.”

<sup>2</sup> Exodus 14:22 “And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry *ground*: and the waters *were* a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.”

despair. It is at this stage of the program of that eventful act of the drama, that the happenings recorded earlier (chaps. 12:4 to 13:2) will transpire. The Lord's appearance in behalf of the Jews, will be the signal for His judgments of the nations to begin. All the best of the armies of the peoples of the world will be marshalled around Jerusalem. The mounted cavalry (or what will answer to the horsemen in that time of disaster) will be the first to get their share of the punishment which will be handed out to the warring armies. "In that day...I will smite every horse with astonishment and his rider with madness"—Chap. 12:4.

Then the other ranks of infantry will "get theirs," as the world expresses the matter. They will be visited with the plague described in our chapter, verse 12. A tumult, or panic from the Lord shall be among the confederated hosts, as has happened before in the history of the nation. The Lord fought for them and each man's hand in the enemy's rank was set against his neighbor.

This will be the time, commented upon previously, that the remnant of Judah shall fight with superhuman strength. They shall rise to the occasion and tread their enemies under their feet—Chap. 12. The noise of war and the shout of triumph shall be turned to wailing and lamentation, as the spirit of grace and supplication takes possession of the heart of Israel, when their eyes are opened and they behold their Messiah, the King of Glory. They will recognize their Kinsman-Redeemer whom they pierced and whom for the many centuries they have rejected and despised. This look of recognition will break their hearts and they shall mourn for Him as one mourneth for an only son. And this sorrow will spread over the whole land and travel around the world, tho' Jerusalem and Palestine will be the centre of God's judgments, as well as men's repentance; for it was the city and the country of Christ's rejection and it must be the centre of His exaltation and blessing to the world. Great is the honor accorded that land of destiny when the long-rejected and crucified, but risen Messiah appears in the midst, His feet upon the Mount of Olives.

We wish again to affirm that the "feet" mentioned in verse 4, refer not to Christ personally, but to the mystical Christ, the Church joined to the Head. The whole body will have been raised up and glorified before the time represented in this prophecy. The "feet" company will be the last rank. They will be nearest to the earth.

God had a great plan outlined for the ages before these times began. He is the Architect and Builder of a heavenly design, marked out for the exaltation of the human family, but it necessitated a humbling first. Hence, man's fall and glorious redemption is the working out of the scheme. God purposed in His eternal counsel, that the Son should become a man, redeem fallen humanity and reign over the earth with a body of people of which He should be the Head. It is this mystical Christ, which shall be the ruler of the Fifth World Empire and the very number five is significant in this connection. It speaks of God and man

joined together in an indissoluble union—one harmonious whole, even as the hand and foot of man. The two thumbs and big toes representing God, make for strength and sufficiency. God has already laid the basis of this wonderful plan in the death and resurrection of His Son. He has raised Him out of dead ones (the earnest of the resurrection of His body) and seated Him provisionally in the heavenlies “far above all principality and power and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come; and hath subjected all things under HIS FEET, and constituted Him the Head for that congregation, which is His body, the full development of Him, the all things filling” (“Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” KJV)—Eph. 1:20-23, Diaglott. Weymouth’s translation of the two last verses is most illuminating—“God hath put all things under Christ’s FEET and hath appointed Him universal and supreme Head of the Church which is His body, the completeness of Him who everywhere fills the universe with Himself” (“And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.—Eph. 1:22, 23 KJV). That is, God’s universe would be void and empty without Christ as a Man, and Christ would be incomplete and useless without His body. It is a wonderful mystery. It is God’s plan which demands a full-grown, perfected Man to rule the heavens and the earth. That Man is in development even now. He will be completed when Israel are ready to receive their Messiah. He shall come and stand upon Mount Olivet. Isaiah declares that Jehovah shall make the place of His FEET glorious—<sup>1</sup>Isa. 60:13. The throne of the only Potentate, the Lord Jesus Christ, King of kings and Lord of lords, will be far up in the heavens—the highest sphere of all the ascensions allotted, in the divine decree, to the universal Ruler and His people, while the lowest sphere will be the Mount of Olives. But to continue with our study.

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark. But it shall be one day that shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night; but it shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light”—V. 6, 7.

