

Text: Zechariah 9-14 (selections)

This last portion of Zechariah is, in some respects, difficult to understand. While the writings of this section are rightly believed to be primarily Messianic in nature, scholars differ on which (if any) of the prophecies refer to events in Zechariah's own time, which refer to the first coming of Christ, and which refer to His second coming. Rather than spend our limited class time today discussing debatable issues, we will focus this morning on the hope believers have in Christ, contrasted to the despair and punishment that will be suffered by His enemies.

Enemies of God Will Be Destroyed

1The burden of the word of the LORD is against the land of Hadrach, with Damascus as its resting place (for the eyes of men, especially of all the tribes of Israel, are toward the LORD),

2And Hamath also, which borders on it;

Tyre and Sidon, though they are very wise.

3For Tyre built herself a fortress

And piled up silver like dust,

And gold like the mire of the streets.

4Behold, the Lord will dispossess her

And cast her wealth into the sea;

And she will be consumed with fire.

5Ashkelon will see it and be afraid.

Gaza too will writhe in great pain;

Also Ekron, for her expectation has been confounded.

Moreover, the king will perish from Gaza,

And Ashkelon will not be inhabited.

6And a mongrel race will dwell in Ashdod,

And I will cut off the pride of the Philistines. (Zechariah 9:1-6)

16"Behold, I am going to raise up a shepherd in the land who will not care for the perishing, seek the scattered, heal the broken, or sustain the one standing, but will devour the flesh of the fat sheep and tear off their hoofs.

17"Woe to the worthless shepherd

Who leaves the flock!

A sword will be on his arm

And on his right eye!

His arm will be totally withered

And his right eye will be blind." (Zechariah 11:16-17)

1"Behold, in that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity. 2"Behold, it will come about in that day," declares the LORD of hosts, "that I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they will no longer be remembered; and I will also remove the prophets and the unclean spirit from the land. 3"Behold, if anyone still prophesies, then his father and mother who gave birth to him will say to him, 'You shall not live, for you have spoken falsely in the name of the LORD'; and his father and mother who gave birth to him will pierce him through when he prophesies. 4"Behold, it will come about in that day that the prophets will each be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies, and they will not put on a hairy robe in order to deceive; 5but he will say, 'I am not a prophet; I am a tiller of the ground, for a man sold me as a slave in my youth.'" (Zechariah 13:1-5)

The truth that God will punish those that align themselves against Him and against His people is demonstrated throughout His Word. The passage in Zechariah refers to those nations surrounding Israel and Judah that opposed His chosen people in Zechariah's day. God promised that these would be destroyed, and so they have been—we no longer see great empires or kingdoms coming from Damascus, Tyre, Sidon, or the cities of the Philistines. Those nations and cities, at least as they existed in Zechariah's day, have long since been destroyed. This has happened in accordance with the promise of God to Abraham centuries earlier, to curse those nations that opposed Abraham's descendants.

**3 I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you." (Genesis 12:3)**

God's wrath is not limited to those Gentile nations that opposed Israel and Judah, however. All that do not serve Him will eventually be destroyed. This includes those Jews which led their people astray. In Chapter 11 the "shepherds" are those religious leaders of the Jews which sought worldly righteousness instead of godliness, and ultimately rejected Christ.

1Then some Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, **2**"Why do Your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread." **3**And He answered and said to them, "Why do you yourselves transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? **4**"For God said, 'HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER,' and, 'HE WHO SPEAKS EVIL OF FATHER OR MOTHER IS TO BE PUT TO DEATH.' **5**"But you say, 'Whoever says to his father or mother, "Whatever I have that would help you has been given to God," **6**he is not to honor his father or his mother.' And by this you invalidated the word of God for the sake of your tradition. **7**"You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you:

8"THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS,
BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME.

9"BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME,

TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.'" (Matthew 15:1-9)

False prophets among the Jews are also singled out for wrath. Remember that false prophets appeared throughout the Old Testament telling the kings and the people whatever they wanted to hear for the sake of earthly reward. We are also told that such will appear among the church during the Christian era, as well.

12But these, like unreasoning animals, born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed, reviling where they have no knowledge, will in the destruction of those creatures also be destroyed, **13**suffering wrong as the wages of doing wrong They count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime They are stains and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, as they carouse with you, **14**having eyes full of adultery that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed, accursed children; **15**forsaking the right way, they have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; **16**but he received a rebuke for his own transgression, for a mute donkey, speaking with a voice of a man, restrained the madness of the prophet. **17**These are springs without water and mists driven by a storm, for whom the black darkness has been reserved. (2 Peter 2:12-17)

Of course, all that oppose God will ultimately be destroyed. This is a teaching we can't afford to ignore. Often our evangelistic methods focus on the joy and peace we have through Christ, or the many blessings we have received at His hand. While we rightly rejoice in these things, there are also joyful and peaceful people among the lost, and many have more temporal blessings (money, position, etc.) than we do. Those that we desire to be won to Christ must be made aware of their sin and the consequences thereof.

