

4. The Messianic prophecies in Zechariah - Part 2

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Not very long after Israel declared as a nation May 19th, 1948, their surrounding Arab nations wanted to get rid of her from their territories.

The Six-Day War of June 5-10, 1967 was a war between Israel and the neighboring states of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. The Arab states of Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria also contributed troops and arms. At the war's end, Israel had gained control of the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights. The results of the war affect the geopolitics of the region to this day. This was the first time Israel had complete control over Jerusalem.

This Six-Day War went down in war history as one of its finest. While Israel suffered less 1000 soldiers killed-in-action, Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Iraq lost 22,000.

The Yom Kippur War was fought from October 6 to October 26, 1973, between Israel and a coalition of Arab states backing Egypt and Syria. The war began with a joint surprise attack on Yom Kippur, the holiest day in Judaism.

The war began with a massive and successful Egyptian attack across the heavily-fortified Suez Canal during the first three days. In the north, the Syrians simultaneously attacked the critical Golan Heights. But within a week, Israel repelled the Syrian attack and launched a four-day counter-offensive, driving deeper into Syria and Egypt. By the end of the fighting, Israeli forces were only 25 miles from Damascus and 63 miles from Cairo. Another victory for Israel and another faithfulness of the Lord.

God doesn't protect Israel because they are special people above everyone else, but because of His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and king David and most importantly His plan through Jesus Christ.

Tonight we are going to finish this great prophecy Book Zechariah. Until now, we've learned about the prophecies regarding Jesus and the events before His arrival on earth. But from chapter 12 to 14, we get to hear about what is happening and what will happen all the way to the Millennium period.

A. THE COMING DELIVERANCE OF ISRAEL

Zechariah 12:1-6 The burden of the word of the Lord against Israel. Thus says the Lord, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him: 2 "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. 3 And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it. 4 In that day," says the Lord, "I will strike every horse with confusion, and its rider with madness; I will open My eyes on the house of Judah, and will strike every horse of the peoples with blindness. 5 And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, 'The inhabitants of Jerusalem are my strength in the Lord of hosts, their God.' 6 In that day I will make the governors of Judah like a firepan in the woodpile, and like a fiery torch in the sheaves; they shall devour all the

surrounding peoples on the right hand and on the left, but Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place--Jerusalem.

The Arab nations surrounding Jerusalem have a passion for possessing the city that is not justified by world history. Muslims claim Jerusalem as their third-holiest city after Mecca and Medina, but Jerusalem is not even mentioned once in the Koran.

Jerusalem's importance to Muslims comes from the belief that in the Dome of the Rock shrine there is a rock where two significant things happened – where Abraham intended to offer Isaac as a sacrifice, and where Mohammed allegedly ascended into heaven.

Though this tradition is firmly in the Muslim mind, it is of recent origin. It was invented by Yasser Arafat's uncle – Haj Amin el-Husseini, who was the past Grand Mufti of Jerusalem. He promoted this myth in the 1920's and 1930's to arouse Arab passions against the growing Jewish presence in Jerusalem by misquoting Surah 17:1 of Koran:

"Glorified be He who carried His servant by night from the Inviolable Place of Worship to the Far Distant Place of Worship the neighborhood whereof We have blessed, that We might show him of Our tokens!"

The Islamic interpretation says that the Inviolable Place of Worship is Mecca, and this is accepted by all. It then says that the Far Distant Place of Worship is Jerusalem, but this has no substantiation because Jerusalem had never been a place of Islamic worship to that time, nor would it be for centuries afterward.

Inside the Dome of the Rock hundreds of verses from the Koran are inscribed but Surah 17:1 is not one of them. The very passage that later supposedly justified the building of the Dome of the Rock is not even included among the hundreds of passages of the Koran inscribed in it.

The Dome of the Rock was built not because of the Koran, but because the Muslim ruler Abdal-Malik wanted to gain revenue from pilgrims and worshippers, and because he wanted to prevent the rebuilding of a Jewish Temple. Islamic passion for Jerusalem is indeed like drunkenness. The problem between Jews and the Arab world has boiled down to one point: Jerusalem.

Do you ever have a week go by without hearing some sort of conflict between Israel and the Arabs? No, it is a fulfillment of the prophecy of the heavy stone for all people that mentioned in v3.

B. WHOM THEY PIERCED

Zechariah 12:10-11 "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. 11 In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning at Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.

Repentance isn't something we work up ourselves. It's a wonderful opportunity from God as we hear His Word and recognize His grace and our sins. Forgiveness comes to any believing sinner only through faith in the sacrifice of Christ on the cross.

2 Timothy 2:25 in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth,

God will pour out the Holy Spirit upon Israel, and the Jews will realize their sins and call out to God for forgiveness. They will also see their Messiah Jesus whom the nation pierced corporately and will put their faith in Him. The nation will go into mourning of repentance.

Unless mourning of repentance falls upon America, she will continuously show her attitude of pride against God. And we all know what God thinks about pride. He will bring America down to her knees one way or another as He has done to many other empires and nations previously.

This will fulfill the amazing promise of Romans 11:26 and many other passages that tell us that before the second Coming of Jesus to this earth, the Jewish people – as a whole – will welcome Him as their Lord and Savior. The whole context of Zechariah 12 puts this radical conversion in the setting of miraculous deliverance from an attack from the nations.