A day of the above character, an unusual day, when even the natural order of things is changed, is scheduled to appear. There will be no visible night, nor visible day. The contest between light and darkness will be waged, and even

**14:6** And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the light shall not be clear, *nor* dark:

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 60:13 “The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious.”



**14:7** 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.

**14:8** 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.

nature shall show it forth; but light will be victorious at the end. It is “one day,” tho’ we have found that it is 75 days long, but as tho’ only one day, because there is no change in it. None has ever been like it before, so strange, so different, as Jeremiah expresses the situation—<sup>1</sup>Jer. 30:7. It shall be a miraculous day, known to Jehovah, not day, nor night, but rather as twilight. The natural sources of light will be withdrawn; but it will not be absolute night, for there will be the transcendent light of the glory of the Lord and His myriad of holy ones in the heavens, which will be reflected upon the earth. And this literal, physical phenomena will be manifest to the believing remnant of Jews. At the evening time of that great Atonement Day for the nation (that will be the very hour of Christ’s appearance), when the day of mourning and sorrow is over, the great and glorious Sun of Righteousness shall arise for their comfort and help with healing in His wings. Then there shall be light such as never has been in this dark world; for the ruler of this darkness shall be cast out. Then shall there be light, the light of the glory of God shining forth in the face of Jesus Christ, their long-rejected Messiah and King, to whom they will, even as Thomas, acknowledge as “My Lord and my God”—John 20:28.

“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”—V. 8.

The following verses of this great final prophecy of Zechariah describe the blessed results of that day of Christ’s reception by the Jews. Great physical changes will ensue, convulsions of nature, we may say, beginning with the terrible earthquake in Jerusalem. Particularly will the position of that city be altered and transformed into wondrous beauty.

The first miraculous change noted, is that of the abundant stream of water, which will flow out from the city, over the entire land of Palestine. Ezekiel informs us of that river in much detail. These living waters proceed out from under the altar in the Temple in Jerusalem. It is wholly supernatural. It becomes deeper and wider in its flow thru the land, changing the wilderness into a garden of delight in a moment, as it were.

The “former,” or Eastern is the Dead Sea which shall then be healed of its saltness by the streams of fresh, or living water, which supernatural waters will also fall into the “hinder” or western sea, the Mediterranean. These two bodies of water will never run dry, as streams are apt to do at the present time. Summer’s heat will not lessen their flow, neither the winter’s cold freeze them up. There will be no extremes of weather in that land of love and sunshine. The living streams will continually flow out in ever increasing abundance. Perennial

<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah 30:7 “Alas! for that day *is* great, so that none *is* like it: it *is* even the time of Jacob’s trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.”

waters coming out from the city of God shall irrigate the whole of Palestine—<sup>1</sup>Joel 3:18. Psalm 46 is a prophecy of the same period of solemn miraculous doings of the Lord. David beholds in vision, “a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God;” for restored and renewed Jerusalem shall be the place where all the changes and blessings of the millennial period will begin. Palestine will be the paradise of God on earth. The garden in Eden was the pattern, in the which was a river “to water the garden, and from thence it was parted and became four streams” (“*And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.*”—*Genesis 2:10 KJV*), flowing forth to fertilize other portions of the earth; so shall it be again.

The land of Israel, will teem with evidences of supernatural doings in that day of the Lord when He will demonstrate His power and majesty. The beauty of nature will be manifested on every hand, while nothing shall destroy, or mar the glory of that beloved land of promise. His holy mountain shall be protected and blessed to the uttermost degree. On the sides of Zion, the wolf and the lamb shall dwell together as well as the leopard and the kid and a little child will be safe to lead what are now known as wild animals. Peace, harmony and love will pervade all hearts, and all peoples. All creation shall witness to the great change when the Lord is reigning as King over the earth. He will be unto Israel as a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby without stopping. Peace will reign among all peoples.

Another fact that is worthy of emphasis in this connection with these waters, is their abundance. It signifies the fulness of the salvation of God, which shall go forth from Jerusalem into all parts of the world. The River of God is full of water, the Psalmist sings (<sup>2</sup>Psa. 65:9) and Ezekiel beholds it in vision, “as a river which he could not pass thru; for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed thru” (“*Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over.*” *KJV*)—Ezek. 47:1-12. And as abundant as they are in quantity, so also is their healing, life-giving efficacy. Every thing in the vicinity of their flow will be rejuvenated and transformed by their presence.

