

XIV. Zechariah in Biblical Perspective  
*The Gospel According to Zechariah*  
“The Judgment of God and the Salvation of God”

Zechariah 9

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Let's look at Zechariah 9. I want to give you this next Oracle. We have already looked at the night visions, and now we have the Oracles of God. We find that introduced with either the word Oracle or the word burden. Zechariah 9:1-8 says [1] *The oracle of the word of the LORD is against the land of Hadrach and Damascus is its resting place. For the LORD has an eye on mankind and on all the tribes of Israel, [2] and on Hamath also, which borders on it, Tyre and Sidon, though they are very wise. [3] Tyre has built herself a rampart and heaped up silver like dust, and fine gold like the mud of the streets. [4] But behold, the Lord will strip her of her possessions and strike down her power on the sea, and she shall be devoured by fire.*

*[5] Ashkelon shall see it, and be afraid; Gaza too, and shall writhe in anguish; Ekron also, because its hopes are confounded. The king shall perish from Gaza; Ashkelon shall be uninhabited; [6] a mixed people shall dwell in Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of Philistia. [7] I will take away its blood from its mouth, and its abominations from between its teeth; it too shall be a remnant for our God; it shall be like a clan in Judah, and Ekron shall be like the Jebusites. [8] Then I will encamp at my house as a guard, so that none shall march to and fro; no oppressor shall again march over them, for now I see with my own eyes.*

One of the things that I am constantly aware of in the preaching of God's Word when you are committed to expository preaching, is how God allows us to work together, the church calendar and the exposition of Scriptures. Secondly, how God Himself works it together and thirdly, at times when we seemingly say, ‘okay, God, we were close, but it didn't work out, was there a reason why?’ What am I talking about? As soon as I said Zechariah 9 some of you here, I know you were thinking ahead of me and saying, ‘Aha Zechariah 9, there is a prophetic word in Zechariah 9 that we just heard read a few weeks ago.’ Now, does anyone know what that word is? The fulfillment of the prophecy in Zechariah 9 is the triumphal entry of Christ. I stopped reading right in front of that prophecy just now.

I gave you the opening statement that God is giving through Zechariah to His people and in this statement, here's where pastors are supposed to do their work. In that statement, there is an immediate promise that God is giving to His people. Israel has just returned and is returning from Babylonian captivity. As they are being brought back under leadership such as Ezra, Joshua the high priest, Zechariah a prophet, Haggai a prophet and they will be followed by Nehemiah and his governorship, Zerubbabel and his governorship, one who is of the seed of David, who has now been appointed as a leader for the return of the people. We find out that as the people are coming back, number one, hoards are not returning for somewhere around 20000 to 50000 of the potentially 1 to 2 million that were taken into captivity are now returning. While they had a good start, things have now fallen into a time in which Jerusalem is encircled, its gates are down, its walls are down and it's like a stone heap. The Bible says the city is almost like a trash heap, where the stones have been cast down by the Assyrians, followed by the Babylonians, followed by the Medo-Persians and so Jerusalem has been laid waste.

Now there are all of these tribal entities in the surrounding nations that I just read, like Gaza, Ashkelon, King of Tyre, King of Sidon. They are gathered around at their whim. They'll

come over and take things from Jerusalem. They'll come ride through as they steal, plunder, terrorize, and do all of those things. So God is giving a word through Zechariah and the immediacy of this word is God saying 'I am going to intervene to protect you.' We have already gone over that in more detail before so I won't go into it now but God is going to intervene on all of these political, tribal movements and entities that are using Israel or Jerusalem any time they want to, any way that they want to. God is saying "I am going to clear the stone heap out. I'm going to raise back the gate, I'm going to raise the walls. We are going to finish the temple where sacrifices will be offered again and My temple will once again stand in My people." This is the second time that He has promised them that He is going to intervene, to hold at bay, those who would oppress, terrorize and plundered them.

There's something else underneath this. As you begin to read through these various text that include Gaza, Ashkelon, the cities Tyre and Sidon, you begin to hear of this one region that has as its metropolitan center, Damascus, Ashdod, which is not mentioned much in the Bible and the regions that are known as Syria, that are around it, something begins to come up in your mind. Zechariah is clearly giving an oracle from God that is causing the people to go back in time for instruction and encouragement. There's a thread that's running through these regions, these cities that He promises to intervene and hold at bay. The theme that keeps coming is at one time, Israel controlled them and ruled over them. Those very names are places of extraordinary interventions of God and victories and they all took place time and again in the days of King David.