8"But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." (Revelation 21:8)

Christ Came the First Time as a "Suffering Servant"

*9*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!
Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold, your king is coming to you;
He is just and endowed with salvation,
Humble, and mounted on a donkey,
Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey. (Zechariah 9:9)

7"Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd,
And against the man, My Associate,"
Declares the LORD of hosts
"Strike the Shepherd that the sheep may be scattered;
And I will turn My hand against the little ones. (Zechariah 13:7)

In these two verses we have a brief picture of Christ's character during His first coming. He came first of all, not in earthly power and glory, but in humility—a donkey is not exactly a majestic and kingly animal. He came in this way both in fulfillment of Scripture, and also as an example to us.

25But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. **26**"It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, **27**and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; **28**just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:25-28)

He also came, as noted in that passage, to give Himself as a Sacrifice for us. This was foretold by the Old Testament prophets and also by Jesus Himself.

14" As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; 15so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life. 16" For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. (John 3:14-16)

Christ Will Come Again as Conquering King

1Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you. 2For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. 3Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. 4In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south. 5You will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him! 6In that day there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. 7For it will be a unique day which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light. 8And in that day living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter. 9And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be the only one, and His name the only one. 10All the land will be changed into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; but Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site from Benjamin's Gate as far as the place of the First Gate to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's wine presses. 11People will live in it, and there will no longer be a curse, for Jerusalem will dwell in security. (Zechariah 14:1-11)

As believers, we look forward to Christ's next coming. While His first coming was in humility and ultimately as a sacrifice for us, His second coming will be in power and glory. He will set up a righteous government with Himself as ruler, and all the problems that sin has caused in the present age will be unknown, because sin—and unrepentant sinners—will have been expelled from the world. Believers rejoice in this and should eagerly anticipate this new age.

1Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. 2And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. 3And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, 4and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." 5And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true." 6Then He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. 7" He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son. (Revelation 21:1-7)

A Remnant of the Jews Will Acknowledge Christ as Lord and Be Saved

9" And in that day I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. 10" I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn. 11" In that day there will be great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the plain of Megiddo. 12" The land will mourn, every family by itself; the family of the house of David by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself and their wives by themselves; 13the family of the house of Levi by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the Shimeites by itself and their wives by themselves; 14all the families that remain, every family by itself and their wives by themselves. (Zechariah 12:9-14)

8" It will come about in all the land,"

Declares the LORD,

"That two parts in it will be cut off and perish;

But the third will be left in it.

9" And I will bring the third part through the fire,

Refine them as silver is refined,

And test them as gold is tested

They will call on My name,

And I will answer them;

*I will say, 'They are My people,'
And they will say, 'The LORD is my God.'" (Zechariah 13:8-9)*

Sadly, the vast majority of Jewish people have rejected Christ as Messiah. Contrary to the teachings of those that promote a “dual-covenant” theology, teaching that Jews are saved through their observance of Law and tradition independent of Christ, the Bible teaches that eternal life—salvation from eternal punishment in the lake of fire—comes only through faith in Christ.

6Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me. (John 14:6)

Both the Old Testament and the New Testament teach that, at some point, a remnant of the Jewish people will acknowledge Christ as Messiah and be saved.

25For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery--so that you will not be wise in your own estimation--that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; 26and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written,

**"THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION,
HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB."**

**27"THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM,
WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS." (Romans 11:25-27)**

This will, unfortunately, not include all the Jews—Zechariah 13 mentions a third, though this may or may not be intended as a literal figure—but we should nevertheless rejoice when anyone, Jew or Gentile, enters God’s Kingdom.

Salvation for All That Will Believe

*6And a mongrel race will dwell in Ashdod,
And I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.
7And I will remove their blood from their mouth
And their detestable things from between their teeth.
Then they also will be a remnant for our God,
And be like a clan in Judah,
And Ekron like a Jebusite. (Zechariah 9:6-7)*

16Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths. (Zechariah 14:16)

These two brief passages hint at one last great truth, which at the time was not readily apparent to the Jewish people. All that place their faith in Jesus Christ, Jew or Gentile, will be saved.

16For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. (Romans 1:16)

8But what does it say? "THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART"--that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, 9that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; 10for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. 11For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." 12For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; 13for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED." (Romans 10:8-13)

Ladies and Gentlemen, this is the “Good News,” and we are to share it with everyone that will listen. Not everyone will listen, and not everyone will believe, but some will, and we rejoice in that. Preach the Word, and trust *God* with the outcome.

6I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. (1 Corinthians 3:6)