“And the Lord shall be King over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord and His Name one”—V. 9.

<sup>1</sup> Joel 3:18 “And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the LORD, and shall water the valley of Shittim.”

<sup>2</sup> Psalms 65:9 “Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, *which* is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it.”

**14:9** And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.

This King is Jehovah—Jesus, Immanuel, the Messiah of Israel, the promised Seed of David. He shall set up His Kingdom and rule over all the earth. He will be God’s Appointee, King not only in virtue of being the Son of God, in whom the rule of God upon the earth shall at last be realized, but King because of His being the Son of Man, the Last Adam, the Lord of creation. In Him the original purpose of God in the creation of man shall be fulfilled. All the promises of the Messianic Kingdom are centred in Him, even as was prophesied before His birth. “He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David. And He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever and of His Kingdom there shall be no end”—Luke 1:32, 33.

The extent of His rule shall be universal—“over all the earth.” He shall have dominion from sea to sea and from the river unto the ends of the earth. Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him (<sup>1</sup>Psa. 72:8-11); for all the kingdoms of the world shall then become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. All the nations of the earth shall come up to worship the King of the Jews, the Lord of hosts, whose absolute sway they will acknowledge. God’s will shall then, and not till then, be done upon the earth. In the very place where His Name has been ignored, neglected and blasphemed, there shall the rule of God be acknowledged, even as it is done in heaven.

And here is a further marvel in this respect. It will be man, the once rebellious creature, in whom this great change will be evidenced. A new creation will be on the scene as the rulers over the earth. Christ and His glorified saints above will reign in fellowship with the saints below and this halcyon state will be the result. The appearances of the risen Lord to His disciples upon the earth during the forty days after His death, meeting in visible fellowship with them at intervals, may be taken as the pattern of the future relation of the mystical Christ to the saints on the earth. His throne far up in the sides of the north will be in fullest fellowship with the throne on earth. Harmony will reign in every sphere and rank of God’s redeemed creation. His Name shall be excellent in all the earth, that is revered and loved; and every knee shall bow to Him in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

“In that day,” God shall be manifested as One, the Prophet adds. He shall be recognized, acknowledged and called the God of the whole earth (<sup>2</sup>Isa. 54:5), the only Potentate, Sovereign of the land and sea. There will be no other God

<sup>1</sup> Psalms 72:8-11 “He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.”

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 54:5 “For thy Maker *is* thine husband; the LORD of hosts *is* his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.”

worshipped by man; for all the false gods and false religions will be abolished and utterly disowned forever

His Name embodies His character. It is Jehovah of redemption that is in view here. The covenant keeping God of the fathers—Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—shall be fully manifested and made known to Israel by the Messiah, the Lamb of Calvary. God’s Name shall be revealed to them by Him. He shall be One, excluding all others, the absolute and only object of men’s worship and praise for one thousand years, “so that he that blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth” (*“That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth” KJV*)—Isa. 65:16. Furthermore, we read of other changes, physical as well as spiritual ones.

“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 winepress”—V. 10.

**14:10** 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.

As the city of the great King, Jehovah of hosts, whose dominion shall extend over the whole earth, Jerusalem, the capital of the World Empire, shall be lifted up above the mountains by which she has been surrounded and obscured. The land all about her shall be changed and become as a plain. This word, “Arabah,” translated “plain” in the authorized version, is the proper name of the Jordan valley, that peculiar depression which runs from the slopes of Hermon to the Red Sea. It is said to be the deepest valley on the surface of the globe. The sea of Galileo, a part of it, is 652 feet below the Mediterranean, while the Dead Sea, included also in its course, is 1316 feet below sea level. And Zechariah tells us that this valley shall be lifted up and the mountainous region round about shall be brought down, and all together shall become a plain. Marvelous transformation! Wondrous change! Altogether it will be brought about by the power of God, not by work, or power of man. It will be done suddenly and supernaturally.