God is sending their mind to the fact that He is going to deliver them and His deliverance has been pictured before in the days of David and then Solomon, where the promises of the land to Israel were fulfilled and the dominion of Israel was from river to river and sea to sea for in those days of triumph, God wants them to remember what He has done before. There are many other places He could have mentioned, but these are very select places that have direct relationship to David and in some cases Solomon also, to the expansion and the extension of the Kingdom in the days of the United Monarchy under King David. David is the one who comes from Jesse and Obed. It is of that line that the great Messiah King will deliver His people from all of their enemies.

What's unmistakable here in these opening words of encouragement is a thread. He's reminding them of His blessings in the days of David, who is the line of the Messiah. So He is going back in the present to give them encouragement of His intervention now, that's going to take place in these decades in the restoration, but His mind is sending them back to David and the victories that took place. These names are well known – Gaza, Ashkelon Tyre and Sidon – who sent the oaks of Lebanon and the money to help David, and who sent the oaks of Lebanon to Solomon out of allegiance and affection to David to build the temple of the Lord? It was the kings of Tyre and Sidon as they sent the logs down the Mediterranean into Joppa, and were carried up to Mount Zion. Who is it that intervened and secured victories for David in Gaza, as he did battle with the Philistines in Ashkelon? It was God's hand of deliverance and power upon David and then brought to fruition in David's son, Solomon. Who is it that is going to be the King, that is going to deliver God's covenant people who are going to be drawn from every nation? It is the son of David who is greater than David. It is the Messiah King.

If we were about to miss what I just shared in these verses and this connection that has the echo of the past victories, anticipating the future victories while promising present intervention, He gives a very clear statement in Zechariah 9:8 which says [8] *Then I will encamp at my house as a guard, so that none shall march to and fro; no oppressor shall again march*

*over them, for now I see with my own eyes.* Encamp here as I go back to the language when I was a kid, means ‘I’ll camp out.’ God is saying He knows what is going on and the reason He can promise this present intervention, calling upon the past memories of victory, anticipating the future ultimate victory in the coming of a King from the line of David who is the Messiah is because God will be present with them in Jerusalem. When was the last time that God camped out in Jerusalem? It was in the days of David when the Jebusites were conquered, as He reminded them in this text. David had erected the tabernacle with the tent of meeting. David was not allowed to build the temple, the house of the Lord, but he gave his heart to Jerusalem, and in this tent of meeting God was in the midst of His people. Now we’re ready for the Messianic prophecy as God comes again as King to Jerusalem.

There will be a coronation this May 6, 2023 to coronate a king in England at the Westminster Abbey in which we were recently there with a group of people and this was a wonderful opportunity for me to share with one of my new met friends in Scotland when he said to me, “Hey, will you all be here when we when we coronate the king?” I said, ‘No, but by the way, I don’t think you’re going to coronate the king. I think you’re going to coronate a king.’ Now, that got his attention. He said, “What do you mean? He is the king.” I said, ‘No, he’s a king. I respect your monarchical government. And we we’ve drawn a lot from it. I want to thank you for all the benefits that you’ve sent to us throughout the years and you’re welcome with the benefits we’ve returned to you, but there is one the King, and that’s the One who rode into Jerusalem headed to Calvary on what we call a Palm Sunday.’ In Matthew and John, the Gospel writers immediately go to this text. Let’s now pick up in Zechariah 9 where we left off for the King of Glory is coming in.

*Zechariah 9:9-10 says [9] Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. [10] I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall speak peace to the nations; his rule shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.*

Now One greater than David is coming and there are certain evidences, markers on Him. He gives them six markers. Number one, this King, unlike all of your other kings, is righteous. Secondly, this King is coming to you having salvation. Another translation would say He is coming to you savingly victorious. He is coming as a victorious Savior. Thirdly, because He is righteous and victorious, you will see the One who is humble. It will be evident because He doesn’t show up in a war chariot or on a war steed. He comes on the fowl of a donkey, a colt, lowly and with humility. Fourthly, this King will bring peace. Who is this King?

