

EXILIC & POST-EXILIC PROPHETS OF THE BIBLE

Senior Adults & Friends Bible Study — Summit View Church of Christ
Fall 2023

PART 7, SECTION 5 — JERUSALEM'S DESTINY

ZECHARIAH 12-14

Date: late 500s/early 400s BC — The date of these messages is unknown, except that they were probably from later in Zechariah's life than chapters 1-8, which date to 520-518 BC. Sometime in the late 500s or early 400s BC is a fair guess.

MESSIANIC PROPHECIES IN ZECHARIAH 12-13

Zechariah 12:1 to 13:6

12:1-9 — *This prophecy foretells that God will defend Jerusalem against all its attackers. It could be taken in one of three ways:*

(a) as a promise of God's protection against powerful foes during the intertestamental period (roughly 430-4 BC), when Judah and Jerusalem were attacked by first the Greeks, then the Romans, and yet remained a people in their homeland (though they were conquered and controlled by these foreign powers, making this interpretation difficult);

(b) as a metaphor for God's protection of his faithful people in the church (taking "Jerusalem" and "Judah" to mean God's faithful people as, for example, when the New Testament writers describe the church as Jerusalem in Hebrews 12:22-23 and Revelation 21:2);

(c) or as a prediction of a great war (much or all of the whole world versus Israel) yet to come near the time of the end.

12:10 — The people will look on the one they have _____, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only _____.

for group discussion...

Notice how these passages refer back to Zechariah 12:10 and apply it to Jesus:

- *John 19:31-37*
- *Revelation 1:7*

cultural background...

We don't know for sure what "the weeping of Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo" (12:11) refers to.

Megiddo was a city and valley in northern Israel. Interpreters take "Hadad Rimmon" to refer to either (a) a specific place in that area, in which case the mourning there may be in memory of Josiah, Judah's last good king, who was killed at Megiddo in 609 BC (2 Kings 23:29); or (b) the name of a god (Hadad) whose followers may have practiced ritual weeping at Megiddo. Neither interpretation is certain.

13:1 — What hints of Jesus' sacrifice do you notice in this verse?

Zechariah 13:7-9

These verses prophesy violence against God's "shepherd," the scattering of his "sheep," and destruction of many in the land—but also purification of those who remain in the land, who will come into a close relationship with God.

13:7 — "Strike the _____ and the _____ will be scattered."

- *Read Mark 14:27-31 and 14:43-52. According to Jesus, what event did Zechariah 13:7 foretell?*

ZECHARIAH'S PROPHECY OF JERUSALEM'S DELIVERANCE

Zechariah 14:1-2 — Step One: War Against Jerusalem

14:2 — Who will fight against Jerusalem?

14:1-2 — Will Jerusalem be winning or losing this conflict?

interpreting Zechariah 14 — the big question...

As we try to interpret Zechariah 14, the big question is, "Does this prophecy refer to a literal, climactic battle in which the whole earth fights against Jerusalem, or does it refer to a spiritual battle in which Jerusalem stands for God's people today as the world presses against them?" Because of texts like this one, some Christians anticipate a literal end-times war against literal, physical Jerusalem. They expect that God will intervene in this conflict, bring the end when Jesus comes again, and save Jerusalem. However, other Christians favor the symbolic interpretation of this text and do not expect a literal world-versus-Jerusalem war; instead, they see this great conflict as taking place through the world's opposition to Christianity. They expect that Jesus' coming will put a final end to that conflict, so that the Lord's true "Jerusalem"—his faithful people worldwide—are saved and exalted. (On the church as God's "Jerusalem," see Hebrews 12:22 and Revelation 3:12, 21:2-3, and 21:9-10.)

Zechariah 14:3-15 — Step Two: The Lord Fights for Jerusalem

14:3 — The _____ will go out and fight against those nations.

The Lord is cosmically mighty when he engages in battle. The following images communicate the impact that the Lord's entry into this battle has on creation:

14:4 — The Lord's feet will stand on the _____ east of Jerusalem.

14:4 — What will happen to this mountain?

14:6-7 — What will happen to day and night?

- *Some commentators have noticed that this description sounds like the situation before Genesis 1:3-5, as if God is preparing to create everything anew. Others point out the similarity to Revelation 21:23-24 & 22:5, in which God's light outshines all others and eradicates all darkness.*

14:8 — Living _____ will flow out from Jerusalem, half eastward to the _____ Sea and half westward toward the _____ Sea. It will be a reliable river, flowing year-round.

14:10 — The region surrounding Jerusalem, from _____ (a little north of Jerusalem) to _____ (maybe 35 miles southwest of Jerusalem) will become a desert plateau. But _____ will be raised up, perhaps like a holy mountain towering over its surroundings.

The following images communicate the impact that the Lord's entry into this battle has on people:

14:4-5 — The people under assault in Jerusalem will escape through the _____ created by the Lord.

14:11 — Jerusalem will be _____ and _____.

14:12-14 — What will happen to the nations that fought against Jerusalem?

14:15 — What will happen to their war animals?

Zechariah 14:16-21 — Step Three: The Lord's Victory for Jerusalem

14:19 — How will the survivors of the nations honor the Lord? What will happen if they don't?

14:20-21 — Jerusalem will be made so holy that even the bells on the _____ will bear an inscription saying, " _____," and the standard _____ in the temple will be as sacred as the bowls used at the altar. And there will no longer be a _____ in the house of the Lord.

Matching

Zechariah 14 adapts several images from the prophecies of earlier prophets, and later (New Testament) prophecies sometimes adapt images from Zechariah 14—all pointing in the same general direction, toward the great things the Lord will do when he fully saves and redeems his people. *Match these images from Zechariah 14 with prophecies from earlier and later prophets.*

(OT = Old Testament, NT = New Testament)

Zechariah

14:1, the day of the Lord is coming (OT)

14:1, the day of the Lord is coming (NT)

14:5, the Lord will come with his holy ones

14:6-7, neither sunlight nor dark, but always light (OT)

14:6-7, neither sunlight nor dark, but always light (NT)

14:8, living water flowing out from Jerusalem (OT)

14:8, living water flowing out from Jerusalem (NT)

14:12-13, enemies destroyed by God

14:16, the nations going up to worship God (OT)

14:16, the nations going up to worship God (NT)

14:20-21, Jerusalem being made entirely holy

Other Prophecies

Isaiah 13:9

Isaiah 60:19-20

Ezekiel 47:1-12

Micah 4:1-2

Matthew 25:31

1 Thessalonians 5:2 + 2 Peter 3:10

Revelation 20:7-9

Revelation 21:2, 9-10, 27

Revelation 21:23-42, 22:5

Revelation 21:24-26

Revelation 22:1-2