The towering position of Jerusalem, as Zechariah points it out, agrees also with other predictions regarding her exalted position. Isaiah, Micah and Ezekiel, each comment upon this same fact. “It shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains and shall be exalted above the hills” (*“And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD’S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.” KJV*)—Isa. 2:2. It shall be a conspicuous city, emblematic of truth and righteousness which will be manifested there. “Truth is on the scaffold now

and error on the throne,” but then the tables will be turned. Truth will be exalted, while falsehood will be in the dust.

The bounds of the restored city are even described; from one end of it to the other, the change shall be manifested. The “first,” or former gate was at the north-eastern point and the “corner gate” at the north-western point; while “the tower of Hananeel” and “the king’s winepress” represent the other boundaries. It is the literal and earthly Jerusalem of which the Prophet is speaking. Then follow further results of the change in the capitol city of the Kingdom of the Lord upon the earth.

“And men shall dwell in it and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited”—V. 11.

The thought is of peace and permanency. Nevermore shall the people of destiny flee away as captives, or in fear of the intruders in their domain. As another Prophet declares, “he shall be quiet and at ease and none shall make him afraid” (*“shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid.” KJV*)—Jer. 30:10. There shall be no curse, or sentence of destruction upon the people because the reasons for these visitations of wrath shall be no more. They will enjoy the blessings of the covenant of promise, the Abrahamic covenant. The Mosaic covenant will have fulfilled its office and finished its course. It will have been seen in its true place as the handmaid to grace, even as was Hagar to Sarah. Jerusalem shall dwell safely in conscious security without walls, or bulwarks; for as we saw in an earlier chapter, the Lord had promised to be as a wall of fire round about it and the glory in the midst of her (chap. 2:4, 5) and “salvation will He appoint for walls and bulwarks” (*“salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.” KJV*)—Isa 26:1. The millennial period will witness a blessed condition of restored, purified and beautified Jerusalem. It will be the earthly reflection of the glorious city on high. Isaiah gives us a precious description of that halcyon blessed period and blessed city. Behold, I create a new heaven and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice in Jerusalem and joy in my people: for the voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall no more be thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die an hundred years old—but the sinner being an hundred years old, shall be accursed. They shall build houses and inhabit them, and plant vineyards and eat the fruit thereof. They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for calamity; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together and the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.

**14:11** And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.

We learn from Isaiah's beautiful, detailed description of conditions in the new earth. He is not telling us of Palestine alone but things as they will be in other parts of the earth. Zechariah says there will be no curse in the land of promise which agrees with other prophetic statements; but Isaiah tells us that the sinner will die accursed. There is no contradiction; for in Palestine there will be no sinners. "All Israel shall be saved" (Rom. 11:26) not those rebels who died in unbelief, but all those who enter the Millennium, and those born afterward. All the victory of Calvary will be manifested in great measure in that blessed land. Death will have lost its sting and the grave its victory in Palestine. Life will be reigning But in other parts of the world death will still hold partial sway. The rebellious sinner will die immediately after he has passed the one hundred year mark, the years of probation. But no infant shall die, neither any child. Death as the penalty for Adam's sin will have been abolished; but persistent wickedness, after light has been given, will be punished with death. It will also signal the second death of that individual. "He shall die accursed" (*"but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed."*—*Isa. 65:20 KJV*). Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5) are figures of such a contingency. That represented the results of the righteous reign of Christ. There will be evidence in the earth that sin has not yet been absolutely put away; but in the land of Israel, all will be Perfection. If there would be death there, then there would still be weeping; but such cannot be.

The wild beasts will be no more; for even they will feed in peace and quietness with the domestic animals. Now the wolf would feed on the lamb, not with him; but then what a change. The only evidence of the curse in Palestine will be the crawling serpent. His condition will continue; tho' he will no longer hurt, or bite, yet he will still eat the dust-crawl upon his belly. He represents Satan who will be chained in hell for the thousand years reign of Christ, and later loosed for a little season to go forth and deceive the nations for the last time—<sup>1</sup>Rev. 20:7-10. Sin and Satan will be let loose for a brief time after the millennium, as a further proof of the incorrigibility of that crooked serpent and his slaves—the fallen Adam. But to return to our prophecy in Zechariah.