Let’s look at Matthew 21 that tells us about the triumphal entry of Christ. Matthew 21:1-5 says [1] *Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, [2] saying to them, “Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. [3] If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord needs them,’ and he will send them at once.” [4] This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying, [5] “Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden (Zechariah 9:9).’”* He is coming on the donkey, which proclaim His mission of peace, and the donkey is a beast of burden because He is coming to bear our burdens at the cross. So here is that picture given to us in that moment.

Now, let's look at John 12 who recounts this same moment. John says they didn't understand everything at first, but later they did. Inspired by the Spirit of God, this is what he says in John 12:12-16, [12] *The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. [13] So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!" [14] And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written, [15] "Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt (Zechariah quote)!" [16] His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him.*

Therefore, this was fulfilled and had been done to Him. This is the Christ who fulfills initially this prophecy. What will Jesus say just days after that entry? [27] *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid* (John 14:27). Christ came to overcome the world. In the world we have tribulation but in Christ we have peace. This is the Gospel of peace that the King will accomplish. So, Zechariah, while he is giving encouragement from the present by looking back to the past, he's pointing them to something yet coming in the future, the Son of David, Jesus, the Christ, the Messiah.

The fifth marker is this King will be afflicted for He comes suffering as He bears our burdens upon Himself. Let's look at II Samuel, our biography of the Life of David. David is under oppression. David is being surrounded and this moment in II Samuel 16 happens. II Samuel 16:1-2 says [1] *When David had passed a little beyond the summit, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him, with a couple of donkeys saddled, bearing two hundred loaves of bread, a hundred bunches of raisins, a hundred of summer fruits, and a skin of wine. [2] And the king said to Ziba, "Why have you brought these?" Ziba answered, "The donkeys are for the king's household to ride on, the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat, and the wine for those who faint in the wilderness to drink."* Here is the provision at the turning point of David's life in which the one who is going to win the victory as King wins the victory, not upon the war steed, but upon the donkey. Awareness would have been in the mind of the audience of Zechariah. So again, we're pointed to David in order to point forward to the Messiah, who is David's son.

Now back to Zechariah 9:11-13 which says [11] *As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you (established by this King), I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit (those imprisoned). [12] Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope; today I declare that I will restore to you double. [13] For I have bent Judah as my bow; I have made Ephraim its arrow. I will stir up your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece, and wield you like a warrior's sword.*

The sixth marker is this King has established a covenant through His blood. And again, there are hordes yet coming, not just the Medo-Persians but the Greeks, Alexander the Great. God will sustain them in those days and He will ultimately use Judah and Ephraim. The Southern and the Northern Kingdom will no longer, in My covenant, be at war with each other. Now they shall be as one through the blood of the covenant that sets them free. He is looking at a new Israel, not circumcised in the flesh, but circumcised in the heart. Where will that new Israel come from by the blood of the covenant?

Let's look back at Zechariah 9:10 which says [10] *I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall speak peace to the nations; his rule shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.* This

Christ shall speak peace to the nations, not just to one nation. This covenant nation that I will bring from this King will come from all the nations, and I will secure them in Him. Now, let's look at the concluding verses of this oracle God gives to Zechariah.

*Zechariah 9:14-17 says [14] Then the LORD will appear over them, and his arrow will go forth like lightning; the Lord GOD will sound the trumpet and will march forth in the whirlwinds of the south. [15] The LORD of hosts will protect them, and they shall devour, and tread down the sling stones (a weapon), and they shall drink and roar as if drunk with wine, and be full like a bowl, drenched like the corners of the altar.*

*[16] On that day the LORD their God will save them, as the flock of his people; for like the jewels of a crown they shall shine on his land. [17] For how great is his goodness, and how great his beauty! Grain shall make the young men flourish, and new wine the young women.*

There is coming a day of celebration, of a feast of victory and it will be for all of His people. For now, this King will come not in humility and loneliness to secure the victory of peace, but will come in judgment upon all of those that aren't His, and they shall be taken away in judgment. His people will be left with Him. Jesus came to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, and then He went back to Bethany. He didn't camp out, but there's coming a New Jerusalem, where He will reside with His people whom He has saved from every nation and will camp out with us. He will be with his people and His people with Him and death will be no more.