Romans 11:26 And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;

C. NO MORE IDOLATRY

Zechariah 13:1-6 "In that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness. 2 "It shall be in that day," says the Lord of hosts, "that I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they shall no longer be remembered. I will also cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to depart from the land. 3 It shall come to pass that if anyone still prophesies, then his father and mother who begot him will say to him, 'You shall not live, because you have spoken lies in the name of the Lord.' And his father and mother who begot him shall thrust him through when he prophesies. 4 "And it shall be in that day that every prophet will be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies; they will not wear a robe of coarse hair to deceive. 5 But he will say, 'I am no prophet, I am a farmer; for a man taught me to keep cattle from my youth.' 6 And one will say to him, 'What are these wounds between your arms?' Then he will answer, 'Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.'

Idolatry and false prophecy were the two principle ways Israel was led astray from God. God not only provides a fountain to cleanse, but He also promises to cut off the source of uncleanness – in this case, idolatry and false prophecy.

If you get to go to Israel, you will see some gaudy and ornate shrines that supposedly mark holy sites in Israel today, you see that idolatry is still alive and well in the Holy Land. God promises to cleanse the land from such idolatry completely.

Every false prophet will be ashamed and insist that he is not a prophet. When people ask about the cut wounds on his body and forearms which were typical emblems of idol worship. Then he comes up with a lame excuse.

Some take this as another Messianic prophecy in Zechariah, because Jesus was clearly wounded by those who should have been His friends. Nevertheless the context and the original Hebrew argue against this referring to Jesus and His wounds. The Hebrew word "arms" is more literally between your hands, that is on the body, whether the chest or the back.

D. STRIKING THE SHEPHERD

Zechariah 13:7c "Strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered; Then I will turn My hand against the little ones.

In the context, and especially in light of the quotation of this passage in Matthew 26:31, we understand that the Shepherd is Jesus the Messiah – and it is God the Father Himself who calls for the Shepherd to be struck.

Isaiah echoed on this:

Isaiah 53:10a Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief.

The prophets Isaiah and Zechariah gloriously and emphatically, state that the suffering of the Servant of the Jesus was ordained by the Father. This was God's doing! He gave the command to strike the Shepherd.

Jesus was no victim of circumstance or at the mercy of political or military power. It was the planned, ordained work of the Lord God, prophesied by Isaiah hundreds of years before it happened. This was God's victory, not satan's or evil men's triumph.

E. THE NATION WILL BE REFINED

Zechariah 13:8-9 And it shall come to pass in all the land," Says the Lord, "That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, But one-third shall be left in it: 9 I will bring the one-third through the fire, Will 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, 'This is My people'; And each one will say, 'The Lord is my God.'"

Only one-third of the Jewish people will survive the Great Tribulation. No wonder these years are called the time of Jacob's trouble.

Jeremiah 30:7 Alas! For that day is great, So that none is like it; And it is the time of Jacob's trouble, But he shall be saved out of it.

F. JERUSALEM UNDER SIEGE

Zechariah 14:1-5 Behold, the day of the Lord is coming, And your spoil will be divided in your midst. 2 For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, The houses rifled, And the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. 3 Then the Lord will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle. 4 And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, From east to west, Making a very large valley; Half of the mountain shall move toward the north And half of it toward the south. 5 Then you shall flee through My mountain valley, For the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee As you fled from the earthquake In the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Thus the Lord my God will come, And all the saints with You.

Obviously this attack against Jerusalem was not the Roman's siege in 70 A.D., because there was no deliverance from the Lord for the Jews. Though the attack against the city will be severe, they will not be overthrown. Just when it seems that all hope is gone for Jerusalem and the people of Israel, then the Lord will fight for them.

In v5, we find ourselves coming to the earth with our Savior in the front of the marching column from heaven. This is the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. The Jews during the time of Jesus on earth were expecting this, so when they met Jesus, naturally they rejected Him.

G. THE LIVING WATERS

Zechariah 14:7-11 It shall be one day Which is known to the Lord-- Neither day nor night. But at evening time it shall happen That it will be light. 8 And in that day it shall be That living waters shall flow from Jerusalem, Half of them toward the eastern sea And half of them toward the western sea; In both summer and winter it shall occur. 9 And the Lord shall be King over all the earth. In that day it shall be-- "The Lord is one," And His name one. 10 All the land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be raised up and inhabited in her place from Benjamin's Gate to the place of the First Gate and the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananeel to the king's winepresses. 11 The people shall dwell in it; And no longer shall there be utter destruction, But Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.

Now Zechariah looks forward to the glory of Jerusalem in the Messiah's kingdom. The lights we have to depend on for our lives will diminish, because God will bring His own light. In v4, as the Lord Jesus set His feet on the Mount of Olives, the ground splits in two east to west and the living waters will start to flow – one to the Dead Sea and the other to the Mediterranean Sea.

For the first, Jerusalem will be a safe place to live permanently.

For the rest of the verses, Zechariah prophesied that the nations will come to Jerusalem not for a war, rather to worship God. Those who do not, God will deal with them promptly.

H. APPLICATION

Pray for the peace in Jerusalem.