The glorious pen-picture painted for us of the restoration of the Jew and his land to beauty and prosperity is now changed to a scene of woe again. Zechariah returns once more to the judgments which always precede the blessings for the Jew, as well as Gentile, individual or national.

<sup>1</sup> Revelation 20:7-10 "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom *is* as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet *are*, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

**14:12** 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.

**14:13** 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 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 eye shall consume away in their holes and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth”—V. 12. Three weapons are described in the following verses, 12 to 15, as those by which God will destroy His enemies. The first is the PLAGUE, as noted above. It is dreadful. Literally it signifies, the flesh of men will rot while they stand upon their feet. It speaks of the suddenness of the attack—the stroke of judgment shall fall before they are aware of its approach. Men’s eye (singular) shall consume away in their sockets (plural) and their tongue (singular) shall consume away in their mouth (plural). The use of the singular and plural in this unusual manner probably signifies that each individual, as well as the company of those wicked folks will be overtaken by terrible calamity. It is the retributive act of God. One by one their eyes, of which they had said, “Let our eye look upon Zion” (Mic. 4:11) namely with joy because of her desolate condition, shall consume away, and their tongue, with which they blasphemed God, shall be destroyed by disease. It is a terrible judgment intended as a warning that it is a fearful thing to be arrayed against God and His Anointed. David advises the kings of the earth against such a contingency, saying, Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son lest He be angry and ye perish by the way—<sup>1</sup>Psa. 2:10, 11.

“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 neighbor, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbor”—V. 13.

This is the second weapon with which the Lord takes vengeance against His enemies. There is a panic among the people because of the plague, or other causes, and mutual destruction follows in consequence. This judgment as well as the first, is spoken of as being directly from the hand of God. It is literally “a tumult of Jehovah,” in the Hebrew. The armies gathered about Jerusalem shall be seized with a supernatural terror. Confusion will reign among them. It is the same condition, “astonishment” and “madness,” with which the horses and riders are said to be smitten in chapter 12:4; and in consequence each one shall lay hold, with evil intent, upon the hand of his neighbor. It will be a fight to the finish. Each in that multitude shall seize the other, mastering him, or being mastered by him. It will be “the survival of the fittest.” The stronger will destroy the weaker. This discomfiture, or tumult was sent by the Lord upon several previous occurrences. The little band of Gideon discomfited the Midianites (<sup>2</sup>Judg. 7:22) and the multitude of the Philistines fled away before Jonathan and

<sup>1</sup> Psalms 2:10, 11 “Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.”

<sup>2</sup> Judges 7:22 “And the three hundred blew the trumpets, and the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host: and the host fled to Bethshittah in Zererath, *and* to the border of Abelmeholah, unto Tabbath.”

his armor-bearer because the Lord caused a tumult among them—<sup>1</sup>2 Sam. 13:16-20.

“And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem and the wealth of the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, silver and apparel in great abundance”—V. 14.

**14:14** 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.

The third weapon used by the Lord to defeat the Gentile armies will be the Jewish remnant. While some of their foes are consumed by the plague, and others are engaged in fighting among themselves, the remnant of Judah will arise and fight valiantly, conscious that the Captain of the Lord’s host is with them and the almighty power of God is now on their side. The utter discomfiture of the Gentile armies will follow and in their confusion and destruction, they will leave behind great riches. All manner of goodly store will be left to enrich the Jews. As it is written, “The wealth of the wicked is laid up for the just” (“*the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.*”—*Proverbs 13:22 KJV*). Here again is an allusion by Zechariah to historical data of the past history of the nation as faintly foreshadowing the future, as note 2 Chron. 20, where we have a corresponding illustration. After the overthrow of the hosts of Ammon, Moab and Mt. Seir, Jehoshaphat and his people gathered “spoil in abundance, both riches and garments and precious jewels” (“*his people came to take away the spoil of them, they found among them in abundance both riches with the dead bodies, and precious jewels*”—*2 Chronicles 20:25 KJV*). At another time the hosts of Syria, which had gathered against Samaria, were suddenly seized with panic, and fled because the Lord had made them to “hear a noise of chariots and horses and of a great host” (“*hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host*—*2 Kgs. 7:6 KJV*)—*2 Kings 7:2-8*. And they left a great spoil behind, abundance of silver and gold and raiment, for the use of the people of God as payment for the trouble that they had caused them.