This man asked me one time, 'Can you get a broken bone in the new heavens and the new earth?' That's a great question. What would you answer? I'll tell you what I answered and then you can agree or disagree with me. You won't break your bones in the new heavens and the new earth. As one guy said, 'you won't roll your ankles any more than your heart can be broken in the new heaven and the new earth for there the perfections of Christ will reign for ever and ever.'

I want to take you on a thread from this text, not only to John and Matthew, but now to the next step of fulfillment of this text, and then one more step. Let's look now at Ephesians 4. Jesus rides in, then goes to the grave after making atonement, then is raised and then has a 40-day itinerant ministry before He ascends to heaven. Then when He ascends into heaven, look at what the Bible tells us about this Jesus in Ephesians 4:1-8 which says *[1] I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, [2] with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, [3] eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. [4] There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— [5] one Lord, one faith, one baptism, [6] one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. [7] But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. [8] Therefore it says, "When He ascended on high He led a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men."*

I'd like to take you back to the ancient history when the king who had been sent into the battle, comes back victorious, he ascends back to his throne, and when he ascends back to his throne, he leads captive the host of captives that he has secured in his victory and the plunder of his victory is now distributed to his people. It is cast out of his war chariot into the lives of the people. So what do we have here? When Jesus ascends back into heaven, His people go to prayer in the upper room and then Christ from the heavens pours forth His Spirit and gives His Spirit to His church. Then through His Spirit, gives His people the gifts to serve Him, love Him and to fulfill the mission, the message and the ministry for Him. But yet this King who has ascended to the cheers and jubilation of the angels who longed to understand what we know from that throne,

gives us gifts and it's all anticipating the final coming of the Lord – when the King returns and brings the new Jerusalem with Him for the new heavens and the new Earth.

Now let's look at Revelation 19. The feasting that Zechariah speaks of is described in the marriage supper of the Lamb and here's what we see as a summation. Here we will see the white steed, the war horse, coming not in humility for salvation but coming in triumph, judgment and consummation. Revelation 19:11-16 says *[11] Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. [12] His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. [13] He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. [14] And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. [15] From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. [16] On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.*

Think of this; every time one of our loved ones goes and leaves the church militant, they go to the church triumphant, and when He comes, they'll be coming with Him, clothed in white linen. Clothed in white linen is their intermediate state. Here He is not saving those from the nations, but bringing judgment upon the nations. Here is the Lord of the Lords and here is the One that brings the victory and will reside in the New Jerusalem forever and ever. He is the One who says, 'Behold, I make all things new' from David to the moments of intervention and the restoration to our Savior who goes to the cross having come to Jerusalem because the time was now, who ascends back into heaven and gives gifts to us is coming. On that Day there will be no more salvation. It will be the consummation of His people and the condemnation of eternal judgment upon those who are not His people.

Until that Day, there's one final thing I want you to think about. Perhaps you've seen the flow in the Messiah and in His people. He comes in humility and He finishes exalted. There's a marvelous text of scripture in Philippians 2 that captures this for us. Philippians 2:5-11 says *[5] Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, [6] who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, [7] but emptied Himself (not of deity but of privileges), by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. [8] And being found in human form, He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. [9] Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, [10] so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, [11] and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

Stay in the battle. Ours is the day where, like our Savior in confident humility, we follow Him – have this mind in yourself. The Apostle Peter says in I Peter 5:6, *[6] Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may exalt you.* These are not the days of exaltation. These are the days of humiliation whereas servants of Christ, we are counted as sheep to be slaughtered, asking God to keep us faithful to the mission and the message. We are not here to be exalted. We are here to exalt Him, who has no rivals and must never be us. We lift Him up no matter what it costs us to lift Him up, knowing that if He is lifted up, He will draw our men to Himself (John 12:32).

Then there is coming a Day in which you will be exalted – not only a new heart, not only a new record, not only a new life, not only a new family, not only a new home, but a new body in the new heavens and the new Earth forever and ever, amen. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the moments that we could be together in Your Word. Bless the fellowship of Your people, the contemplation and the meditations of Your people. Thank You for Your Word. Thank You, Father, for its glorious intricacies, profundity, and yet simplicity. Father, encourage Your people to keep their eyes on Jesus and eagerly await the coming of our Savior, but our waiting is not passive, no, our waiting is ready. Our lamps are lit and we're bringing others to Him, knowing when all of His have been gathered from all the nations then comes Jesus. Come quickly, Lord, in Jesus' Name, Amen.