“And so shall be the plague of the horse and the mule and the camel and the ass and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents as this plague, or as their masters”—V. 15.

**14:15** 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.

The animals also will come under the curse of the Lord and will be

<sup>1</sup> 2 Samuel 13:16-20 “And she said unto him, *There is* no cause: this evil in sending me away *is* greater than the other that thou didst unto me. But he would not hearken unto her. Then he called his servant that ministered unto him, and said, Put now this *woman* out from me, and bolt the door after her. And *she had* a garment of divers colours upon her: for with such robes were the king’s daughters *that were* virgins apparelled. Then his servant brought her out, and bolted the door after her. And Tamar put ashes on her head, and rent her garment of divers colours that *was* on her, and laid her hand on her head, and went on crying. And Absalom her brother said unto her, Hath Amnon thy brother been with thee? but hold now thy peace, my sister: he *is* thy brother; regard not this thing. So Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom’s house.”



destroyed in the dreadful destruction which will fall upon the armies of the wicked. This also is in conformity to God's law in the beginning. All creation shared in the fall. The animal creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but on account of Adam's sin. We have an instance of this ban, or curse being carried out, in this extreme degree, in the case of Achan whose oxen, asses and sheep were stoned and burned along with himself and his children—<sup>1</sup>Josh. 7:24, 26.

But the above condition will be reversed shortly. The redemption of our Lord Jesus Christ has also provided for this phase of man's fall. The innocent victims, which became involved in its suffering and death, shall all be delivered because of the death and resurrection of Christ. They shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption and come into "the glorious liberty of the sons of God" (*"the glorious liberty of the children of God."* KJV)—Rom. 8:20-22.

#### Final Results of Israel's Redemption

##### Verses Sixteen to Twenty-One

"And it shall come to pass that every one that is left of all the nations, which came up against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the Lord of hosts and to keep the feast of tabernacles"—V. 16.

**14:16** 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.

These concluding verses of Zechariah's prophecy are most interesting and instructive as to the worship of Jehovah during the millennium, in which worship all the nations of the earth shall have a part. They will all be made to acknowledge Israel's national supremacy, not as individuals (tho' that may be included), but as THE NATION. The times will be Jewish instead of Gentile. Christ Jesus, the greatest Jew of all time shall be the reigning Despot, and perforce His people shall be The People. All other peoples will bow to their King and worship at His feet.

The armies of the nations which they will send up to Jerusalem to destroy these people of destiny shall be defeated as we have seen. The nations will thereby learn some necessary lessons by the judgments poured out upon the world. They will learn righteousness, and the fruit of such knowledge will be a humbled, chastened spirit by which they will yield universal homage to the universal Ruler, the Lord Jesus Christ. Official appointees will represent them at the feasts in Jerusalem every year. Peace and harmony will reign supreme among them when the Prince of peace holds sway over the earth.

<sup>1</sup> Joshua 7:24, 26 "And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of Achor....And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the LORD turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of Achor, unto this day."

The reason that the feast of Tabernacles is singled out for special mention here is on account of its symbolic character of the end time. It represents spiritual realities as do all the “set times” outlined for us in Leviticus twenty-three. This latter chapter has been called, “The Sacred Calendar of Jehovah,” for it foreshadows the great facts of redemption. By a series of striking types, as well as their order, we have revealed to us God’s great redemptive purposes and the manner and time in which they shall be carried out.

This commemorative feast of Tabernacles was the harvest festival of the year. It betokened joy and thanksgiving in celebration of all the fruits of the people’s labor, the full ingathering of the “harvest of the field.” It is sometimes called “the Feast of Ingatherings.” All the days of this hallowed week the people dwelt in booths. We read the instructions of this picnic time in Leviticus.

“And ye shall take you on the first day the fruit of the goodly trees, branches of palm trees and boughs of thick trees and willows of the brook and ye shall rejoice before Jehovah your God seven days; x x ye shall dwell in booths seven days x x that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt. I am Jehovah your God” (*“And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days...Ye shall dwell in booths seven days...That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.” KJV*)—Lev. 23:40-43. It was somewhat similar in character to a camp meeting—a rest from toil, a time of rejoicing before the Lord. It is especially anticipative of the millennium and refers to that halcyon period when every tear shall be wiped away, when there shall be no more toil or labor, no depression, no losing of one’s hard-earned savings, no worry, financial or otherwise, no failure of banks, nor heart failure anywhere in all the wide domain where Christ is received and owned as King. Israel as well as all other nations shall sit down to the feast of fat things, of wines on the lees, of fat things well refined, the banquet of the Lord Jehovah of hosts.

The feast of Tabernacles was the only one of these set times which had an eight day, an extra day put in for good measure. The others were always seven days in length, but in the feast of Ingathering the last day was the important one. We read of this special day in one of the Gospel Records where it is called “the last and great day of the Feast”—John 7:37. It was on this day that the Lord Jesus stood and cried, saying, “If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. This He spake of the Spirit which they that believed were about to receive” (*“If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers*

*of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive:”—John 7:37-39 KJV).*

Tho' not a part of the original Mosaic appointment, the ceremonial service of this feast was most interesting and also typical, as we learn from these words of the Lord. Every day of this picnic time a joyous procession accompanied by the choir chanting psalms and led by a priest bearing a golden pitcher, measuring about a quart, made its way from the Temple to the Pool of Siloam. At the same time another company went to the Kedron valley whence they brought willow branches which they bound on either side of the altar of burnt-offering, bending them over it in a sort of canopy. Then the laying of the sacrifice upon the altar proceeded as on ordinary occasions, and as the pieces of the offering were being carried by the priests to the altar of burning, the priest returned with the golden pitcher and the water. He was announced by a threefold blast from the priest's trumpets and great ecstatic demonstrations of joy. The water was poured into a silver basin upon the altar even as the prescribed libation of wine was poured into another receptacle. The joyous crowd of worshippers would resemble a forest in motion as they all carried palm branches in their hands, many as tall as a man. Great silence fell upon the multitude as the choir of Levites would begin to sing the Hallel, or "Praise" for the festival. These latter were Psalms 113 to 118, to each line of which the people responded with "Hallelujah." Soon the whole of the assembly fell into line and marched in procession seven times around the altar. As the singers reached verse 25 of Psalm 118, "Save now, I beseech Thee, O Lord; O Lord, send now prosperity" (*"Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity."*—Psa. 118:25 KJV), the people waved their palm branches and accompanied the song with loud exclamations of joy. And as they reached the next verse, 26 of the Psalm, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord" (*"Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD"*—Psa. 118:26 KJV), those who really believed, shouted with a great cheer, to the coming Messiah and King, to whom they were aware these words applied.

The joy of this day was so abundant that it became a proverb, "That he that hath not seen the joy of the drawing and pouring of the water hath not seen the joy of life." There was symbolic significance attached to it among the Rabbis in connection with the rain for the year, which they imagined was determined by Jehovah at this feast. It was also a commemorative service, reminding the people of the wonders of the wilderness journey where water poured out from the riven rock for their thirst; but the chief and glorious meaning of all the ceremony of this feast, as already intimated, was to the glad day of Messiah's reign. The proof of this statement is found in the words of Jesus, quoted above, John 7:37. There was a limited, but blessed fulfillment in the pouring out of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost after Jesus was raised, glorified and taken up to heaven. He came down upon the 120, the nucleus of the Church gathered in that

upper room, as a rushing mighty wind and provision was made for all the Body of Christ to drink of the Spirit, yet that was not all that was typically embodied in that wonderful last day of the feast of Tabernacles. No, the feast of Pentecost must be fulfilled before the feast of Tabernacles. The one speaks of the first advent of Christ and the consequent outpouring of the Spirit upon the Church; while the other figures the second advent and the regathering and regeneration of Israel. Then, as Joel predicts, will come the great out-pouring of the Spirit upon Israel and all flesh (<sup>1</sup>Joel 2:28, 29) and the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Another word as to the eight day. It speaks of a new creation, a resurrection out of death and wreckage and ruin. It points on to a glad new Day, the Eternal Day, after the millennium, when the cycle of time, in which the history of the earth, as recorded in the Sacred Writings shall have been completed. God will fold up, as it were, the heavens and the earth and they shall be changed. He will consummate His purposes and the earth will enter into an eternal state of rest and blessedness in harmony with heavenly glory—“when a great voice out of the throne shall go forth, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with man and He shall dwell with them and they shall be His people. And God Himself shall be with them and be their God” (“*And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*”—Rev. 21:3 KJV)—Rev. 21:1-8. But to return to our chapter.

“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”—V. 17.

The withholding of rain was one of the ways by which God was wont to punish the apostasy of His own people, the Jews, and He threatens to inflict it upon the Gentiles during the millennium, in case of disobedience. And there will be no escape and no exception for any one. This judgment will fall upon Egypt, as well as all other nations who fail to appear in Jerusalem at the set time of the feast of Tabernacles. The edict is solemnly repeated, two being the number of witness, expressive of the importance of the command, that the nations shall all be represented to worship the Lord, the King of the Jews, at least once a year.

“In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses HOLINESS

<sup>1</sup> Joel 2:28, 29 “And it shall come to pass afterward, *that* I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.”

**14:17** 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.

**14:18** 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.

**14:19** This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

**14:20** 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.

**14:21** 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 seethe therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.

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 seethe therein; and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts"—V. 20, 21.

In these last two verses we reach the glorious goal and climax of all vision and prophecy relating to Israel. God's original purpose in their calling and election—"Ye shall be unto Me a Kingdom of priests, and an holy nation" (Ex. 19:6)—shall then be realized. His people, after all the past centuries learn the meaning of holiness. They shall be born anew, a holy seed, Jehovah's people, holy as He is holy; for His law shall be put into their inward parts and written on their hearts. It will be in their very nature to obey God, not in a mere outward form, but in reality and truth. The world will then witness for the first time in its history the spectacle of a whole nation, and each individual member of it, consecrated unto the Lord. And their dwelling place will be in character to themselves. Its capital will be called the "Holy City," a counterpart and reflection of the heavenly Jerusalem, the transcendently beautiful City of the Ruler of the Kingdom of heaven upon the earth. And not only shall everything in their outward and inward life proclaim their holy character, but everything they possess and use. Holiness shall be engraven upon the bells of the horses and upon the pots and bowls of the altar. It will permeate every detail of the life of the people. The external character, that which is exhibited in the streets of the city, represented by the tinkling bells upon the horses, shall bear witness to their sanctity; while the pots and bowls also engraven, will witness that the same character shall be evidenced in the privacy of the House of the Lord. "Holiness becometh Thine House forever" (*"holiness becometh thine house, O LORD, for ever"*—*Psalms 93:5 KJV*) is the language these symbols speak. The law of Sinai was given as a means to this end, but alas, it only made matters worse; but thru the grace of God the goal will be finally reached. There will be no distinctions between holy and profane in the perfected Kingdom of God, for no sin nor sinner will be there. Nothing shall enter into it "that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life"—Rev. 21:27. The latter refers to the heavenly Jerusalem; but the character of God will be expressed in like manner in the earthly city, as the final verse of our prophecy reveals.

"And in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts"—V. 21.

The Hebrew word for Canaanite means "trader" or "merchant," which tells the story. No trafficker in the things of God, no making merchandise of the Gospel, or trading in religious things in that Holy City of regenerated Israel. Jerusalem, "haven of Peace, and Righteousness," will really answer to its name.

Nothing that defiles or works abomination or makes a lie shall enter its portals. Only that which is perfect and beautiful in the sense of being sanctified shall have any place in that glorious city of truth and equity. The balances will weigh true then. No falsity in word or deed shall be found in that home of the Jews. It shall be built upon an eminent place, a lifted-up plain, as it were (the Temple in the midst of it set upon a mountain,) where it may be viewed for miles around. It will then truly, and for the first time, be the city set upon a hill which cannot be hid—<sup>1</sup>Matt. 5:14.

The nations of the earth will flock to its shelter and acknowledge its preeminence above all other cities. They will worship the God of the Jews, bow at His shrine and own Him Lord of lords and King of kings. The Temple in its midst will no more be a den of thieves, but a House of Prayer for all people. Time and space fail to tell all that is written of this city of God: but the best of all that is said of her, is that **THE LORD IS THERE.**

FINIS

<sup>1</sup> Matthew 5:14 “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.”